Webinar: New Video Resources

Today Daniel Ediger came on to talk about the value of creating video resources and walks us through a guide he has put together on How to Make and Test Videos. We go through the process step by step and look at the reasoning behind the them. Two particularly valuable topics that we spend time on are the setup requirements and the importance of community involvement.

For the former segment we go over a list of hardware and software you will need to assemble and talk about why things are important and in a few case some low cost alternatives. For the latter we start with why it's important to get the community involved from an early stage and then discuss topics like tips for recording the session and getting the participants engaged. If you are at all interested in experimenting in new was to educate your community take some time to watch this webinar. To go along with the webinar we have three documents. How to Make & Test Videos, Reaching your readers: A field testing guide for community groups, and Video Guidelines & Test Questions.

Why Make Videos?

- Many people learn through visual and moving images, rather than text alone
- Videos can compliment your in-person educational outreach events
- Videos posted online counteract misininformation by changing search results
- Videos can connect viewers to your print publications and direct services

Steps to Making and Testing Videos

1.) Ask your community to suggest a topic 2.) Write a script with pictures and movement 3.) Create a series of visual images with text 4.) Record Voice Over Narration 5.) Edit audio tracks and visual images in an editing program 6.) Show the draft video to a community and listen up 7.) Change the video based on community Feedback

Asking your Community to Suggest a Topic

Listen to what your front-line service providers (hotline advocates, legal assistants, and lawyers in walk-in clinics) tell you about what legal questions or misconceptions come up again and again. For example, when we asked service providers in our community about video topics, we heard:

"We get so many calls from people AFTER they lose their housing voucher because they didn't understand the rules. Wouldn't it be great to educate people about the rules before it's too late to help?"

"Lots of H-2A workers don't know that they may have to file income taxes, but they can get into trouble if they don't file. How can we warn them about tax preparer scams and also teach the basics about taxes?"

"We have a lot of seniors here who need Power of Attorney documents and Living Wills. Can you come teach us about changes in the law?"

Video Topic Ideas:

- Give a step-by-step guide about what to expect in a legal process
- Show what a legal document looks like, where can you get a sample, and how you fill it out
- Debunk a common misconception about the law, and tell the facts
- Explain where to get more information to avoid legal trouble in the future

Sometimes the hardest step is to sit down and write a draft script. First, tame your fear. There are going to be several— maybe a dozen or more drafts. Write the first draft quickly — in an hour or less. If you already have a written publication on the topic, you have a head start. Read it aloud or have someone else read it to you. What pictures come to mind?

Here is a script template. In one column, write voiceover (narration)— what viewers will hear. Write about one sentence per row. Each sentence takes about 8 to 12 seconds to say out loud in English. Aim for a video that is shorter than 3 minutes long. Pare your script down to 25 - 30 sentences.

Many lawyers want to put every accurate legal detail into the script, like writing an outline or a brief. Beware of this tendency. People will stop watching if the video is too long or crowded with unfamiliar terms or concepts.

Next to each sentence of narration, describe a visual image or movement. If you run into difficulty, read the script to a non-lawyer. Ask them what pictures come to mind?

Write the most important sentences first. Repeat important sentences in the middle and remind viewers of the most important sentence again at the end of the video.

Keep it simple. If a shorter word works, use it. If you can cut out a word, cut it. Use everyday words and if you must use a legal term, define it as soon and as simply as possible.

Read the script aloud to someone else. Everything sounds different when you hear it so it will be much easier to notice clunky sentences and legal-ese. If they say something sounds wrong, they're probably right. Try to fix it.

Use PowerPoint, Apple's Keynote or another presentation software to create a series of slides. "But I can't even draw a straight line!" Luckily, the computer can! Simple outlines can be as effective as "realistic" drawings. Ask your community and colleagues for help. Do any of your colleagues know a kid who draws comics? Do you have any contacts at local art schools? You can also use free images available on ShareLawVideo.com, at the end of this guide or use your phone to take original photos. At first start with one slide per sentence of narration. You can make a basic one-minute video with about 12 slides held on screen for 5 seconds each. Use text, sparingly and strategically, in a title screen or to introduce key words. Once you

have a very rough draft of the visuals and on-screen text, export the presentation into individual image files: PNGs or JPEGs. Keep the images in one file folder to import into a video editing software later

Record Voice Over Narration

- Use a desk-top microphone, like the Blue Yeti which plugs right into your laptop with a USB cable. Save the voice-over as an MP3 or WAV audio file to import into the video editing software later.
- If you have to record in an environment with ambient noise (like your office), you can make a simple, desktop "sound-booth" by lining a plastic storage bin with eggcrate mattress foam.
- You can record voice-over tracks with certified interpreters in other languages. You can record the voice-over in one "take" and edit out mistakes later, using video editing software.

