

Promoting Patrick County Agriculture by Video: A Case Study

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Introduction

The purpose of this project was to develop a tool to help raise literacy and awareness of the importance of agriculture and natural resources in Patrick County. With many of today's younger generation being three or more generations removed from agriculture, there is an increase in need to reach out to everyone not directly tied to some type of agriculture enterprise. With the objective of raising awareness and the importance of agriculture to a Patrick county and the supporting industries as a primary economic driver, a promotional video/DVD was designed and developed explaining these linkages and importance of agriculture to this region of Virginia.

According to the US Census Bureau (date) , 71.7 percent of households reported accessing the Internet in 2011. The average American spends more time using media devices- television, radio, iPods and cell phones- than any other activity while awake (Bloxham et al., 2005). Considering the ease of access and the amount of time devoted to media devices, providing a social media platform is an way to communicate the message about the impact of Patrick County agriculture to a wide array of individuals.

Materials and Methods

A logic mode was developed to guide the development of the informational DVD by identifying the situation, target audience, participants, inputs and outputs, and projected impacts/outcomes. The model evolved throughout the process to show realistic expectations. A list of local producers was compiled for possibly participating in the video to be representative Representatives from each of the following sectors were interviewed for the video: Extension, Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture, Virginia Department of Forestry, Soil and Water Conservation, Vegetables, Fruits, Pollinators, Beef, Dairy, Small Ruminants, Poultry (backyard flock), Row Crop and Grapes. Underlying topics included: Large and small scale farming operations, value-added products, local Farmers Market, Niche products (i.e. locally raised water buffalo, local wines, etc.), diverse farming practices, mountainous scenery and some local tourist attractions.

The video recording was supported by the loan of a high-definition digital video camera. Editing and duplication was provided by a local firm Bowers Production, The Patrick County

Farm Bureau agreed to support the costs of editing and duplication providing collaboration and financial support to complete the video.

Once funding was secured, the project began by collecting video on the farms and throughout the County during peak times throughout of the growing season these visits provided “filler footage” highlighting the scenic beauty of Patrick count and the diversity of the agricultural sector. . Collecting footage on over 15 different farms, businesses and local attractions took roughly 50 hours. Interviews typically lasted around 30-45 minutes, while some lasted a little over an hour. Shots for filler footage typically lasted 1-2 hours, and did not require the interviewee to be around. All participants were asked a set of questions twice during the interviews to help ensure that optimal information would be retained. Some producers seemed to be more comfortable answering the questions the second time around once their nerves had calmed from the initial camera “shock” The questions asked to each producer are as follows:

- Name and type of operation
- Tell a little bit about your operation (history, acreage, family farm, etc.)
- How important is your type of agricultural operation to Patrick Co?
- How important is agriculture to Patrick County?
- Do you have any employees?
- What are your outlets for marketing your product?
- Do you have any value added type products?
- What would Patrick County be like if there was no agriculture?
- What sets Patrick County products apart from other Counties or areas within the state?
- What are some of the advantages and disadvantages to farming?
- What skills are best taught by working or being raised on the farm?
- How do you think farming is perceived in Patrick County?
- Is there anything else you would like for the people watching to know about your operation?

Some questions were omitted if they did not apply to certain operations. For example, some operations had no employees, or some may not market value-added type products. In the final cut of the video, each producer interview was trimmed to between 3-4 minutes. As a result, not every producer was shown answering each question during their segment. However, each question was answered by at least one producer in the video.

There was roughly 22 hours of total footage collected that was edited down to a one hour promotional video. Bowers Production, provided additional editing and support by adding supporting text, county statistics, and other information highlighting agriculture in Patrick

County. Twenty copies were made straight from the editing computer and dispersed to Patrick County Farm Bureau, Patrick County Extension, Patrick County Administration and Patrick County Chamber of Commerce. The web-based video, totally more than 1 hour, was designed to be shown in six parts and made available online through the YouTube website (<http://youtu.be/dLsy1ZYkmQ>). Videos were shared on various websites, social media websites and local media outlets. The Bowers Production editor provided two copies to be used in making 200 copies. This process took a total of about 6 weeks to complete. Several drafts were made critiquing artwork on the DVD and the covers.

