

# **Video Promotion – How-To & Tools**

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Peter H. Berge is the Web Education Director for Minnesota CLE. He graduated from William Mitchell College of Law with honors where he was an Editor of the Law Review. After law school, Mr. Berge clerked for the Minnesota Supreme Court and then moved to a civil litigation practice in Minneapolis. After publishing a book on Insurance Law, he lived the gypsy life of an itinerant law professor, teaching at the William Mitchell College of Law, Temple University School of Law and Georgetown University Law Center. Returning to Minnesota, he became the Vice President of Risk Management for Minnesota Lawyers Mutual until an insane urge to try cases again struck him. A timely intervention by Frank Harris brought Mr. Berge back to his senses and into the fold of Minnesota CLE. When not shepherding the Minnesota CLE Webcasting endeavor, Mr. Berge plays guitar and sings in bars around the Twin Cities with The Midnight Mo Experience and you can see some of his photography at [www.peterberge.com](http://www.peterberge.com) and [www.facesofmn.com](http://www.facesofmn.com). He recently had a show of his photography in Stillwater, Minnesota called "China, It's All Over the Map." Peter is a director on the ACLEA Executive Committee.

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Brandon Haynie is Marketing and Production Specialist for the Oklahoma Bar Association CLE department. Mr. Haynie focuses on video production for webcasts as well as motion graphic and video promotion for CLE seminars. Mr. Haynie also handles graphic design and print advertisement for CLE programs as well as Oklahoma Bar Association special events.

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Bill studied Film Production and Theory as an undergraduate at the University of Notre Dame. He went on to receive his M.F.A. from the Graduate Film Conservatory at Florida State University. Bill was an active writer, producer, and director of independent film while working at IFP Minnesota and teaching Producing and Screenwriting at Minneapolis College. Bill then moved into advertising and branding where he took a position as Broadcast Producer at Periscope. He is currently the Executive Producer at Pixel Farm, a creative studio that services the advertising, filmmaking, and design communities.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Once a tool only of the most well-healed companies, video has broken into the mainstream. With smartphones nearly ubiquitous now, almost everyone has the potential to be a videographer and broadcast to the world via services like YouTube. With broadband connectivity, video is now an accepted, even expected, part of people's daily Internet intake.

It does not seem that video has been widely used, at least as a marketing tool, in the CLE industry. To my knowledge, the most any of us has done has been some initial experiments in the area. That initial experimentation, however, is indicative of what is going on in the world and on the Internet. I have no doubt this will be an area of increasing interest for CLE providers as we move forward.

## **SECTION 1: PRE-PRODUCTION**

Before ever picking up a camera, before ever recording a frame, before ever pointing to your talent to start, you should know what you are going to shoot. While I have to admit having honored that more in the breach than the observance, I've only been able to get away with that because the video we have experimented with has been short-form and extemporaneous.

The necessity of solid pre-production becomes quickly apparent as the size of video projects increases. On a Hollywood movie set there are hundreds waiting for the Director's orders. Every minute the director has to spend in contemplation is hundreds, thousands, and sometimes millions of dollars lost. But even on a small project, planning will make things go smoother, easier, and quicker.

This is where you have to think about what you want to convey and how you want to convey it. How will it be shot? From what angles? With how many cameras? With what camera movements? How will it be lighted? What sort of background do you want? If you are shooting outside, what time of day? This is the organization you need to do so the production phase will go smoothly.

There are several basic types of pre-production vehicles which videographers typically look to for providing structure to their shooting:

- **Outline** – Even for the simplest of video shoots, at least having an outline of what you want to shoot , from what angles, which what camera movements, and what you want conveyed by the talent will save time, effort, and money. For a lot of what we as CLE providers are going to be doing, at least initially, an outline is probably sufficient to organize our thoughts and streamline the production process.

For more on outlining and pre-production in general:

<http://www.reelseo.com/video-pre-production/>

- **Script** – For a more involved program, one might want to considers a full script. There is a ton of information out there – websites, books, seminars – on screenwriting. For the likely limited purposes of a CLE provider doing marketing videos, again, I strongly suspect that an outline will be sufficient, at least initially.