Show the video to a community group... and listen

Your first draft video is just the initial "hello" in a continuing conversation with your community.

You probably already have connections to a senior center, housing program or social service provider where your community members reside or gather. You should make every effort to meet the community in their space and make accommodations in the time, place and structure of the event to ensure you have enthusiastic volunteers. For example, you may need to visit a senior center in the morning, while you may need to visit a farmworker housing project after 5 p.m. when the residents are off work.

It may take several weeks to plan and promote the event. The flyer at the right shows examples of what you can offer your community members to honor their contribution to the videos:

- free legal information with a lawyer (including Spanish interpreter, where necessary, during a Q&A session)
- the opportunity to share opinions and feedback
- light snacks and beverages
- gift cards to a local grocery store or general retailer

Create a comfortable, confidential space.

Strive to create an informal atmosphere where people feel relaxed enough to speak out loud in front of a group. Make sure to remind people that what they say will remain anonymous, and that participation is voluntary. Ask for informed consent to record audio and take notes. You can introduce the discussion with these reminders:

"You are the experts. The video is being tested, not you. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know if this video works and how to make it better. Any honest opinion you can give us will help us improve the video and help other [farmworkers / seniors / domestic violence survivors] understand their legal rights and options.

Everything you say will be anonymous (confidential). We will not gather anyone's name nor contact anyone after the event. But we will be taking notes about what you are saying and we would like to record the discussion with this audio recorder. We want to make sure we remember and understand your suggestions as accurately as possible. No one will be able to know "who said what." This event is voluntary. If anyone doesn't consent to be recorded, you can leave at any time, and do not need to tell us why.

The groups can be as few as 8 or as many as 20. The session should last about 1 to 1.5 hours maximum. After that, people can lose energy.

Ideally, you would be able to do more than one field test for each video- until you reach the point where no new ideas about the video are coming in from the community. Most likely, you may only be able to conduct one— but one is much better than none!

Group interviews require active listening and empathy. Knowledge of the specific legal issues helps!

At a minimum, you should have a discussion facilitator (who is also an attorney), an assistant and an interpreter, as necessary. The assistant can handle technological logistics and record notes, allowing the facilitator to be a fully engaged host with un-divided eye contact.

The facilitator should welcome each individual as they arrive. Once the event starts, the facilitator should explain the format and purpose of the event, and then show the video to be tested.

Often, group members will ask specific legal questions ("Who can be a witness for a living will?" or "Can I add a family member to a housing voucher?"). Reserve time at the end to respond, saying "That's a good legal question, I'm going to write it down and talk about that at the end during the Q&A. For now, let's continue with our discussion about the video." Questions centered around legal knowledge may highlight communication gaps in the video. If multiple people ask questions about an issue you covered, you should change your video.

Change the video based on community feedback

Analyze your notes and transcripts to look for patterns. Admit communication errors freely.

Make a transcript from the audio recording and highlight feedback, both positive and negative. Some questions and comments will show information gaps in the videos where pertinent information wasn't covered at all. You may be surprised by these questions and realized that you missed the issue— but the audience found it! These gaps will make themselves apparent in the discussion through repeated legal questions from the group members, and in your facilitator's responses.

Although you may have covered an issue, there still may be questions and confusion. A pattern of comments may expose information mishaps where viewers need further or alternative explanations. Another pattern of comments may reveal that many people missed an issue that you thought you covered. You will need to re-write you script and shift the emphasis through repetition, re-organization or visual images or animation. For example, you may discover in a discussion with seniors that there is still confusion about the definition of "Durable" in a video about Power of Attorney Documents. You may find it necessary to re-write the script to clarify the concept.

The discussion may reveal cultural context in your viewers' lives that will lead you to alter the tone of your video. For example, you may learn that many domestic violence survivors are fearful about revealing information to the housing authority. You may need to change the tone of your video when directing them to talk to their housing case managers about household and income changes

Of course you will receive direct recommendations about style or content, including specific suggestions about what would work better or what was not working. One example: "The white lettering on the yellow background is very hard to read." These

may be the easiest corrections to make.

Last updated on January 08, 2022.

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