DPC/G7.1

ACROSS GOVERNMENT POLICY

Guideline for creating video snapshots

Purpose

To provide guidance on the creation of simple and engaging video snapshots that can be used to tell a story, showcase good work, share information and support decision making.

Recent advances in consumer technology are enabling everyday people to create engaging videos using little more than a basic smartphone, a good microphone and a little bit of guidance and practice.

Short video snapshots (which can include project snapshots, scripted presentations, live events, or one-on-one interviews) can communicate a range of perspectives to project teams, executives, or customers, in a concise and visual way, and at low cost.

Background

The use of video provides a range of opportunities and benefits that can go beyond that of traditional information sharing. Understanding that different people have different preferences for consuming and comprehending information, means that video snapshots can open up the work you do to a wider audience and can increase the likelihood that people will understand the messages you're trying to convey.

Video interviews are an excellent way to capture real stories and bring the 'outside world' into your regular work environment. Experience has shown that going out 'in the field' with customers is the best way design services with users at the centre. While 'user-centred design' is a significant undertaking, video snapshots can be used to complement this work by capturing discrete learnings that can form part of wider research activities.

Hearing directly from people creates empathy for their lived experiences and provides insights into the work you do. It enables subject matter experts to speak directly to your audience through testimonials that use rich, immersive content.

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has trialled a technique that is simple and effective, using minimal resources and expense.

A pilot project, entitled 'My Relationship with Digital', tested the process used in this guideline to create videos of real people. These examples can be found at https://dpc.sa.gov.au/digital/digital.

Ethical considerations and risks

It is important to consider how people are being portrayed and to ensure that facts are being presented in a non-biased way. How video clips are edited together can (sometimes unintentionally) distort the truth or lead your audience to draw false conclusions, so it is important to be mindful of this when creating your videos.

It is important to remember that video snapshots are only part of the story, and if used to convey research or evidence, it is best to use them in conjunction with other data.

Additionally, some cultures have systems of belief around the use of their image on film, so it is important to ensure that video subjects fully understand the context of the work and how it will be used before agreeing to be part of filming.

Process overview

Preparation	Filming	Editing	Follow up and publishing
• Research the topic and determine the purpose of the video • Prepare any paperwork such as a script, questions, consent forms, etc • Find a location and arrange filming	• Set up and test equipment • Discuss the topic with video subjects • Sign consent forms • Film small clips and do a number of takes • Playback and check the best take of each clip	• Import footage into a computer and review • Name and sort clips into themes • Put clips together with editing software	• Show the final product to subjects that you've filmed • Insert the video into presentations or publish online

Preparation

- Develop an understanding of your topic and determine what kind of video will work best. You are only creating a video snapshot, so the purpose of the video should be simple, and you should be able to summarise the topic in a clear and succinct way.

- If creating a scripted video, prepare a script and estimate how long the video will be.

- If conducting an interview, prepare a list of open interview questions to ask the interview subject (see Appendix C).

- Prepare a consent form for anyone who will be on film (see Appendix B) and provide this in advance, as well as any script, shot list, or interview questions.

- Make sure you have all the equipment you will need (see Appendix A), and practice with colleagues to help you to iron out technical issues in advance. It will also help you feel more comfortable on the day of filming.

- Find a place to film and ensure it has minimal background noise and will be well lit (and lit from behind where your camera will be). Make sure you have permission to film there, if required.

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Filming

- On the day of filming, be sure to test your equipment and ensure there is enough storage available on your device.

- You may wish to film some background shots to include in your video as context. These look best when the camera is kept steady.

- Discuss the broad topic and purpose for the video with the people that will be speaking on camera.

- Make sure all consent forms are signed (Appendix B).

- If making a scripted video, film small sections (one or two sentences at a time). Film a number of takes until you and the subject are happy with the delivery.

- You may wish to consider writing out the script onto large cards to prompt the video subject. These are just to help them remember their lines, as you don't want it to appear as though they are reading.

- If making an interview, film the response to each question, one at a time – in line with your interview guide (Appendix C). When conducting interviews:
  - allow interview subjects sufficient time to reflect and discuss the topic of each question thoroughly before framing their answer (to elicit authentic responses)
  - subjects may wish to repeat their responses more than once to clearly summarise their answer
  - remind subjects to include your question in their answer (as per the interview guide) as this will make their responses complete, stand-alone sentences, and will help with the editing later on.

- Be sure to quickly playback each clip (the one you think is the best take) on your device to ensure the sound and vision have been recorded well, before moving onto the next line in the script or interview question.

Editing

- It is good practice to export clips off your phone as soon as you get back to your computer.

- If you followed the recommended technique, you will have a series of short clips (one for each script statement / interview question).

- Give a file name to each clip that includes a recognisable description – for example, 'Sally – Introduction' or 'Sally – Question 1' or 'Jeff – Question 2'.

- Create folders to organise your video clips. They could be based on different themes or parts of the video. This will help you to keep track of the footage.

- Decide on the order you would like to arrange your clips – for example, if you have multiple video subjects, you might decide to have all of their introduction clips together, or you might like to keep each subject separate.

- Use video editing software to drag and drop the clips to arrange them into your chosen order (no particular software is recommended, but some examples are included in Appendix A).

- The software will allow you to add a title screen and transitions between your clips. A fade out transition can help prevent sudden jumps between clips or prevent responses from running together.

- Your audience will understand that the video was not made professionally and will not expect it to be perfect. The aim isn't to create a 'cinematic experience' but to communicate key messages

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Follow up and publish

- It is good practice to show your completed video to the subjects that you have filmed to ensure that they haven't been misrepresented as a result of the editing process.

- Depending upon the purpose of the video, you may wish to publish it online, or insert it into a presentation.

- Remember to provide a narrative context around the videos, as they are just snapshots and not 'the whole story'.

- Be mindful of accessibility requirements when publishing online. You can refer to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 to find out more.

Appendices

Appendix A – Suggested Filming Equipment

Appendix B – Video Participation Consent Form

Appendix C – Additional Guidance for Filming People Speaking

Document control

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