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IALLT Showcase

IALLT Showcase Award

- Award Winner 2011: Betty Rose Facer, Old Dominion University
- Award Winner 2009: Edith Paillat, Victoria University of Wellington
- Runner Up 2009: John Verbick, University of Oklahoma and Fuqiang Zhuo, UC Davis
- Award Winner 2005: Fuqiang Zhuo, UC Davis

INTRODUCTION

Have you created a YouTube video advertising your language center? Do you have virtual tour online that gives your students an orientation to your lab? If so, let us know. You may win the IALLT showcase award given at each IALLT conference.

Call for Submissions

What is IALLT Showcase?
: IALLT Showcase is a collection of video footage submitted from educational institutions which includes not only lab or facilities tours, but also training, promotion, and project documentaries.

What is IALLT Showcase Award?
: The best submission which offers viewers insight into lab design and management or some aspect of training, promotion, or related activity will be recognized at our biannual conference.

Who is eligible to submit?
: You must be a member of IALLT.

This is a competition in which awards will be presented to the lab or center submitting a motion video segment which provides the clearest information whether it be for training, student orientation, or to introduce the facility.

Videos will be judged for inclusion based not primarily on the equipment or facility displayed, but on the instructional or informative value of the content. The submission may contain background music, transitions, effects, subtitles, etc. These effects are not part of the judging criteria. While 95% of the adjudication will evaluate the content, there will be some consideration given to the overall professional quality of the submission.

Questions and submissions should be directed to: Harold H Hendricks [1]

IMAGES

The image you record on videotape will be influenced not only by the subject at which you aim the camera, but by the lighting, by the camera position and movement (or lack of movement), by the focal length(s) chosen on your camera lens, and by the clarity of focus.

A word on lighting, both artificial from indoor light sources, and natural, such as that outdoors and coming into buildings from windows: Remember that brighter light levels allow for greater depth of field in the camera image, i.e. a greater near-to-far of in-focus objects as seen by the camera. The human eye is far more sensitive to visible light than are most video camera image tubes and chips, so as you look about a room, remember that even the natural light which seems sufficiently bright to you may need supplementary artificial lights in order to make your camera image look well-lit and clear to the viewer.

Avoid shooting into the sources of your lighting. Windows through which daylight is entering a room, as well as fluorescent lights and other light bulbs appear in the backgrounds of indoor shots as "hot spots" which distract form the foreground subject matter and cause automatic exposure systems to close the lens aperture to the point where the entire picture darkens. In fact, since outdoor light is typically many times brighter than indoor lighting, you may wish to pull the shades, close the blinds or at least minimize the amount of time during which the light sources or windows appear in the image. If you wish to use incoming natural light to supplement the interior scene lighting, try shooting with the window behind the camera instead of facing the lens.

When a narrator will face the camera, make sure that his or her face is well-lighted. People tend to look better when their eyes show "catch light" or highlight reflection, but watch out for those unflattering shadows and light reflections caused by eyeglass lenses. Have peoples faces about five feet away from the camera and use a moderately telephoto focal length to fill the frame with their heads or busts; moving in too close while using a wide-angle lens setting causes displeasing image distortion such as lengthened noses, and widened foreheads and necks.

For stabler images and for smoother pan and zoom shots,use a tripod or other stationary camera support. Also, without the use of a good set of dolly wheels or a Steadicam, those hand-held shots done while walking are going to be extremely hard to watch. In pan or zoom shots, use a smooth, slow progression in order to keep the image from smearing. When panning, don't cover more than about 30 degrees of rotation per second. On a tripod, use a "fluid head" or a "fluid effect head", if one is available, to smooth out the starts and stops of a camera rotation.

Think twice before using that zoom lens while recording! Can you move in closer or back up instead? If the zoom is really the best way to show a close-up and a wider view of something, keep it smooth, and record at a fixed focal length for 5 seconds or so at the beginning and at the end of the zoom sequence. This brief fixed shot lets the viewer focus on something to which he or she will pay more attention in the ensuing zoom shot , or which has captured his or her attention in the preceding zoom shot, whichever be the case. Be wary of too much zooming while recording. Use the zoom feature to preview your angle of view before you record, so that you'll choose the best focal length available for each shot.

Excessive use of panning or zooming in your "raw footage" recorded with the camera tends to make the video editor's job extremely difficult, unless you want to give the final, edited version of your tape a look akin to that of poorly-done home movies or impressionistic music videos. Such a look has a place in art, but is distracting to the viewer who wants a documentary look at your facility, materials, action, or equipment. "Shoot for the edit" is indeed a good rule of thumb when planning your videotape. Start with a "storyboard" on which you write out notes about each shot (draw a sketch too, if it helps), including length, angle of view, lighting, and to which you correlate your soundtrack, especially narration. Then "shoot for the edit," by adding about 5 seconds onto the beginning and the end of each shot. Editing equipment needs between 3 and 7 seconds of tape to "pre-roll" or back up before locking onto the signal for the shot you intend to use. If you intend that the viewer should pay attention to some detail in a shot, make it at least 5 seconds long. By this formula, your short, simple shots will last 15 seconds when you originally record them, although they may be trimmed during editing of your final tape.

