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**VISUAL
COMMUNICATIONS**



RESOURCE GUIDE



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THE VISUAL PRESENTATION

*...they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts...*

Isaiah 6:10

INTRODUCTION

As the Visual Communications Leader, you are in a distinctive position to clearly communicate the parish's project. Few activities will have as much impact upon the success of the program as the visual presentation.

You have a unique opportunity to positively influence the success of your parish's capital stewardship campaign by:

- ☐ **Visually communicating the project and program so that the parishioners will embrace it with their enthusiasm, excitement and support.** Visual presentations will provide the parishioners with their first exposure to the program. If first impressions have lasting importance, then the visual presentation should be treated as one possessing unusual purpose and potential.
- ☐ **Creating a visual presentation that will establish the proper spirit, provide thorough information, create a common bond, offer a positive challenge, and seek the support of all.**
- ☐ **Permitting the momentum and motivation of your program to be shared by not only the parish leaders but also by the parishioners.** Visual presentations will help accomplish this as they are shown at strategic moments in the program and in proper settings to as many people as possible.
- ☐ **Helping “cast the vision” of the project.** This clearly defines the “what” as well as the “why” of the program.
- ☐ **Telling the story of the parish: the heritage of the past, the challenge of the present, and the vision of the future.** This will be a focus on the people, purposes and ministries of the parish.
- ☐ **Personalizing and placing faces on needs that will be met.** For example, if your project is debt reduction, talk about ministry opportunities that will come because of debt service savings. Translate your project into benefits and solutions. Paint word pictures of the faces of people into your projects.
- ☐ **Offering a dynamic appeal that encourages everyone's participation and support.**

On the following pages are resources for DVD/visual production from several different perspectives, including:

- Working with a professional production firm, or
- Taking on the task of an “in-house” production, and



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- Developing and writing a script for your visual presentation.

Begin by enlisting a team of talented people to assist you in this project, people that have the creative skills, spiritual insight, and personal dedication needed for this endeavor. Within your own mind and heart capture the opportunity to make this a meaningful and lasting experience.



WORKING WITH A PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION FIRM

This section will explore some of the important questions you will need to answer before enlisting the help of a professional service.

WHY WORK WITH A PROFESSIONAL?

1. **Easier for you.** Though it seems easy and doable, a visual presentation of 8 to 12 minutes can take a great deal of time to produce, and achieve the quality your parish deserves. A professional can ease the time constraints toward the end of the program and help create a visual presentation of which you and the parishioners can be proud.
2. **Quality of finished product.** While most of us are able to piece together footage we have, a professional will give an objective viewpoint that will help in the flow and style of the visual presentation. In the end, it is important that the professional help you see your project and purpose from the experienced perspective of an outsider and an expert.
3. **Ease of duplication.** Professionals will have at their disposal multiple duplication devices. Should you need 10 or 1,000 or more copies, it will be easier for them to produce, and would spare your equipment the wear and tear. The price of small or large-scale duplication can be part of the negotiated professional fee.

HOW TO FIND A PROFESSIONAL

1. You can check with other groups, Catholic or civic, who have had visual presentations prepared in the past and ask for a reference list.
2. You might also check the Yellow Pages in your community under Video Production. A good rule of thumb is to always ask for references, and take the extra time to carefully check them out.

WHAT ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK A PROFESSIONAL VIDEOGRAPHER?

1. *Could we have an unedited list of references?* Parishes or civic organizations may give you the best feel as to whether this company was successful in getting their message across in pictures, as well as their level of satisfaction with the quality and timeliness of what was produced.
2. *Have you ever worked with a parish before? Do you see any possible stumbling blocks with working with us? Are you available on Weekends and in the evenings when many of our activities are taking place?*
3. *What recording format will you be using?* Studio quality is $\frac{3}{4}$ inch and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch SP.



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4. *What equipment is available to you? What types of graphics and wipes are available?*
Though you want the end product to be entertaining, the parishioners do not need to focus on the special effects and miss the message.

WHAT ARE THE CONSIDERATIONS?

1. Money – Determine as early as possible the budget you will need to spend. Do not be surprised if the quote is over \$1,000 per minute of finished product. This is normal if the production company has to do all the work. If the parish does some of the work, you can significantly lower the final cost.
2. Time – When do you need the final product, and when would you like to preview it so that changes could still be made before the final showing? These dates are already predetermined and are found in your Responsibilities tab.

