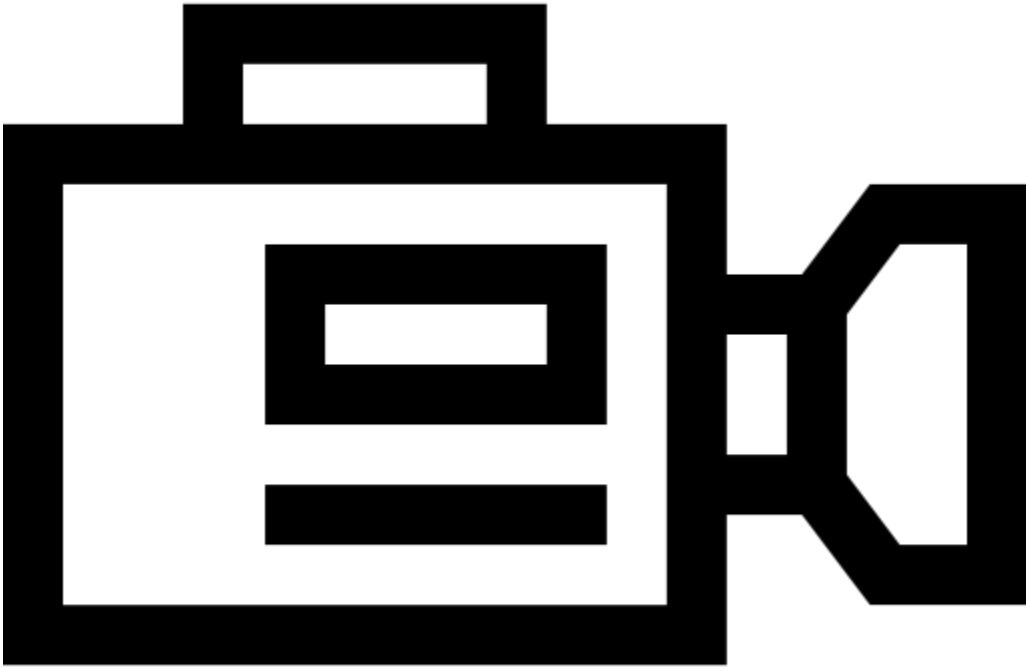# Handbook for the Corporate Media Guy and His Bosses:

Handbook for the Corporate Media Guy and His Bosses:

That's a long title. I'm not so sure I like it, but I suppose it's adept. IF you're a corporate media guy, you probably have much larger dreams of being a director, auteur, but for now you're paying the bills. Or maybe you truly enjoy the work that comes with being in corporate media. There's no harm there so embrace it. If you're a guy who runs a media guy or department and just wants to understand their positions for a better corporate atmosphere, you'd better grab a different book (I Kid). I'm actually trying to write this for both positions, to make it easier for the media guy and his department so that the communication and ability to work together for the best benefit is achieved (You're welcome).

Either way, I've worked in media and corporate media for 18 years now (I feel old saying that) and have come across some truly interesting things in my time. It seems like there would be so many different things in the multimedia world given how technology works and how it speeds up, and it's only made the adaptation and knowledge greater than ever in single positions. Many don't realize that being a corporate video guy is a combination upon combinations. For a lone wolf creative, you'll have to be adept with filming, editing, lighting, directing, scouting, audio, rendering, graphics and 3d design, animation and After Effects. That's actually just the tip of the spear. Within each of those disciplines, there are myriads of options and technical abilities-shooting in XVAC/ProRes, frame rates, High-def vs 4k, 24 vs 60 fps, using different lenses, cameras and more. That's for shooting. There's just as many for editing. Many times, the creative behind this hasn't mastered enough of all of these abilities and develops a workflow that simply "works". Do you prefer Premiere, FCP, Resolve, or do you have experience in Avid's Media Composer? Most media guys need to be proficient in at least 2 of those, if not 3 of the 4, and then have experience with using Photoshop and at least After Effects to round it out. We can go on ad nauseam…

I'm giving you all sorts of good tips and tricks to think about to make your creatives and department hum properly. Maybe you're the single media guy trying to convince your bosses because they should or shouldn't do something. Maybe you're the boss trying to justify trying to do something. To keep another factor in mind, and this is really the root, and the key is organization. Not just the process or the people, but the media as well. Let's start at the beginning and move on from there.

We're going to start with the managerial position and the corporate side first. If you need to manage a media guy and don't come from the media world, take a gander over the text to see why and how you can make everyone's life easier! If you're a manager you probably won't but I'm rooting for the media guys here, so give them a little bit of a break, they could probably use it. If you're a media guy or want to become one, stick around to the end or flip ahead to find out tips and tricks and things you should pay attention to.

When should you hire an in-house media guy? Or become one?

Not JUST because I'm a media guy, but because I see a lot of companies that straddle the line and probably could use this type of guide to help them determine whether they need it and how they can get the best value.

Let's talk about some things here. Multimedia encompasses so many different things, and for large companies and agencies they typically devote at least a single person to one aspect of those things, if not multiple people. These media types that companies utilize typically consists of photos, videos, web design, and graphic design. This doesn't even include the actual marketing portion of a company, organizing all of this media or the social media aspect. That's an even larger plan to deal with besides those aspects, and one that ties all of those skills together into a coherent plan that makes the business effective.

If you're a business that utilizes this type of content, this can be absolutely critical. In the days of COVID and instantaneous media-facebook/insta/tiktok (and after), you can develop an effective media campaign and also have to change it and shift it quickly. Ensuring your message across these platforms is effective and reaches the right customers with the right message is essential to growing or maintaining any business size-whether it's a small under 10-person business or a fortune 500. And finding those people that can do all the above skills and work together to create that effective media platform for your company is also essential. You don't need to turn to separate media houses with massive budgets to reach the customers anymore, and that's just as important within your company budget as well.

