

First take

The Bladonmore  
guide to corporate  
film & online video



## Screen grabs

The explosion of media content, particularly on the internet, has spawned a generation of consumers and business users with limited patience and an ever-decreasing attention span. This broadband generation uses iPods on the way to work, Blackberries at work and Sky Plus boxes at home – to save time, filter out junk and immerse themselves in a stream of hand-picked content. Content that is not relevant and engaging will be binned, ignored or deleted before you can say “forget it”.

So how can you get your message heard? Businesses still have the same objectives as before – such as greater employee engagement, stronger sales



*“Twelve per cent of our target audience viewed our most recent film. That’s 370 of our closest contacts spending four minutes with us. By any measure, that’s a great return on our investment”*

*Andrew Hartley, managing partner,  
August Equity LLP*

messages and better-informed investors – but getting that message across is harder than ever before.

Bladonmore works with businesses to identify and communicate key messages to their target audiences via film and video. Increasingly, this content is delivered online, and by using innovative web technologies, we can accurately measure just how effective this content is.



# The five stages of producing effective film and video

## 1. The brief

Too many communications agencies and production companies dive headlong into the film-making process without a complete understanding of what you are trying to achieve. We begin by working to understand your aims, objectives, key messages and target audience, as well as ascertaining the timescale and budget you are working within.

Although briefs can come in many forms, the following themes are common:

- “We need to tell our existing or potential investors what makes us special. We want to do it quickly and get the point across in a way that grabs their attention.”
- “The company has hired new management (or embarked on a new strategy). We need to gee up our colleagues and ensure they all sing from the same hymn sheet.”
- “We have a great new product (or service) and want to use our website and email marketing to bring it alive. We have the contacts and the leads but want something to get them talking about us.”

## 2. Pre-production

The pre-production phase involves developing the storyline and its treatment (i.e. the film’s content, style and approach). We liaise with you to decide who should be interviewed, what can be filmed and where the film crew need to go to do this.

At this stage it is important to agree a final production schedule – who and what will be filmed, where and when. This is the key to avoiding time-consuming and costly mistakes later on in the process. Experience tells us that greater input at the pre-production stage saves valuable time later in the production.

## 3. Production

And now the shooting starts! Whether on the other side of the world or in a meeting room in your offices, this is about capturing high-quality content. The important thing here is to relax: remember that the sole objective of



*“It works. When I wanted to hire a new MD for our US business I played it to him and he got what Creston is about very quickly. The film gets our strategy across really well”*

*Don Elgie, group chief executive, Creston plc  
Marketing services group Creston plc commissioned Bladonmore to produce online video to communicate its strategy to prospective investors and help fund its expansion into the US*

professional film-makers is to make you and your organisation look as good as possible.

Most corporate films include on-camera interviews. Experience has taught us that giving interviewees a list of questions encourages them to rehearse and then “perform” their responses. Unfortunately, this does not often make for a good on-screen performance. We prefer to discuss the specific points you wish to make, then have a much more natural discussion, albeit on-camera.



*“We had 200 people in the room – some with more than 20 years’ experience, others with less than 12 months’. Somehow, Bladonmore created something that appealed to everyone and got our event going with a bang. It was intelligent content that added value”*

*Ian Smart, head of corporate finance, Grant Thornton  
Grant Thornton asked Bladonmore to produce a film on the state of the UK private equity market to launch its annual corporate finance conference. It led to a spirited debate on the future direction of the business. Following the conference, the film has been used regularly for other internal communications purposes*



#### 4. Post-production

The post-production phase begins with offline editing. This is the stage when interviews and other shots are assembled, perhaps with a voiceover and music, to create the film’s narrative and structure.

When viewing this first cut, you will have the opportunity to discuss the content, structure, style and pace. Traditionally, this showing would take place in an edit suite but advances in technology has meant you can do this from a laptop or even over the internet.

Any amendments you wish to make are then incorporated into a final offline edit. Once you have signed off on this, the completed film needs to be mastered. This process – called online editing – optimises the quality of the final visual and audio material. It involves colour grading, audio mixing and the addition of graphics and effects.

#### 5. Versioning for delivery

Depending on your audience, a final version of your film can be produced in any of the following formats:

- DVD – this is essential if you are planning to showcase it at meetings, conferences and exhibitions or if you wish to distribute physical copies.
- Digital file format – digital files, such as MPEG1, Windows Media or QuickTime are flexible and manageable enough to be integrated by you into PowerPoint and other presentations.
- Online – the most popular online options include the Flash format (for delivery over the internet) and downloadable files such as podcasts and vodcasts. Each of these can be supported by a targeted email campaign to drive traffic to the online content. This, in turn, is measured accurately to assess how your intended audience responds.
- Interactive – making your film or online video interactive could be as simple as creating a DVD with a menu structure to index the content.




*“There is always so much to take on board and so many names to learn on your first day in a new job. Our film works because it communicates clear and consistent messages in a very engaging way”*

*Jonathan Mullen, global head of media relations and internal communications, BNP Paribas  
BNP Paribas commissioned Bladonmore to create an overview of its different UK activities for new employees. The film is used at induction presentations, it is available on the corporate intranet and it runs as a version with subtitles on screens in the bank’s reception*

Alternatively, a streaming online video can be synchronised with PowerPoint slides to take the delivery of your film to the next level.

Bladonmore is frequently asked to produce versions of a client’s film in other languages. This may entail recording a foreign language voiceover or producing on-screen subtitles. During the production of such versions, we engage the services of native-speaking translators as well as asking for a final sign-off from an individual in your organisation who is fluent in the required language. **B**



*“Three years ago, we had never used film to help build our business. We have now completed seven – all with Bladonmore – for customers, our people and shareholders. Each time it gets quicker and easier. Bladonmore has a deep knowledge of our business and our brand and we have access to a growing digital library of content that they hold on our behalf. Film brings our communications to life”*

*Tabitha Aldrich-Smith, director of corporate affairs, UNITE plc*  
*Bladonmore has produced a series of award-winning films for UNITE plc, the FTSE 250 student hospitality business, that communicate its key propositions to customers, stakeholders and staff*

*“I’m delighted with the way in which the film has brought to life the tangible benefits of our claims and back-to-work support services”*

*David Ellis, senior business development manager, Cardiff Pinnacle*  
*The sales team at Cardiff Pinnacle, a leading provider of payment protection insurance in the UK, uses a Bladonmore-produced DVD to demonstrate how the business differentiates itself from the competition. The DVD is used for new business tenders, training and presentations to existing and prospective clients*



**Bladonmore**  
COMMUNICATING KNOWLEDGE ●●●

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