

Metro Librarians Share Their Tips For Successful Video

One year into a global pandemic and our librarians have mastered virtual programming, which has been so successful there's no going back now. After a year of fast-paced hands-on video experience, how can we continue to fine tune our videography and editing skills? Metro librarians from around the library system have tips and tricks they use to keep their videos on point every time. As always, if video questions arise, the [virtual engagement guidelines](#) created by EPS are available for reference.

Background

Working in a library gives us an advantage when it comes to a picturesque background, but sometimes the ideal filming spot is unavailable —

what then? Try to find a background that is clear of distractions like an empty wall. A brick wall is an easy and typically readily available space to film; however, when filming outside it's also important to check sound quality so things like wind and passing cars don't drown out the dialogue.

It can also be helpful to frame the shot ahead of time to assure the speaker is positioned clearly in the shot and there are no other distracting objects.

"Details matter so take time to arrange everything

in your shot," Adult Librarian Mitch Leisure suggests. "Straighten the books on the bookshelf behind you, put up a poster on the blank wall behind you, make small adjustments to your position in the frame too."



Keep in mind that getting the right angle is also important and can potentially change the look and feel of the video. Some performers also have a preference of what angle to get so they look the most flattering on screen and so their props can be seen clearly.

Lighting

Beware of washing out the shot with too much light. Natural light is great, but it's imperative to make sure it's coming from the right angle.

"Don't back-light yourself by filming in front of a window or bright light," said Beth Loecke, Adult Librarian at Choctaw Library.

Don't have a well-lit spot? Use the ring light to get the perfect lighting. Mitch Leisure from the Bethany Library also suggests using a piece of poster board, shiny side up, to bounce light from your light source to your face if you have significant shadowing.

Carol Roberts, youth engagement specialist at the

Midwest City Library suggests recoding a short video in your desired location as a test to assure the lighting works.

"One video I made with felt birds on a felt board and when I replayed the video it looked like the birds were fluttering because of the lighting!" Roberts said.

Sound

Testing the sound is an important step in the process. Having a lapel mic isn't necessary, but it can help cut down on background noise and produce higher quality sound. Some video editors have effects that allow users to reduce noise and even adjust the volume on the dialogue. Doing a test video to check for sound quality is helpful, because no one wants to finish recording a great take only to realize the sound was off.

Keep it Steady

Tripods are not always available, but phones can be set up on a bookshelf or table to assure the "90s reality TV effect" isn't coming through in your work. Get creative if you have to, and find a steady place to set your camera for filming.

Find a Filming Buddy

It's not always easy to play actor, director and film crew. See if a co-worker can help. Having help will ensure that if the shot isn't framed correctly it can be adjusted without an additional take or if equipment dies there isn't any additional time wasted and a live program does not get interrupted.

"I didn't realize that a green screen I had hung up behind me fell when I was filming a storytime by myself, and I had to completely re-film it," said Mary West youth engagement specialist for the Community Libraries.

Don't Stress It

Have you ever filmed what felt like a bazillion takes to get it right? That's OK!

"Don't stress out trying to make the video perfect. People want to see that you are human," Loecke said.

Be Prepared

We all know that one person who gets in front of the camera and wings it but it somehow comes out perfectly. Not you? Join the club. One way to assure the video comes out the way it's intended is to write out a script or talking points. The memorization doesn't have to be perfect. Some librarians have even started using a tablet or second phone as a makeshift teleprompter. Loeke suggests printing it and taping it

to a wall or tripod.

"Preparing and practicing your content not only makes you look more natural on camera, but it can also help you feel more comfortable performing to an audience you can't see," said Tess Botkin, children's librarian at Northwest Library.

In addition to prepping for the dialogue in the video, it's important to consider wardrobe. There's not any kind of requirement to dress up for a video, but it's important to feel confident, so wear something that feels comfortable. Cheryll Jones, children's librarian at Southern Oaks, suggests avoiding colors that blend in with the background for the video.

Stitch it Together

We can't all be one-take wonders, and that's OK. Sometimes filming a video in sections makes it easier to get through without mistakes. Then use an app like iMovie, YouCut, CapCut, CutStory, InShot and others to stitch it all together and even add things like video transitions, hyperlapse, slo-mo and background music.

Remember, You're a Star!

If being on camera feels daunting, that's okay. Try doing a [power pose](#) before you start rolling, put your shoulders back and puff out your chest like an athlete who just won a prestigious medal and look directly into the camera like you're talking to another person instead of a camera. Doing all of these things, whether or not you feel super confident, will help you exude confidence to your audience, making you also appear more credible and trustworthy as a speaker.