Determining if you can afford a media guy is an important aspect of the new age of business. Should you hire a social media guy? A video guy? A photographer? Does your business truly utilize these types of features? Because every business is different, that's something that only you can decide, BUT if you need to stay in touch with customers on a regular basis and continually feature media in your products/services/posts, then you probably should consider putting a guy on staff or at least contract with a small agency. You CAN do it yourself if you have the time, and there's plenty of tools to do that as well. But if you don't want to, or if you've got a decent sized business and budget, make it easy on yourself with an expert.

IF you put a guy on staff; finding a single person that can deal with all of those skills is a deal and an amazing package all in one. It is common to find a video guy who can edit and typically understands photoshop, or After Effects, even better that they can shoot and do photography, and an absolute steal that they can do web design and graphic design. That can cut down on your budget dramatically and keep your expenses in check as well as helping streamline your designs and keep them within the same designer and "feel". But all of those disciplines are varied-they are different skills and creating those assets from scratch is time consuming. Getting a proper photo may be fine and dandy, but then editing it, putting it in a format for the delivery-social, website, etc, and creating the graphics and message is important. Don't underestimate the ability and skill of the people who do this, because it's the outward facing component of your business and one of the key ways the customer sees you. Give this person or persons the time and space they need to make your business shine. These aspects and assets alone can be worth many, many, times what they produce for you, and have a direct impact with customers and viewers. It's also important for education resources-internal and external, as well as other potential revenue streams for your company depending on your business model-Amazon Video, YouTube, podcasts and other recurring streams of media.

IF you don't need a staff member, make sure that you choose an agency that can deal with these assets in the smartest and easiest way possible. There are plenty of places that can deal with your needs, but again, because they vary or they can change quickly, don't underestimate the costs of the projects that you bring to them. You can utilize services that can pre roll your assets to make this easier, but that's also time consuming and needs proper organization, so be sure that you keep track of your assets (that audio, video, photo files and more) and that you have the right ability to use the right assets for the right time.

As a small business owner, you typically have your hand in many things at once. Sometimes the work of running the business outpaces the actual work of the business. If it's something that can save you time, money and effort, consider hiring a media guy on staff, or hiring a media agency that can bring all of these assets together and make them easy for you to use and develop. Think about this-because we all think of the bottom line-if a media guy can organize your media and streamline it to bring in a minimum amount of new customers, then he's worth the investment to pay a decent salary. If you want a good media guy that can handle all of the above, then you will need it to take your business to the next level.

IF you're a media guy, focus on these skills. Chances are, you're familiar with cameras and editing. But you'll need to focus on the whole process-the lighting, the shooting, the editing and the effects afterwards to make a good video. And that's not including the marketing and the direction of the video. As that term of Swiss army knife goes-start shooting and keep shooting. Become familiar with as much as you can and utilize as many advantages as you can. There are plenty of things that can give you a great advantage-like software templates (Envato and others) and more that will allow you to begin a production with assets ready to fill in. That way it only requires the most attention for shooting and allows you to focus on bringing the project together as a whole in order to get it finished. We will explore this separately later on.
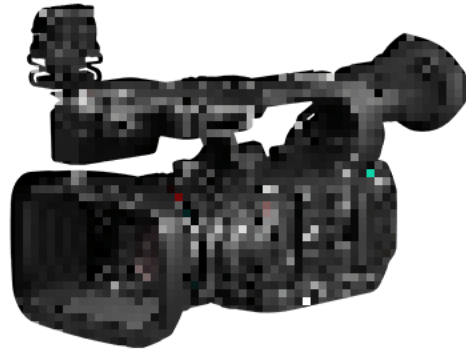
Recognizing the value of your media guy

So, you've decided to hire a media guy. Step one accomplished!

Now, what do you do with him?

If you're a small to medium sized company-and this goes for any, really-you'll come to find that you'll have many departments and people clamoring for your shiny new toy. Because someone who can create products for other people has high value. It holds true for just about any creative, really-HR loves borrowing creatives for logos and internal initiatives/newsletters and other departments will come to find that someone else can do half their job for them is a great thing.

"Hey, can you create a video series explaining the entire concept of training to new workers?" Cue blanks stares and internal thoughts of "Isn't that YOUR job?". Did you hire the video guy for internal or external purposes? Or both? We'll get to that in a minute.

Instead, it's best to think of how you can work together to create a great, viable product that works for everyone. Because it's not that video guys CAN'T create a video series that pretty much makes some people's jobs useless, but it's also that you want a great company environment and team that can create better experiences for all. It's also important to realize the value cost of those productions, even if you have a single full-time guy (presumably very busy), or even a team of creatives.

Here's a thought; A single 3-minute video can cost a single guy a week to produce, and upwards of $500 for an extremely cheap video. Let's stick with that number, because it easily gives a good idea of what those assets are worth to you and your company. If you wouldn't hire an outside agency to create a video for that price, then you probably shouldn't send your video guy on that errand. And while we're talking about cost-it's probably going to be more in reality. If

you hire a full-time video guy, you'll need a beefy equipment setup. At least 1 camera ($2k), a decent computer and graphics card ($2.5k-10k depending), software suites and components ($1k a year), lighting and accessories ($1k-3k) and backgrounds, stands, the sky's the limit. If you add that media guy's salary (and it should be decent for all they can do) in the price, plus the value cost of the equipment, then you really will be producing a video at a minimum of $1k per project if not more.