Summary

One month after the release of the Patrick County Agriculture DVD, there have been over 400 views on the YouTube videos combined, local newspaper and radio have broadcasted the release of the video, Patrick County Tourism Department has shown interest in producing more DVDs focusing on other tourism venues in the County, and it has increased use of the local Facebook page for the Patrick County Extension office by 50%. Currently, the videos are being offered free of charge to private businesses and agriculture operations to utilize as a marketing tool for local products and services in Patrick County.

Based on current demand, additional copies are needed funds have been allocated at the local level as a means to increase interest in marketing agriculture and agri-tourism within the region.

Below are general steps and procedures to assist in planning a similar project.

Step 1: Identify Goals

The first step in producing a promotional video for your organization is to identify the specific goals that you want the video to accomplish. Begin by developing a logic model(reference) identifying 1) define your target audience(s), 2) the current situation and project goals; 2) specific inputs for the project, such as, capital, staff resources and time, technology/equipment, and partners; 3) desired outputs, such as, activities, workshops, publications and other media, and collaborations, , and 4) the expected or targeted outcomes for both the short and long term. O Key to a successful project is a well defined target audience to be responsive to the message, product or service .

Step 2: Develop a budget

The budget should consider all outlays of funds, time, and like-kind contributions to insure that all inputs are recorded and valued. A well documented budget allows for demonstration and valuation of all of convolutions and services to assit in demonstrating costs

and benefits of the project. Wages, time, like-kind contributions, equipment costs, editing costs, software costs, duplication costs, and etc. should all be considered when developing the budget. Developing a cost sheet prior to the start of the project will give you a realistic look at the capital and non-monetary investments needed to complete the project. Sponsorships can be helpful in obtaining funds to complete the project, and need to be involved in the goal setting for the project.

There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to funding a video project. Be creative in generating revenues to fund the project. Depending on your level of experience and comfort with this type of project, consider simple cost saving items that you can do on your own. In some instances, consider renting or leasing equipment, which could significantly reduce the amount of capital needed to complete the project.

Step 3: Plan the Video

When planning the outline of your video project, consider the following questions carefully:

- 1) How long will the video last?
- 2) What is the theme of the project?
- 3) Will there be a spokesperson or voiceover to narrate the story?
- 4) Who is the spokesperson going to be?
- 5) Will there be non-scripted interviews or a storyline told by the spokesperson?
- 6) What types of questions will be asked if using a non-scripted interview format?
- 7) Who will/should be interviewed?
- 8) What will the storyline be?
- 9) Will the setting be formal or informal?
- 10) Do you want to include any “extra shots” of landmarks, scenery, etc?

Step 4: Capture the Footage

Although the professionals make it look so simple, in reality, capturing the footage for the project can end up being the most challenging part of the project. Before you start, check with the editor or other professionals that will provide the final be formatting to ensure there are no compatibility issues with cameras and editing software.

Always check each piece of equipment prior to starting each filming section. Audio and lighting are critical settings that can change after each segment. Effects such as natural sounds, fluctuations in voice levels, lighting and the environment/surroundings can all necessitate

adjustments to the camera equipment. The use of a wireless microphone can help with audio issues by offering another “channel” of audio to use.

Allowing adequate time to capture footage is critical. As a general rule of thumb, shoot a minimum of 2 takes per segment. This becomes obvious when conducting interviews, as some people may be tense during the first round of shooting footage, but may become comfortable after they have gone through the first take.. It is never a bad idea to have backup interviewees in the event that someone backs out or maybe just does not interview well in front of a camera. This will all take time, so be sure you have backup interviewees to prevent unplanned downtime..

Be creative when capturing footage. Try capturing footage from different angles, or even zoom distances. Changing up angles can help to break up the monotony of a single screen shot. It is also important to capture extra footage to use to fill in with during the video. Be observant while you are filming to see if there is anything different or interesting that would add eye appeal to your footage. Something as simple as a bee foraging on a flower or a leaf blowing in the wind can keep viewers focused and interested in the final cut of the video.

Step 5: Edit the Video

Editing the video should be simple but the most important part to a good story,. to meet the objectives laid out in Step 3. Whether you do-it-yourself, or hire a professional editor, having a layout of how the project needs to flow will make the process easier. If you choose to edit the footage yourself, it can certainly save you money, but it may take more time depending on your experience with editing software. If you hire a professional, the project will conclude quicker, but will require additional funds.