For more on script writing:

<http://www.videomaker.com/article/15386>

- **Storyboard** - Storyboards are typically a sort of comic book style illustration of the entire movie, or sometimes just difficult scenes in a movie, including camera angles and the motion of actors through the sets.

For more information on Storyboarding:

<http://www.videomaker.com/article/15361>

<http://www.videomaker.com/article/15415>

## SECTION 2: PRODUCTION

### *Minnesota CLE Studio*

The Minnesota CLE Webcast Studio is a good example of a high-end webcast studio setup:



The Webcast Studio is dedicated to the production of video educational products. The vast majority of those are our webcast CLEs. You may see an example of a typical program by clicking on the link below:

<http://www.minncle.org/webcasts/ondemand/175011201/#>

The studio is also used for other purposes such as recording short non-credit programs, vignettes for live programs, and is occasionally rented out to other organizations.

Technology of note in the studio proper includes:

- **Sony BRC300 Cameras** – The studio is a three camera shoot. Two of the cameras are mounted on tripods and can be moved freely within the studio. The third is mounted on the wall in the back of the studio and provides excellent establishing shots. All of the cameras are controlled remotely from the control booth in the studio.
- **Audio-Technica Wireless Lavalier Microphones** – We mic with lavaliers rather than boom or standing microphones. We tend to have fewer mic'ing problems using the lavaliers, given proper placement, because they are more discrete to the individual presenter and pick up less ambient noise. That said, we have also installed an auto-gate to minimize cross-talk between presenter's microphones. We can mic up to eight, though we rarely have a panel of more than four.
- **Studio Lighting** – We are using fluorescent studio lighting that is white-balanced to provide good color (particularly skin tone) reproduction. The fluorescent lights are far more energy efficient and put off far less extraneous heat than traditional studio lighting. You can see the fluorescent lights at the top of panoramic photo above hanging from the ceiling.
- **Chroma-key** – The back wall of the studio is painted bright "chroma-key" green. Combined with the chroma-key generator in the Control Booth of the studio, we can create life-like backgrounds for videos. We have used this extensively for creating vignettes for programs. We are looking at adding tracking technology in the studio that will allow the backgrounds to automatically scale to camera angle so that we can more easily do multi-camera chroma-key shoots.
- **Sound Dampening** – One wants a studio to be fairly "dead." That is, one does not want a lot of reverberation in the room. Our studio is part of our greater Conference Center and located in a commercial building (our next door neighbor is Target Corporation). To both control sound within the studio and insulate from noise without, we have placed acoustic dampening panels on the wall of the studio, carpeted the studio, and sprayed acoustic dampening foam on the ceiling.



The brain of the Webcast Studio is in the Webcast Control Booth:



The two racks house:

- **Audio-Technica Wireless Receivers** – 8 wireless channels that work with the lavalier microphones mentioned earlier. This is the audio input for the Webcasts.
- **Panasonic DVD Recorder** – This allows up to record a program on the fly.
- **SonicFoundry Mediasite Encoder** – A specialized PC that runs the Mediasite Webcast Encoding software. It takes the Video, Audio, feeds and encodes them in the Windows Media format and syncs the VGA feed (typically PowerPoint) so that the program can be streamed over the Internet. It also records the programs for later playback. After encoding, the signal is sent to a server farm for streaming to customers.
- **2 Crown Power Amps** – These power two sets of speakers, one in the Control Booth and one in the Webcast Studio itself. The Control Booth speakers are typically on during a program so the AV Tech can hear the program. The speakers in the Webcast Studio are typically off as they would be distracting at best and cause feedback at worst. They are used when webcast faculty are using video clips so they can hear the clip as it is played and know when it is over and time for them to present again.
- **Switchers** – All of the different pieces of equipment in the studio are plugged into the switcher. This allows a great deal of flexibility as to how one connects the devices. Depending on what the studio is being used for, one may want different

combinations of equipment. This allows switching with a press of a few buttons rather than rewiring.