Back to the $500 per video concept. Let's go with example 1;

You produce a video with testimonials for your external marketing campaign. It's beautiful, dramatic, flowing shots and has everything you want in it. Call to action, graphics package, actors and more. Wait-did I just mention actors? Yup, sure did. Because here's part of that cost that I didn't factor in. If you shoot something with people, you'll need to make sure that you're using actors or people who have signed release forms. Even if you use b-roll footage from companies, it's still going to cost you something to produce that video. And if you use someone from YOUR company, that's great. UNTIL they leave, get fired, change positions, or generally do something that you possibly may not want to be associated with them for. And then your product is useless. Which has its own benefits and disadvantages, but you can be sure that if your executive VP is no longer in the picture, you can recognize the bad PR value of featuring them in a video about your company. Which renders any assets with them in it, effectively dead. And if you've shot a lot of content with that specific person in it, you have now got a lot of dead content that can't be used. That's an empty library and sunk costs.

Here's example 2.

You're a larger company (or smarter) and you recognize the value of your creatives. You have a producer-someone who sets up the background details, actors, asks the interview questions and keeps it going (takes responsibility, that's next post). You have a script/copy writer, someone who can give you an edge and feeling of the campaign and script. You have a media guy, the guy who lights it, films it, edits it, creates graphics for it, and finishes the video. You can add in a graphics guy to produce the graphics for the video guy. Then you have a web guy, the guy who uploads it and makes sure it gets seen and published in the right place with boosting content. Even in that example, which requires 5 people to effectively produce a piece of media and is still placing a lot of expectations on that media guy to light/shoot/edit/graphics work/kick it out properly, you can get some effective work done. Except, you still need a proper chain of command and communication to make sure that the team does its job effectively. And that's a "small" team. That team can service a company that needs to pump out media on a weekly basis. Daily? You'd run them ragged. You'd need double for that. And you'll need someone effectively directing this team to do its best work. Because despite the size of this team-you'll still have internal and external fights regarding how to effectively use the team to produce things for the business. Except this team is costing you maybe $5k-$10k a week in salary and shoot

costs. Oh, and example 1 can still apply to all the work THIS team does and then someone leaves the company after they've shot it.

Point being, don't waste money by not being organized in the first place and recognizing the value of your media. It CAN work for you and it CAN work effectively. You just need to be smart about how you use it and what you use it for. When you get a machine humming and running like it can, you'll realize the amount of value the creatives can bring your company. And that brings us to step 3: Protection!

Protecting your media guy.

Not like physical protection, although if they're good looking you may want to consider it…

By protection, I mean someone in charge and delegating. This again, may seem obvious, but it's really often overlooked. You have this tool-and I'd like to think of myself and my profession as- a Swiss army knife. Or a Leatherman, if you're anti-Swiss, those are cool too. Video and media creation are a sort of variable and interchangeable as codecs, formats, media types and shooting can vary. You have the ability to ingest and spit out all sorts of media, formats, products, assets and more. You can have one-man bands, or full professional teams. But you still need to give direction. And you still need that approval process.

This means when a project comes in and goes out, it's given a direction that the team can track from inception to execution and keeps it on track. You may think it's the video guy's job to do this, but it's really the director of marketing, media, sales, whatever you want to call it. Because just as you can have a Swiss army knife do 50 different things, sometimes you don't need all those tools, or sometimes you have a better tool for the job. Having that approval process makes it easier on everybody to contribute to projects. It's essentially communication. You wouldn't put someone in a position and not tell them what to do. When they twiddle their thumbs, you'll be mad, but if they're proactive and waste their time because the message wasn't clear, they'll be mad that their time isn't valued. Don't create that internal strife-let's put this is as big and simple terms as possible:

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY!

I don't think I need to explain that there's lots of other books that do that, but if you still need help, go get some help.

Let's go with more examples because I enjoy them. Say you have an internal project; Joe from IT wants a video to teach new employees how to login to the computer system. That's easy and something you can create in a few days to a week with the team. Joe writes a script or gets a script approved, the video guy makes the video and then hands it over to Joe. Problem solved, right?

Except- say hypothetically Joe doesn't like the color scheme. Or Joe wants the video to look more dramatic with a chase scene. Everybody wants to be Spielberg. There needs to be someone taking responsibility for this process. And hint-it should NOT be the video guy. There needs to be that buffer level between the creative and the department and client. Setting standards and media ideas are up to the person in charge of the department. This makes it easier if Joe wants something that will cost 3x the budget it truly should, to tell him no in the beginning and not put the blame on the media guy. It also helps it fall in line with the standards of the company-the color scheme, makeup, tone and more. If Joe gets a crazy video that takes 4 weeks to make, then Karen in accounting can or will want something just like it and before you know it, that media guy is booked trying to accommodate all those people and ideas. It's his job to create, but it's not always the creative's job to make everyone happy and that can cause stress. The creative will look for the direction and approval and if Joe approves and the VP vetoes, you'll have an awkward situation that the media guy is only in the middle of. Especially if they've taken that time to do the shoot and spent the capital or anything else to just have to bury the media. Communication is key here-and again, not just for the factor of making it less confusing.

The creatives need to report to the director of marketing-or whomever the company has in charge of that department. And the department head needs the power to veto those ideas that don't fit within the company aesthetic without making those other departments mad at the individual creative. It's much easier to tell them no upfront, or temper ideas as well. Having a stunt through a burning ring of fire will not help the HR department relate to employees better. The department head can veto that one right away.

Sometimes you'll find that the creative is very busy. If you have a good marketing plan, they will be kept busy. Help protect them by keeping that director of marketing in charge of that pipeline and approving the videos and projects that come in. Keep communication open and honest and it makes things less awkward. Now, we can look FORWARD!

Organizing your Media Assets;

I'm going to sound like an old guy here, a veteran of the media wars. "It was terrible Timmy, we had competing operating systems, competing processors and the bombs were falling left and right" …Also, skip ahead if you don't want to read some nerdy stuff.

BUT during the time that Apple switched from its custom PowerPC chips to intel chips (circa 2010-ish) everything seems RIGHT with the video world. FCP was a powerful tool, much more powerful and preferred than Premiere and Apple hardware ran it well. Of course, it had a problem upgrading every year, but if you were careful, it would be ok and you'd be able to continue working on your projects.

