

Video Production Cheat Sheet

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Getting Started

If you're still waiting for the perfect time to create your first video, today is the day. No one has to view it but you, but it's a big first step to have your first production under your belt. Create a video about your commute to the office or about running an errand. Bonus: mention how you narrowly escaped a dragon. This can be simply you talking to the camera, or use still images with narration to make a slide show. [Create a YouTube account](#), and post the video as private, or "unlisted" which lets you share the link with others. Delete when/if you'd like, then repeat at least once a month, with or without the dragon.

Editing tools: For PC users, experiment with Windows [MovieMaker](#), and on the Mac, get to know [iMovie](#). View the tutorials and experiment with the features.

Equipment

Telling an interesting story is much more important than using fancy gear. Most smart phones and laptop cameras do a good job for starting. If you have a camcorder, even better. Quality can be improved significantly by adding an external microphone, such as the [ALM](#) for iPhone 5 for \$28. When you're ready to buy a new camcorder, consider paying a little more for one with a port for an [external mic](#), such as the [Canon VIXIA HF R400](#) for \$299.

Humor

Lower risks by first producing a video for an internal meeting. Reach out to the sales team. Salespeople are big fans of humor, and usually have budget for internal events. If the video is a hit, sales people can use it as an ice-breaker for client meetings, which boosts the video's ROI. Next, post to the company intranet. If it is received well, post to YouTube. Be sure to communicate the video's success, and include quotes from customers, salespeople, executives, tweets, etc. While folks are still celebrating its success, ask for more budget for your next production.

Edutainment

You don't have to make a video about your company or service, or a client. For the IBM smarter planet campaign, we created some [fun videos and animations](#) around interesting facts about the problems we were solving. It opens up a lot more options.

Documentary

You can always find interesting stories about the history of invention in your industry. Look for good storytellers to interview. A good place to start is with authors, academics, analysts and other influencers who are experts on the topic. A good story on a shoestring production budget [can earn a Webby](#) nomination.