- **Sony DVD/VHS Player** – Some faculty bring in teaching aids such as vignettes or video clips. They can be played on the DVD/VHS player. We try to get them prior to the program so they can be recorded from the DVD/VHS player to the Turbo Hard Drive Recorder.
- **Grass Valley Turbo Recorder** – A hard drive recorder. Since it has a faster response time than the DVD/VHS player we prefer to record vignettes and video clips to it as this makes the AV Tech's job easier and smoother.
- **2 Niagara Encoders** – The original encoders that we used, were superseded by the PolyCom Capture Station which have since been superseded by the Mediasite Stations. They do, however, provide a backup encoder.
- **Networked Computer** – A basic PC so that the AV Tech is connected to the company network and email. An important part of communication between the Tech, the Floor Director, and the Program Attorney. Typically use Email and Instant Messaging.
- **Metro Optical Ethernet Internet Access** – The encoded webcasts are sent to a server farm to be streamed to customers via a 7 Mbps Metro Ethernet connection.





On the table are the basic tools the AV Tech needs to run the webcast or recording in the studio:

- **Leviton Light Controller** – Slider controls for controlling the intensity of the Fluorescent Studio Lights.
- **dbx Autogate** – Audio from the microphones comes into the autogate which senses levels. Lower gain sound is not let through the gate. This controls feedback and cross-talk between the mics. Thus when one faculty member is talking, sound picked up on the other's mic (e.g. breathing, the other speaker's voice) is not audible.
- **Soundcraft Audio Mixer** – After the Autogate, the feed from the microphones goes to the mixer. The mixer controls levels, so that if one person has a softer voice, we can boost it relative to a louder speaker's voice. The mixer also allows EQing of the voices – that is adding or subtracting bass, midrange, or treble as needed to make the speaker sound their best.
- **Sony Cameral Controller** – A joystick controller. With it, the AV Tech can turn and zoom each of the three cameras. It has presets built into it. Using the presets with the three cameras effectively gives the AV Tech six different shots at the touch of a button.

- **Sony Anycast** – The Anycast is used as the switcher. The video signal comes to the Anycast from the Camera Controller and then is sent to the Accordent Capture Station for encoding. The AV Tech uses it to choose camera views and fade between them when cutting. It also contains a text generator for creating lower-thirds that we use to identify speakers.
- **Keyboard, Mouse, & Switcher** – The AV Tech needs to access the Networked Computer, Turbo, and the Mediasite station. Rather than having a keyboard & mouse for each, there is one keyboard with a switcher that toggles the keyboard connection between the three.
- **Ultramatte dv** – The Ultramatte dv controls the Chroma Key. With it we can substitute an image for the green screen background and give the appearance of being virtually anywhere.
- **Monitors** – The four monitors can be switched for whatever devices are needed in the Control Room. Typically they show, from left to right, 1 – the feed from the Anycast to the Capture Station, 2 – the Networked Computer, 3 – the Turbo, and 4 – the Accordent Capture Station.

### ***Oklahoma Bar Association CLE Studio***

The Oklahoma Bar Association CLE Webcast Studio is another good example of newsroom webcast studio setup:





Like the Minnesota CLE Webcast Studio, the OBA studio's main function is to serve as a webcast studio, but is also used as an outlet for vignettes, CLE promotions and weekly seminar updates.

Technology of note that the OBA studio incorporates in their production:

It's important to note that having matching components, such as mics, cameras, etc. is key. It's also important to not be too cheap when it comes to cables for transmitting A/V signals.

- **Sony PMW-100 XDCAM** – This camera offers great broadcast quality, color rendition, and good if your light source isn't ideal if you are shooting run and gun. It also offers XLR (three prong) mic inputs when shooting offsite and on the road.
- **Panasonic HC-X900M** – If you are looking for a more affordable camera option, I've had experience with this camcorder. It has a 3-sensor CMOS, so it produces a great image quality in several conditions. It even shoots in 60p so you can have some smooth slow motion footage if you want to shoot out of the studio.
- **Shure PG Series Dual Wireless Lavalier Microphone System**  
This mic system offers reliable service, good quality, and is cost-effective. We use two sets of these. The receiver handles each transmitter (mic) separately, so they can be adjusted independently. They each require their own separate channel on a mixer, but for the quality and price, you are essentially getting two mics for the price of one.