FCP then had this great feature that I still don't quite understand why they discontinued it. When you kick out (render down) a project you typically use a significant part of your computer's processor-both normal and graphics card processors to compress a file. In the pre-intel days, FCP allowed you to network files and projects to compress across your own mini-render farm. It was neat, as I used to edit on both a laptop and a desktop, and when I needed to kick that file out, I would use both or even another desktop to help compress the file.

This required the help of another app integrated into the software called "Compressor". If multiple machines had it, and were connected to the same gigabit network, you could call them up for multiple processing and farm compressing. This was also awesome, and I felt it cut down on render time. I even went so far as to create a mini network within my offices at the time that handles distributed processing as well as distribution with media assets using FCP Server (more on that in a second).

There are some people who argued whether it really truly had the full capabilities, but again, I felt that at the time I could kick out files much faster using the network feature. For a small shop with multiple creatives, it was awesome in my opinion. I had a gigabit ethernet hooked up, which was still relatively new at the time, and had a gigabit hard drive server component as well, so the data flowed across the network for sharing, access, writing and rendering. These were also shared by FCP Server.

Adobe Media Encoder allows for parallel and distributed processing, but that isn't the same as having multiple machines compressing the same files at once as compressor used to do

At the time, Apple came out with FCP server, which allowed the sharing of media assets. You could "check in" and out assets for creatives. If someone took a photo, it would be added and tagged into the system so that multiple people could access it and use it for their purposes. Photo guys take the photos, Graphics guys could edit the photos, video guys could add them into the pipeline for videos, kick out the videos and then web guys grab all of the above for publishing. I'm using the term "guys' ' loosely here, 'cause there were plenty of women in the

office. FCP server was based on some web/javascript sharing system and it was a bit clunky, as I remember it wasn't a "from the ground up" Apple product, just a rebranded one. My office at the time had only partially embraced the tech before I ended up leaving the system behind, but for what I envisioned, it worked out well for a shop. Then it came crashing down when they discontinued those versions for the upgraded Intel versions which **at first** were only shells of professional hardware. They're much better now, but they caused such a ruckus at first that I switched to windows after the first few years and haven't looked back. In fact, now you can edit for free on DaVinci Resolve and do a pretty darn good job of it without touching the Adobe or Apple suites. You might still need After Effects, however.

And the whole point of this long convoluted story is that I miss the concept that it could have become. When Apple switched to Intel, they changed the whole game of FCP and in my opinion it caused me to never look back. Upgrading incredibly expensive hardware every year is financially impossible for small businesses, and when Windows and Adobe finally stepped up, they created a better ecosystem than Apple had. I found myself switching alliances so easily, because what I needed just worked on Windows (considered taboo for those times) after Intel. You could edit on cheaper PCs, and when the graphics switch became more apparent reliance on heavy duty graphics cards, it truly ended my time with Apple. The network distribution option never became important as it was before that. Apple had created systems that were accessible to small businesses and shops-not giant rendering farms running custom software, but small shops that could afford to create a few distributed nodes and the ability to create small-time productions with great tools. It's kind of been a lone wolf journey ever since, but I suppose things are never going to remain the same, it's the nature of the business and the nature of life. Sigh…I told you it was an old story.

Oh, the real point is that you do need to organize your media assets. There are ways to do this-and ways to do this over the network, but they're not as easy as that vision that once was. Databases and database software has come a long way, and that's the sure route, but it isn't as fully directed as it once used to be as a small shop friendly interface.

In fact, I reiterated the database part. The NDE-the Non-Destructive-Editor, is specifically built around a database. That term refers to the fact that because we have digital, we don't have to destroy the film to edit it like we used to. They literally used tape and taped film together when they used to use old school film. We can cut as much as we want and do it over and over again, and it's great, hence the non destructive part. The system that you use keeps track of the videos you bring in and how you cut it. It's why you'll get problems linking to video files when you move them. It's also why you should keep projects organized in folders and in hard drives so that you can easily trade or replicate them if you need to. There's nothing worse than having to hunt and search for assets after sending a file and wondering where they went.

If you shoot internal video and external video, you'll need a good idea on how to organize your media. Are you storing projects? Where, how and in what formats? We used to shoot using tapes, and now it's pretty much all digital. Are you keeping backups and hard drives available for

re-edits? Do you need to spread assets between creatives? Can you walk media assets between the creatives, or do you need network storage, library check ins/outs and more? If you change a campaign, how easily can you re-render a project, or did you film something with a now defunct employee and are in danger of losing all of that footage and data?

Don't forget that as you render out different versions of files and edits, you'll also need to keep track of which version is which. That NDE concept is great for creating a duplicate of the timeline for version 2, 3, 4, and maybe not losing an edit that you have to go back to. I like to number my videos like software, V1.0, 1.1, etc, so that if there's a version that people like or want to go back to, it's easy to find. And the timeline is still there so that I don't have to re edit everything from scratch and cost myself a day or put things back if the changes were too drastic.

That might not be so costly for a large company and campaign, but it can be devastating for a small company and one creative person. Reshooting the same elements all over again not only wastes time but becomes ineffective if you didn't learn the lesson and shoot with actors in the first place. That's the reason behind using talent. You get the professional results you want faster and easier. And if you're smart, you'll use multiple cameras, scenes, and more to make sure that you get the most out of those shoots you paid for. Even paying for b-roll online isn't guaranteed to give you the same results or license-make sure you check those before you launch any b-roll into campaigns.

So, use waivers, talent forms, and organize your media into a smart and effective way to utilize it. If you ever need footage to pull from, it's much better to have a working library instead of scrambling to find and shoot footage every time you need something. It saves time, effort, and stress on everyone's part.