Consider Your Audience

One essential element to filming an ideal clip is to share enthusiasm for the subject, further engaging the audience. The attendees or viewers are there because they're passionate or interested in the information being shared, so expressing enthusiasm only furthers their interest.

"We want to engage the people watching," said Allie Barton, children's librarian at Belle Isle Library. "Smiling, appropriate gestures, and using the appropriate inflections in your voice can engage the watcher or listener."

Whether preparing a program for children where the presenter asks questions or a program for adults explaining a new concept, asking a question or asking the audience if they have questions, you want to leave a pause for them to answer or think about what you've said. It can feel awkward to have silence

in a live or even recorded video, but keep in mind that while it may feel awkward from the presenter perspective, it feels natural to the audience.

"If you watch any episode of children's television, you will notice they leave in pauses for kids to interact with the content," Botkin said. "The pauses are what turn a prerecorded video into an interactive experience instead of a passive one."

Start Early & Ask a Co-Worker to Review

In the past year we have had closures for a variety of reasons. Weather and illness are unpredictable, so it's important to begin planning and filming early. If road blocks pop up, you're prepared to move forward with your program as planned.

"You never know what might arise as you approach your deadline," said Laura Pool, children's librarian at Bethany Library. "We have had scheduling issues, weather closures, and more that affected my library's filming schedule."

It's easy to miss something in the editorial process! Ask a co-worker to review the finished product before launch.

"The more outside input you have on the video, the better it can become," Pool said. "Most of the things I've created, I've shared drafts with the Bethany Library engagement team and gotten some great suggestions and solutions!"

Don't Forget Accessibility

Subtitles or closed captions are a must to make our content accessible to all of our customers and social followers. Creating captions can be daunting, but there are ways to make the process easier. Try uploading the video to YouTube and using the auto-generated caption feature. For simple videos like stories and reels, try creating the video in the Caption app.

Prevent Unwanted Interruptions

There will inevitably be times when an interruption derails filming, but there are ways to prevent it, such as blocking designated time on your calendar for filming so co-workers are aware and placing devices on airplane mode.

"If you're filming on your phone, I like to put mine on airplane mode to help prevent any unwanted interruptions. It also helps the phone battery life!" Barton said.



TLC Upgrade Coming Soon

TLC will upgrade the evening of Tuesday, April 13!

One important feature added in the upgrade includes a new "damaged items" feature in CARL.X Return and CARL.Connect Check In to allow the ability to check an item in as damaged, and any hold on the item will move the customer to first in queue on that record.

Upgrades are also coming to the CARL.Connect Fill List, including these exciting new features.

- The ability to change your list view to take action against one item on the fill list vs. multiple.
- Location and Media Codes will only display codes for items in the fill list.
- "Not Found" is being labeled to "Wander List," which now has more functionality.

Additional updates include:

- CARL.Connect now has check-in sounds to alert staff to lightbox during checkin.
- The catalog has a lot of mobile updates to include title details, viewing loan history, placing issue level holds and the ability to add or view lists and saved searches.
- When customers update their email address in the catalog and opt in to email notifications, it will change the flag in CARL.X to "yes-do send email."

A full list of updates will be posted to the intranet on Tuesday, April 6.

Summer Reading Training Is Here!

Get the lowdown on all things Summer Reading 2021! The Summer Reading staff training just launched April 1 and this year's training is a bit of mystery. Put on your Sherlock cap and help us solve the mystery of where Spoticus is hiding!



Along the way we'll share important information about this year's Summer Reading program and begin to get into the spirit of the "Tails & Tales" theme.

COMING UP

April 15

Commission Meeting



GOODBYE

Michael Payne

ED Access Specialist FT

Steven Jenkins

Outreach Specialist II FT

Takesha McGee

DC Library Aide PT

CONGRATULATIONS Promotions & Transfers

Annie Emmons

BI Youth Engagement Manager to ED Adult Engagement Specialist II HT

Kadey Bernhardt

CIS Virtual Engagement Specialist II FT to DC Adult Engagement Specialist II FT



DIY Development Well-Being In The Workplace

23(m) When we're laser-focused on productivity and achieving new milestones in our career, it can be easy to brush aside feelings of unhappiness. But our mental health matters. In this course, join Lianne Weaver, the founder and director of Beam Holistic Therapy and Beam Development & Training Ltd., as she shares practical techniques for alleviating anxiety, worry, stress and other common mental health issues. Lianne discusses what causes worry and how can you reduce its effects, how to avoid burnout, how to increase happiness and gratitude to battle negative thoughts and more. Upon wrapping up this course, you'll be ready to take steps toward feeling happier and healthier at work. Find this course and more in the course catalog on [EduBrite](#).