- Panasonic AG-HMX100 Digital AV Mixer**  
 With the HD revolution catching up in all areas of media, this is a one stop machine handling HD camera signals and video/audio mixing. With ability to fine tune chroma-key (green screen,) you have unlimited options for a custom made production. Since this is a broadcast quality machine, it uses SDI and HMDI inputs. It's important to have a convertor for input and output if your computer or recorder doesn't have these inputs.
- Edirol / Roland [V-4 Four Channel Video Mixer](#)**  
 This video mixer is great for the price if you are looking for something small and affordable as well as reliable. This unit is standard definition, but for a little more, its next model will handle HD.
- Green screen** – If you are looking for a flexible background, this is one of your best options. Search Amazon or bhphotovideo.com for some mid to cheap prices. Be aware that lighting and recording quality are essential for this recording process. If you are normally shooting one to two people, the “car sun reflector” fold up types are great for portability and space when not in use.
- Cowboy Studio Three Light System** – These lights are powerful, reliable, and very cost effective. For \$300, you can easily light up a room with the three continuous spiderlights provided. Most systems come with a boom stand too for your custom lighting needs. Make sure the package you look at includes the softboxes to ease the lights harshness. If your shooting will mostly be stationary, then this is a great product. Disassembly of the softboxes can take some getting use to for shooting on the go, but can be overlooked if this fits your budget.

### **SECTION 3: CREATIVE SHOOTING AND VIDEO PRODUCTION**

The greatest part about the video revolution is the creative freedom that it allows. Since web distribution allows for wide and instant viewing, capitalizing on using video as a marketing tool has never been greater. People view 100 million videos a day on the web, so the time is now for our industry to take advantage.

At OBA/CLE, we utilize our studio for several promotions because of the technology they provide, but also use several other methods to produce videos. One of the most enjoyable parts of the CLE promotional video process is painting a picture of what your event or seminar will offer your attendees, or getting them to really get the flavor of what you are trying to sell them. While not standard, here are a few “out of the box” examples we’ve produced.



<http://bit.ly/Vz7cPZ>

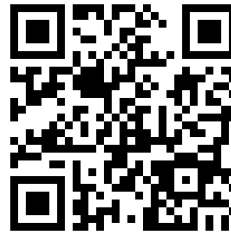


<http://bit.ly/XfzcsZ>

It can also be effective to use program highlights, a “CLE movie trailer” if you will, in promotion of your business as well as raise interest in your overall programming. For example, we record footage during some of our bigger programs and then show the highlights with interviews later to drive traffic to our website, Facebook page, and before and after webcasts. Here are a few:



<http://bit.ly/VHhijM>



<http://bit.ly/11a0g1u>

## Tools and Software

If you webcast and have a camera you like and are comfortable with, then you are in business. If you would like to try something different or leave your studio untouched, then there are plenty options available, both in cameras and software. Here are just a few of the many options.

- **DSLRs** – It used to be that DSLR cameras were known for just taking high quality photos. Now, several are packaged with the ability to shoot HD video too. This has truly been a game changer in the independent film making world, but is spilling over into the prosumer world too. Because of the large sensor that these cameras carry, getting low-light shooting, soft bokeh backgrounds, 24p frame rate (used in movies) and many lens options for a fraction of the price to produce results that took triple the price years ago, is now a reality. Now, they are not

intended to replace a video camera or can record for hours, but for superb HD quality in run and gun field work or even studio vignettes, they are hard to beat. I love them and use them primarily in my promotions. If you need to take some quality photos at an event too, just switch it back to the camera mode!

**Here is a list that have great reputations, starting with the “big boys.”**

- **Canon 5d Mark II, III, 7d** – What I use, and known for helping start the boom in using DSLR cameras in film, movies, and commercials. Full frame, full 1080p HD, incredible in low light, and beautiful “out of focus backgrounds.” Higher end on price for the camera and a good lens, but a great option for great results.
- **Canon T4i, T3i, T2i, 60d** – The smaller version of the aforementioned cameras, but follows many of the same concepts in design that their big brothers use. With the help of some lighting (which you should always use!) you can achieve fantastic results for a smaller price tag. You can get the T2i body for 599.99 used, which is a steal to get great HD results.
- **Blackmagic Cinema Camera** – While this isn’t a DSLR, it is a true gem in the category of small cinema quality cameras. It handles canon lenses, and has many features that make it a true professional. If you are looking to film “CLE: The Movie,” then this would be your option.