The KEY-and this should be looked at by both managers, producers, and the video guys; is to create a proper system that contains the work as you go and scale.

It is a massive pain in the butt to retag scenes and keywords and look back within a library system that one guy created and try to adjust it to another production or system. It would help to date/number/describe/keyword/tag/and basically any other ideas that you can think of to keep your media organized. The amount of time and work you save by doing this AS you shoot, and edit are incomparable. And having to go back and find these assets, through browser or however you would find the random footage is incredibly hard as well. Lightroom has a great system for tagging images. It can also do videos in newer versions, but since software changes frequently and companies don't like spending the budget updating all the time, try to find something like a good folder system that keeps things organized.

Save 15 minutes with keywords. I'm telling you; GEICO has that locked up, I had to pay them $25 bucks just to use that phrase for this pamphlet. Also consider using a better search tool as well. I like "everything" on Windows, and the best part is that it's free. Don't worry about that budget!

YOU may feel like arguing and saying-isn't that what the video guy is there for? And yes, you are partially right. But think about how much storage you'll need if you need to continue to shoot and add up footage. Think about the time that you save when you have proper tagged assets that the video guy can pull from. Taking that time to research for an obscure scene or shooting things because you forgot you have footage that fits is cumbersome. It takes away from new edits, it costs more money for storage capacity, and it also continues to leave more assets to organize and dead ones to still deal with.

If you want a new creative to walk into an established company with no footage, no media to guide him, and starting from the ground up, that's fine. Put a smart plan in place to deal with everything that can be produced and you won't be surprised later when the problems arise. IF they arise at all. That key setup of an organization is awesome for producing the best type of media possible and in turn for your company.

Other Types of Video:

A small addendum, but there are waaaaayyy more uses for video today. As a video guy, you're actually more like a technical consultant-combining creativity with the best equipment you have on hand or advise to get. The internet is big enough to showcase to the masses and create your own market without paying the gatekeepers of advertising like TV stations or others. So you have way more use for filming, creating and utilizing video, and even creating things like streaming video, video libraries and heck even your own video channel playing 24/7 if you can support the content. So don't sell yourself short in those departments, because live streaming is playing more of a crucial role in companies values and depending on the goods they're selling. I have devoted a whole separate guide to live streaming and online streaming, so I won't go into too much detail here, but just realize that the opportunities are endless and becoming more and more useful and valuable.

I'm a media guy….Uh..help?

HEY! Welcome fellow media dude. As a media guy, you're probably going to be very valuable soon. And especially with the way things are moving, you're going to need to brush up on your skills. Like I mentioned earlier-if you read that-you'll need a lot of skills. If you only have one or two, you may want to consider becoming that Swiss army knife. If not, you'll find yourself mostly likely competing with college interns if you have already passed that stage. Also, you might find yourself having to perform those many jobs I listed above. It's just part of the gig nowadays-you'll have to work with a lot of different situations and systems. If you love it, you can learn a lot and get exposed to many different things.

It doesn't take a lot to shoot a viral video. Some are done purely on the phone, shot and edited within the phone. Most aren't, but don't undercount the value of the tools that you have available to you all around you. Besides the main instruments like cameras, you can also get easier and cheaper lighting like LEDs, and free tools that are available on any system-iOS, Mac and Windows. Technology moves fast, but honestly, not that fast. 4k is the rage today, with some people even trying to push 8k/12k 360 video, etc but HD is still going strong. It's honestly what the public is willing to accept and move to. You may notice that codecs are still mostly pushing out HD quality, because it's faster and easier to download. 4k will get there eventually, but probably in another few years-it depends on the download and processing speeds, the codec speeds, and the ability of the public to truly use that technology.

TOYS

This also means that if you can get an older camera for cheaper, you're most likely going to get really good use out of it. Plenty of cameras from the early 2000-teens are still going strong, HD or 4k, and picking up a used camera for a song on eBay can save you a lot in the starting blocks of your production. You can then use that money for other things like lenses (equally important) and other accessories to beef up the production. There are videos on Youtube that have some reviews of older cameras that are still packing a punch. I recommend the DSLR Video Shooter Channel because he does this a lot and explores older cameras that I wanted to buy but never got around to buying them. And again, the lenses are just as important as the system you choose.

Don't forget the purpose of your shoot. You can find a DSLR, but that's not going to get you far if you're concerned with shooting lots of live videos. It'll have a limit, and it might overheat, so again, consider the platform for what you're shooting. And how you're shooting-because if you want to shoot for landscape/tik tok type videos, you'll need to adjust your shooting and shooting style. Finding a camera that does everything is typically impossible, so it's a matter of finding the best camera that can do JUST about everything you need and within the budget you have. DSLRs typically fit those needs today, because of the excellent picture they produce, so most productions are switching over to them, but it's still up to you. Heck, even FOX has one in the end zone for NFL games, and it definitely looks cool and noticeable for the production value.

That's also an important point-finding a system that works with what you do. If you produce lots of live events, you will want a live camera or a camera with a fixed lens that has excellent zoom. For productions that you can control, using a DSLR can give you a great advantage with the color and quality. *EDIT: I've also created a guide for streaming that deals with a lot of specialized software and cameras specifically for streaming, so if you want to focus on that, please find that nearby on my website as well. PTZ cameras are super useful here for a single man production and make shots and productions so much easier to deal with.*

Other accessories include lighting, which is much cheaper with the advent of LEDS but still requires knowledge of placement to be effective. Jibs and small cranes are also useful to create an atmosphere of unique footage and other ideal shots. They are cumbersome to set up and carry, however. Stands and various clamps, tripods, etc are all par for the course for holding as much as you need. You can feel out what you need and there's a bit of equipment creep that can come into play on some of these issues. The best idea is to have something and not need it, but the budget typically requires media guys to be creative in how they do things. There are plenty of videos on how to get the best bang for your buck on productions so look around and see if it's worth the expense. Another note to mention is that typically the lighting and other accessories go a long way towards making the production look better and with every step and effect you're making the difference from a video shot on a phone to a professional production. Either one can be useful depending on the value of the content but projecting a professional face on the type of media that you use and have is important. This is also why having a camera

dedicated to streaming is better than trying to adapt a camera with all sorts of adaptors and more than only function slightly better overall. If it's easy to throw up a few cameras and have it streaming, it'll be much easier to accomplish than pulling out a large kit and trying to make that work.