Finally, with regard to the camera-generated image, I offer a word on focusing the image. If you rely on an autofocus system to do this for you, check its accuracy first. Many autofocus systems focus merely on the largest object near the center of the angle of view. Some have only a zone-focus system, which allows for three general zones of focus: close, far, and everything in between. If you choose to manually override the autofocus system, focus before you begin recording each shot. Pick your camera position, then use the zoom feature to close in the angle of view to whatever will be the most important feature of your upcoming shot. With the lends zoomed in, focus the image on that important area of your shot, then return to the angle of view with which you want to begin the recorded shot. Behind this exercise is the idea that focusing errors made when the lens is at a telephoto setting will be magnified when the focal length is increased during the ""zooming-in" process.

SOUND

Just as clarity of focus changes the viewer's perception of your work, so does clarity of sound. The videotape medium offers only visual and auditory canals by which to transmit a message, so take full advantage of both of them. High-quality audio can reinforce the visual image and even make up for lesser-quality images used out of necessity. Poor audio, on the other hand, can undermine your best camera work, and reduce the video's power to less than half of its potential.

Whether you use on-location audio, or post-production sound in the form of voice-overs, music, and other effects, the two bywords are "clean" and "clear." Check the quality and quantity of sound by recording a sample of it and playing it back. In on-location work, this gives you the chance to check your lighting and camera angle at the same time, since they are often hard to judge by the image in a "monochrome 1" viewfinder.

Eliminate as much as possible the undesirable background noises which are present or which might occur. Shut off or move away from the machinery whose internal cooling fans produce humming or whirring noises. Hang a "keep out" or "quiet please" sign on the door to reduce the possibility that someone will walk through the shot or enter the room while telling a bawdy joke. If the size or construction of the room (such as a cavernous space finished in concrete and hard linoleum tile) causes distortions or resonance in on-location narration, try using a lavaliere or hand-held microphone to capture the voice closer to its source. Otherwise, post-production voice-over narration can allow you to record the voice in a more controlled environment.

In post-production, adjust voice-over and background music signal levels so that the music does not overwhelm the narrative voice, washing the speaker and listener away. Music is not a requisite ingredient of a good videotape, however. Cue your narration to take advantage of the power to reinforce the images used in each sequence of the tape. While verbally enumerating the features of your facility, make sure that your narration corresponds to the image simultaneously presented to the viewer. Earlier in this discussion, I recommended five extra seconds of image added onto each slot; they can be very useful at this stage of post-production and editing to pad shots about which you have no more to say than to show.

GRAPHICS

Graphics, in the form of words, charts, or designs, may be recorded into videotape through the camera (by aiming the camera at the lettered signs or at other "hard copy" artwork) or directly into the video tape recorder (VTR) from a character generator or effects generator. "Desktop video" add-on circuit boards for microcomputers also allow for electronic output of computer-generated text and images directly to VCR'S.

Whatever the source of the text or graphic designs you may use, remember to keep the edit and the viewer in mind when recording your graphics. This means that you should record the graphics for at least fifteen seconds in order to allow for sufficient edit "pre-roll" room (see above). Plan to leave the graphic on the screen long enough for even the slowest reader to read or examine completely. Since you know what your graphic will say or show (in the case of a chart, for example) before you edit your final tape, try putting it on screen for twice as long as you need to look at it.

In the case of graphics simultaneous with narration or graphics simultaneous with camera-recording images, strive to reinforce one element of each pair with the other. Graphics should not distract from narration or from other images onto which they are superimposed, but should reinforce the same messages, which these other elements communicate. While it may seem redundant to see on the screen the words spoken by a narrator, this redundancy is simply one device to aid comprehension and retention on the part of the listener/viewer. Similarly, viewers may feel better-oriented in a video tour of a complex facility if important details are not only enumerated by a narrator, but also displayed graphically for them to read or examine.

TIPS

1. Keep it simple. Avoid too much motion while filming
2. Include easy-to-understand narration
3. Show off your facility! Include your equipment, services, and staff!
4. The submission may contain background music, transitions, effects, subtitles, etc. These effects are not part of the judging criteria. While 95% of the adjudication will evaluate the content, there will be some consideration given to the overall professional quality of the submission.

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prkos.hr

Source URL: http://www.iallt.org/showcase

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