## **Audio**

Your promotional video or commercial is only as good as your audio, no matter which video recording method you use. If you have a camera with XLR or 1/8” stereo inputs and you can get good results, then you are in business. If not, then there are many options for on and off camera audio recording.

- **Camera Mount Lavalier systems** – Just like the wireless lav mic systems in a studio or presentation hall, but with a small receiver that mounts on your camera. Most have the option of an XLR and a 1/8” stereo jack and many cameras today have automatic audio gain adjustment to handle the input signal, or a manual adjuster. There are several good options, but the **Sennheiser G3** series is great, as is the **Shure FP Bodyback**. If you plan on using a DSLR to do short promos, it's important to have a small portable mic preamp. Most DSLRs have bad audio, so boosting the gain is a necessity for good audio. Check out the **Foster FM-1**.
- **Portable Digital Recorders** – I often record the audio separate from the video and sync up later when I edit, and I do this with the **Tascam DR-40**. These recorders are powerful, very customizable, offer phantom power to run up to two lav mics, have decent internal mics that are movable, and screw right on top of my Mark II. Other recorders with a good reputation are the **Zoom H4n** and the **Sony PCM-D50**.

## Software

Now that you have your raw footage, it's time to put it all together. With proper planning and numerous shots, the editing booth is where you can really be creative and let your piece shine. It doesn't take a \$1000 dollar program to do it either. It's more about how you cut your video than anything. I personally use the Adobe Master Suite, which has now moved to an online subscription for \$50 a month that gives you access to all their programs.

- **Video Editing Software** – First off, it's important that your computer can handle the video quality you are shooting. For example, if you are shooting 1080p HD, you'll need a core processor that can handle the load (core 4), enough ram and a decent graphics card. Most newer computers today can handle this, but do your research!
- **CyberLink PowerDirector 11 Deluxe** – This software is a numerous winner of *PC Magazine's* editor's choice award. It's easy, provides fast video renders, and has a ton of features. All for under \$70
- **Corel VideoStudio Pro X5** – Another piece of software that's quick and easy, and is brimming with video editing tools. It also comes in under \$70.
- **Adobe Premiere Elements 11** – The kid brother to Adobe's Premiere Pro, it offers your basic video editing with several snazzy tools for pro-quality effects. This is one of the better programs under \$100 if you plan to do green screen work.
- **Adobe Premiere Pro CS6** – Quite a bit more than the previous mentioned editors, but this is a pro grade piece of software. The performance is incredible, the features are great, and it works seamlessly with other Adobe programs. Have shaky footage? Premiere can fix it.

## SECTION 4: DISTRIBUTION

At Minnesota CLE, we have created videos largely for internal marketing.

Experimenting with video advertising, we did it with the idea of playing them before programs and during breaks at our Conference Center. We have large screens in the front of the classrooms which can show a variety of content, including videos. We also have several television screens around the Conference Center where the videos can be shown.

We have also done a series of videos which are more substantively oriented though they have their marketing side. Given the recent hard economic times for new lawyers, we started a New Lawyer Website. On the New Lawyer Website are a number of 5 to 10 minute videos by experts on a variety of topics from ethics to office management to substantive law. They are available for free to new Minnesota lawyers.

But even if your focus is internal, there is no reason you can't take advantage of external resources. YouTube gives you instant, world-wide distribution capabilities for your videos. You will find a collection of videos created by Minnesota CLE at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/mncle>

Another byproduct of posting videos on YouTube is that it makes it easy to share the video. Once posted on YouTube, a link to the video can be embedded on a website or blog for viewing. YouTube acts as the host for the video.

## **CONCLUSION**

We are at the very beginning stages of exploring the use of video in our industry. No doubt, we will all gain more experience, expertise, and savvy as the years go on. We should likely consider this the beginning of an ongoing discussion.