**Again, it's what you're comfortable with, but one of the big things I've learned is that when something is easy-it will get finished quicker. If you're developing a system, try to shoot for ease of use and setup. This will make sure that you can get your project done, even if you're tired, don't want to or have a hard time. When you can shoot and straight upload, it won't sit in your inbox or project list for a long time waiting to be edited and all the other things you might have to do to it. If you stream live, utilize OBS (free) or something else that makes editing on the fly easy and quick, and you only have to fix minor mistakes in your stream.

Drones are typically worth it, however. Drones have come a long way, and some-DJI-can fit in the palm of your hand and shoot footage better than your phone. This can also mimic the crane effect and give great landscape shots for things that you do. And the price is actually really good for the benefits that they give, so if you're considering a drone, just go for it. The controls are similar to video game controls. If you've ever played a video game, you'll be familiar with the movement, and they have sensors in some that make it almost impossible to crash. If you want to use bigger drones, you'll need a license and must deal with the FAA, but that's important to get some shots. I would definitely consider getting the drone pilots license if I shot more than once a month with a large drone. You will need it if you're freelancing and shooting footage for others. If you're shooting with a small drone, you can squeak under the weight limits, but it also depends on the footage purpose, so be sure to look that up under the FAA regulations.

SOFTWARE

At this point, I recommend becoming very familiar with the Adobe Suite. You can get a subscription or a student version, so you can run this on a laptop or reasonably cheap machine (sub $1k) with some minor caveats. The reason that I recommend this is because it's industry standard and getting used to it will give you a leg up when dealing with the different facets. Creating graphics in Illustrator for output to InDesign for print, Photoshop for altering, After Effects for animation or Premiere for editing video is staying within the same ecosystem so to speak. It helps to hand those off to the same sorts of people that will print or finish the assets in other ways. Staying within the ecosystem also allows the trade of those assets. I can import Photoshop files into After Effects easily and it brings the layers in to animate it almost ready to go. Besides that, most of the interfaces in Adobe are similar to use, so once you have a handle on the basic effects, you'll be ready and able to use those in the other tools. The low monthly cost of using Adobe tools with their subscription play today is much better than it used to be,

and allows flexibility if you're only using 1-2 tools or the whole suite. Personally, aside from a few crashes, I haven't really found a reason that I can't use their suite for just about everything and not really have to go outside of it except for tools that are specific like Blender.

You can ALWAYS go free- Inkscape for graphics, Resolve for video editing, Blender for 3d and potential animation. I recommend that you learn those tools as well, they will help you fill in the gaps of what you might miss with the other tools, but they most likely will have gaps in what they can cover or the speed to which you can create with them. I don't know if there's a good imitator for After Effects. You may find a random one out there, but I like AE enough that I use it often and it's a time saver/compositor/rendering tool that works extremely well for the weird and wonderful things that you will likely need if you're doing cool stuff. Final Cut Pro is supposed to be back to great working levels, but I haven't touched it in years so I'm a little rusty.

You can go higher too, Nuke, Flame, etc, but they get pricey. I don't know how much you have to spend on your workflow, but if I can find something better to spend money on, as well as providing the hardware to run it and make it work well, then I'll do so. If you have a major budget, then by all means, go nuts.

One honorable mention for usefulness and costs is OBS-Open Broadcast Studio. It's free, but it's full featured and probably the best video mixer software out there right now. There's Wirecast and Vmix and a few others, but they don't have the *free* attached to it and the fact that OBS can run on almost any hardware. If you're considering streaming or live edits, investigate OBS. It also offers plugins and right now is part of the streaming tools of Twitch, so you can integrate your streaming directly into the output without having to worry about converters or any other tools. With simple converters you can have a multi camera shoot ready to go quickly.

You can find plenty of guides that will help you in specific instances, but I also recommend that you subscribe to a good media asset library like Envato Elements. This gives lots of different assets that you can use to help speed up your workflow as well as give you a strong base to begin with. Need a flyer? Find one and then adjust the colors/fonts to fit your needs. Need a commercial? Use the stock footage and maybe a After Effects template to create some flashy stuff with it. Of course, you will need to adjust and create your own and render it as well, so it isn't just purely stealing another creation. You will get valuable insight on creating some of those complex animations so that you can create your own faster or create sub templates that you can utilize. The world is an oyster here, so it's invaluable to the production of business and more. Grabbing a template, using stock video and more will save you over the course of the day/week/month and is awesome for creating many different videos from one concept. That's a time saver when you have great control and command over the software, and you'll most likely spend more time on the render than adjusting the settings after a while. Again, there's some other libraries and resources of stock footage-Getty has a massive library as well, but the best bang for the buck is Envato right now, and you can get great starting blocks for just about any project that you need. If you can get one for your company, also get one for yourself because you'll use the heck out of it and it pays for itself immediately.

BRAINSSS!!!