Once the editing portion has been completed, present the video to a group of viewers that closely resembles your target audience. By doing this, it will ensure that the message you intended is what was received. It is sort of a market test before spending money on the duplication process.

Duplication of the final version can be done relatively inexpensive, Factors that determine price of duplication include the number of copies being made, color vs. blank DVD, and the choice of DVD covering or casing, and shipping.

Step 6: Share the video

Once you have successfully completed steps one through five, it is time to share the video with your audience. There are many ways to get your product to your target audience. YouTube (need link and reference to how) is an online video site that allows you to download

videos and share with the public. It is free to use. Social media can provide a quick and cheap way to debut your promo as well. Facebook, My Space and Twitter will all allow you to put links to your video on your personal pages. This does require you to have an account with these social media websites.

Always send a copy of or link to your video to local media, chambers of commerce, county administration, etc. These resources can prove to be an excellent way to promote your cause. Consider “high traffic areas” for your target audience, and be creative in ways to get your video into their hands.

References

Bloxham, M., Papper, R., Popovich, M., Holmes, M. (2005). Average person spends more time using media than anything else. *Ball State University* [On-line]. Available at: <http://www.bsu.edu/up/article/0,1320,32363-2914-36658,00.html>

File, T. (2013). Computer and Internet Use in the United States, Population Characteristics. US Census Bureau [On-line], P20-569. Available at: <http://www.census.gov/prod>

Program: Patrick County Agriculture Importance DVD/Bunn Masters Project Logic Model

Name: Travis Bunn

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short	Medium	Long
<p>Capital Contributions: \$1500.00-Farm Bureau, Patrick County</p> <p>Staff: Travis Bunn,Ext. Agent Matt Lohr PC Producers Volunteers Administrative Support</p> <p>Time:TBD</p> <p>Technology/Equipment: HD Video Camera Editing Software Copier Paper supplies Data Collection mat'l</p> <p>Partners: VAFB VDGIF VDOF Virginia Tech Virginia Coop. Extension VDACS</p> <p>Media: Local Newspaper Local Radio Social Networks</p>	<p>Collaborated with local government, PC Farm Bureau, and citizens to identify agriculture/agribusiness sectors to showcase in DVD.</p> <p>Designed DVD topics to highlight the diversity of PC agriculture</p> <p>Collaborated with VDACS, VDOF, VDGIF to compile statistics on Ag and Nat'l Resources in PC</p> <p>Provide copies of DVDs to local government, Extension office, local agriculture businesses, and Farm Bureau</p> <p>Show DVD and administer evaluation at Farm Bureau annual meeting</p> <p>Show DVD at Farm Bureau annual meeting, and administer evaluations to determine changes in agriculture literacy and awareness in PC</p> <p>Develop and administer an evaluation tool to collect data to determine changes in agriculture literacy and awareness of PC Agriculture</p> <p>Make presentation to PC Administration, VT Project Committee to showcase DVD and evaluation results</p>	<p>Patrick County Citizens</p> <p>Local Producers</p> <p>PC Agricultural Fair participants</p> <p>PC Board of Supervisors</p> <p>Social media guests</p> <p>Local media consumers</p>	<p>Increased awareness of the importance of Patrick County Agriculture to the local economy</p> <p>Increased knowledge of locally grown products and where they are marketed/available for purchase</p> <p>Increased literacy of PC agriculture among citizens, visitors, etc.</p> <p>Increased interest in Patrick County Agriculture Products</p> <p>Increased awareness of beauty, simplicity, serenity of Patrick County</p> <p>Increased support from PC Board of Supervisors of Agriculture programming offered by VCE</p>	<p>Increased use of Stuart Farmers Market as a source of locally grown products for PC residents and visitors</p> <p>Increased use of Stuart Farmers Market as a place to market locally grown products for producers</p> <p>Increased direct sales from the farm as a result of increased awareness of products offered locally</p> <p>Increased niche markets in PC</p> <p>Strengthen network of g community and non-ag community to have a positive perception of agriculture and natural resources</p> <p>Increased support from local school board of agriculture programming in local school system</p>	<p>Ensure a vibrant Agriculture program in local school system</p> <p>Change in law to pass Land Use Assessment for Patrick County</p> <p>Increased profitability of agriculture enterprises in Patrick County</p> <p>Increased economic development in PC agriculture sectors</p> <p>Increase in return or retention of younger generation returning to farm</p>