Subject to change as time moves forward

Let's explore the center of your work, the computer. You will need a computer, and it'll need to be rather beefy to deal with the things you're trying to do. First, you'll want a strong processor. This is at least an i7/i9x or a Ryzen 7/9x seriesto start. The main part of media creation hinges on graphics design, but you'll want your processor as strong as possible in order to save as much time as possible. If you enjoy leaving your computer on to run renders overnight, then this might be fine for you. I do enjoy being able to create quickly, so I want my renders done quickly. You will also be looking into machines that are basically "gaming" machines. That might be a bonus if you like to do both, but if not, it's just that the machine types share pretty much the same specs. There's also a "Studio" line of machines coming out that Nvidia can recommend for media creation. After the processor, you'll want a good amount of memory-16GB or more, but more likely more. Then we come to the biggest aspect, which is the video card.

You can get a strong laptop with a mobile graphics card to run this type of software, but there IS a difference between a mobile graphics card and a desktop graphics card. A mobile card is designed to be thin and light, and therefore will have power and heat restrictions that prevent it from harnessing the full power that a desktop will have. We used to edit using proxies in the olden days, which were less quality encodings of the full video. This allowed us to edit and then apply those proxies to the full footage, which gave us great quality at the end of the production. You most likely don't have to use proxies today, but you might want to consider it if you use super high-quality footage or renderings. If you edit only, you can get away with less. If you're expecting to animate and 3d and more, you'll want more power. A laptop today will be able to edit and kick out HD no problem, but it might take longer for 4k and animation renders, so just be prepared if you use a mobile laptop for daily work. It CAN work, but then it depends on your workflow.

A 1080 Ti graphics card will give you a solid rendering pipeline that's reasonably fast today. It's older already, but it still works and it still works well. This isn't for rendering a Pixar film-that's beyond the scope of this guide and you'll want a farm for that, but for rendering most graphics you can get away with a lot. I mention this because graphics card prices are insane today mostly due to the bitcoin mining craze which uses lots of graphics power and processing. If you can reasonably buy a graphics card, then do so. I also find that builds are a better buy as of this publishing, instead of piecing it out. The after-market cards are expensive. When you buy a bundle, you can get a good processor and the card together so you can either sell the processor separately and keep the card with your machine or just use the build to work with.

If you can afford the 20-30x-40x RTX cards, I do recommend them as they can offer substantial increases in rendering and new software abilities. Nvidia is working on an animation pipeline using the RTX cards that can work on many different software tools so it will be cool to see what the future can hold. The new Mac studio just announced is also sporting a dual M1 Ultra configuration which is supposed to be incredibly optimized for graphics and design work within the Mac ecosystem. It's not the same as Windows, but it's also not supposed to be, so the real point is if you get the job done and in time- is what matters. It's also pricey too and for the full decked out configuration, you'll need to ensure you're getting the most bang for the buck.

If you're a guy who enjoys looking at these details, it will mostly be fun because you can truly configure to your heart's content, and there are millions of combinations that work-or should work with your workflow. If you don't, well then you might be in the wrong line of work, because figuring out mini solutions to everyday problems is again, part of this job description. If you don't want to waste the brain power on it, then look for a mid to high level gaming machine and that should be just enough to run everything you need for editing and graphics without serious 3d work and design. That is a whole discipline and a 3d artist can be extremely useful just for that work alone.

You might say, what about iOS, or an iPad and an iPhone? While I've edited on an iPhone, it's not necessarily the best path. If you need something cut together and it's quick and dirty or an easy edit, then I would say go for it! But for any serious and professional level creations, you're going to want the ease of the desktop and computer-based applications. It's fully possible to edit and create stuff on your phone. I've done it for clients, but again-pay attention to your needs. If you can get away with that sort of aspect, then you don't need to spend thousands on a computer, but you probably need to spend thousands on the phone itself and you'll still need some cool things like lighting and more. Maybe someday in the future we will have the ability to create those assets on the phone. The biggest problem isn't importing camera footage-even from DSLRs that have Wi-Fi equipped-it's the ability to make the final edit look nice. You'd have to have elements prerendered and ready to go. It's more than possible and the solutions can be done to bounce between the two, but then again, you're working super hard to create a weird solution that's probably not going to save you time in the first place. In my case, I'm a weirdo that likes thinking of solutions like that. So trust me, and don't think too hard unless you like it or you have to.

Skills

So we've covered the gist of what you need except probably the biggest thing, which is talent. Talent itself isn't something magical, or something that is bestowed upon just a few. You can definitely learn talent. It might be harder for some, but if you truly love media and creation, you can find something that is defining. This includes the writing, the filming, the editing, and just about anything that's part of the media process. If you're stuck on what to do, then my advice is this: Write.

Write the script. Create the backbone of what you're going to shoot. If you can't think of something good and nobody is helping, try thinking of what you want to imitate. Think of the commercial type, the documentary type, the film type, whatever it is that you're trying to create. A good script gives you the ideas of where you can go and what you need to do. Contrary to most ideas, you can't just "create" and expect that it fills in the gaps. It's more like you need to see what you CAN create and how that can work for you. And even within this, drill down deeper. What are you saying, and what do you want to say? This is coming from my marketing background, but why would you want to say what you're showing? Is it important to the customer or the company? Even if you're not doing the voice over for the script, how can you create something that's effective for the job you're trying to do?

After the script then you may want to storyboard. This is important for thinking about the type of shots that you want, and if you're pouring millions of dollars into the shoot it is essential. In a large production this also helps them realize what type of shots they need and what's essential. If they need effects and stunt work, this is where they plan it. I doubt you will need to know this in the world of corporate, but you never know. If it's a small local production, you might be able

to just go ahead and shoot while looking for something that fits your script. That can enhance your corporate library and stock footage archives that you can draw from later. If this is the case, then make sure that when you do shoot, you shoot many scenes, many angles, and other types of ways to get multiple shots. You don't even know what type of shot you might need so if you've paid for the day then you should take advantage of the shoot and get everything you can.

If you have or purchased stock footage, you might be able to fit it to your script, but you most likely will need to find a way to create the flow of the piece and how it works together. The benefit is that stock footage can be cheaper than the day shoot so again, plan accordingly. You will incur a fee for using stock footage and know that stock footage can be used by others. You can buy the full license for the stock footage to protect it, but that can also be expensive. You also might incur a licensing fee for the production depending on if you air it on T.V and other places so again, it might be useful to know that if you're planning a big media campaign, you may want to reshoot footage to keep it simple and in house.

After you've organized your footage into a script and storyboard, you need to simply execute. Go and shoot, go and find and go and produce. You have the plans in your hands, so now the creative part of getting those shots, figuring out if those shots work, is the next part. This comes with editing, and any graphics creation at this point. You may want to record the voice over so that you can plan the full timing of your shots or have key markers on where the audio falls. If there is none-which also happens, then think about where the footage leads the viewer. Again, thinking with that purpose helps to direct them to the end result, which typically for a company is sales, a call to action, a website, or something else. If it's educational, you want to make sure that the point is covered. If it's a commercial, you'll want viewers to know the website, phone number, QR code, and whatever they need to know to call and place orders or become a new customer. Once that flow is done, it's pretty much the end of the project. Wrap it up and submit it for proposal.

The last step is the revisal. Since most shoots and edits will need tweaking and approvals, don't be surprised if the project comes back into your hands more than once. This is the point of editing, and nobody typically gets it right the first time. The great thing is that you can also go back and fix it!

This also depends on where you are in the creative process and how your company and project functions. If you have a scriptwriter, producer, creative director and more, you're a small cog in that machine. That reduces work that you have to do, but it also means that you might have to have approval from many different sources. If so, hopefully they give you good and relevant feedback to finish the project. Many hands in the pot make it confusing, so be sure to get the final answers and direction from whoever is in charge of the project, again the producer or the creative director or even the client if you have one. It would be great to have input from the scriptwriter, but the final boss takes all, and if they like it, then the project is finished. If it's only you and a manager, then again, you'll have less to worry about other than the manager's approval. This is important to have different eyes on the project, however, because even with creative vision, there still needs to be a firm purpose on the subject and point of the media. Creating a cool commercial is great, but if it doesn't call to action or create demand or anything

that it was meant to do, then it's effectively useless in the eyes of the bottom line. And if the company is that bottom line, then it's back to the drawing board. You go to fix it or create something new.

This is also why it's important to storyboard because you can also figure out if the concept works at this step. You may realize that the concept of what you started with is not effective but if you haven't shot anything yet then you haven't wasted much money. If you use stock footage to get the idea, you can also give that project weight that the manager can give good critical feedback on to make sure you're on the right track. Make sure that you ask for that feedback as well, because that ensures that you're not wasting your time and effort. Artists in general (I know because I've done this) can become enamored with a project and put their time and effort into it only to see it torn to shreds. That can really dampen morale for the original project and even foster negativity into the next projects as well. So be aware of the ownership of the media and creation and realize that everything needs an edit or two and be aware of the ability to take constructive criticism. This is a greater personal lesson to those out there that aren't aware that it can become damaging to their psyche and even lead to leaving the job or position. Some people can feel like their input isn't valuable. Which may or may not be the case if the company culture allows it, but it's also a symptom of the media creation and professionalism, so keep that in mind as you work on things. It's your media, but not your company. If it was a client, you'd have a different set of expectations for every project, so keep yourself aware and make sure you're appropriately utilizing your skills and media creation on the right projects.

There are some skills I have left out, which are namely the ability to shoot and lighting, as well as technical processes. Those are left to the workflow as well as the skill that one has with those technologies. Since people will have a different setup, a different set of equipment, it's really all up to the media professional to figure that out. If you're part of a larger team and have people specialized to do that, by all means utilize those things. If you're a one-man band, then you'll need to brush up and learn how to do those things. You can find plenty of examples online, and it will change as technology advances as well, so I can't specifically advise on some of those processes. It will help to learn as much as you can and continue to learn and evolve in the field, however, because the skills will become more useful over time. I can't explain the first time I saw someone properly light a scene and it blew my mind how much differently it changed my footage, even using a camera that would be considered "prosumer/professional". The cameras have changed as well, with even mid-range DSLRS capable of shooting footage that could pass for movie quality. This enhances productions and means that you can achieve professional level productions with cheaper and cheaper budgets. The camera positions absolutely mean things as well, so these variables are ones that have to be addressed with skill, with the shoot and more. You can learn those as the situation arises or circle around when you have free time to address those cool things that you've always wanted to know but haven't been able to learn or do. The next best thing is actually getting to attempt those with your company's permission so that you get to learn on the job and create new and wonderful things.

Final Words:

Personally, I love the world of media and creation. It's getting bigger and bigger every year and it's merging into all other skills. If you animate, you can do so much easier than you ever used to, and you can create productions and ideas faster than ever as well. I love being able to design something, utilize it in 3d format, even 3d print it for physical use, and create something that might have taken millions of dollars even 10 years ago. The world is changing and it's advancing for the better, and the position of media professional is changing as well. Pay attention and enjoy the ride that is created when you take the time to work on media. It will be well worth it in the end, for both you, your company/or the company that you work for, your own business and more.

Remember that you're going to need to keep moving. It's so fun to get a system that works and it feels great to have a solid workflow. The way that technology moves and is moving, you can probably keep that workflow going for a number of years. But don't forget that because our business is based on technology, it's always going to be changing and moving forward. Pretty soon the cameras will be smaller, faster focusing, better quality, and able to fit in the palm of your hand. That's a good thing, and it only ensures that you can create more projects and better ideas with every new thing that comes out. Embrace the change, and it'll go a long way towards making you successful in the media field. It helps to enhance your creativity, so nurture that as much as you can. I'll try to continue to update this guide and revisit all these concepts as I grow as well, so I'll be one of those old timers stroking my beard discussing old things. Or not, but I'll try to keep everyone updated.

Good Luck!