HOW TO RELAY YOUR VISION TO A PROFESSIONAL

1. Explain inspirational and motivational needs. Start with the end in mind, and explain what needs to happen as a result of the DVD being shown. Typically it will be viewed prior to the commitment cards being filled out.
2. A well-thought out working script will give the professional much of what he or she needs. It will have duration, copy, and even possible shots. This, along with the creativity of the videographer, will go a long way in producing a DVD that will accomplish your desires.
3. Explain the three-year use of this presentation, and the wider impact it may have beyond this one showing. If possible, negotiate another DVD with an added opening and closing by your Pastor to be used during the follow-up period. Confer with the Follow-Up Leader(s) about specific script requests in order to adapt the presentation for use during the three-year giving period.

COST VERSUS BENEFITS

A decision needs to be made regarding costs and benefits. Using a professional will certainly cost more than an in-house production. However, a professional-quality production will require less work from you, will probably communicate your message in a better form, and may allow you to raise more money.

WHAT A PROFESSIONAL MIGHT EXPECT FROM YOU

After surveying many of the videographers used by parishes, the following list of suggestions resulted for you to consider before contacting a professional.

- ☐ What is your production budget?
- ☐ What can the parish provide – such as pictures, video clips, or ideas for the visual presentation?



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- ☐ Who might be a good narrator?
 - ☐ What are your time constraints? Previews are usually done in two ways. First, you or a member of your team will sit with the videographer during the editing/assembly stage and answer questions as they go, so that you have a finished product; or a rough edit can be previewed to make sure the visual presentation is following the ideas of the parish.
 - ☐ Background music can be produced specifically for your use, purchased at many editing studios, or copyrights may be obtained. Permission must be obtained for the use of any copyrighted music.
 - ☐ How will the finished product be archived and for how long? Can you have a final copy (preferably in digital tape format or on a DVD)?
 - ☐ In what format does the parish want the final copy? DVDs are now the most economical to copy; yet some homes still rely on VHS tapes. A finished DVD can be economical to mail.
 - ☐ Can the final product be used on a website? — Many parishes are using websites to share their visual presentation. Special preparations may need to be made so the finished product can be used on your website.
 - ☐ Be as prepared as possible before contacting a professional — the more work you are able to do before contacting a professional will demonstrate your commitment and interest in this product and in the skills of the professional.



IN-HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

You may consider handling the production of a visual presentation for the capital stewardship campaign on your own, or “in-house,” rather than employ the services of an outside, professional videographer. Several aspects should be considered as you embark upon such a project.

1. What is the scope of the project?

Options:

- ☐ An Information visual presentation
- ☐ An Information presentation and an additional presentation to be shown at the Special Event
- ☐ A DVD or “PowerPoint” type presentation, or combination of both

2. How will it be presented or distributed?

Options: Check with the Pastor or Consultant about the way it is to be used or circulated.

- ☐ Shown at Information Meetings
- ☐ DVDs sent to every household for viewing
- ☐ Shown in large group setting (typically the Special Event presentation)

3. Where can I get volunteers to help on the Visual Communications production team?

Options:

- ☐ From the parishioners
- ☐ From the larger community (for example, high school or community college students presently enrolled in video production courses, others with experience in video production and/or editing)

4. Where can production equipment be obtained?

Options:

- ☐ Parishioners who have high-quality digital video cameras and/or computer editing equipment
- ☐ Community resources (for example, local cable companies, high school, community colleges, local companies with in-house production facilities, and interested individuals)

5. What is your production timeline? Especially with the Information visual presentation

- ☐ This is a project that demands managing people and deadlines. Check your Responsibilities timeline, determine the schedule for visual presentations, and make sure those are met.



SCRIPT PREPARATION

The first step in visual production is to compose a working script and a “story board” for the various images desired. This will permit you to determine times for various individuals, groups, and locations. Please refer to the Addendum in this Resource Guide for an added explanation of the process.

CAMERA OPERATION

A digital video camera may be the best option for an “in-house” production. Such equipment will offer consistently superior results with higher resolution and no-loss transfer of images. It will also interface best with computer software for editing.

Tips on enhancing your camera work:

- ™ When taping individuals and groups, always strive to get focused close-ups of individual(s). Use various angles – frontal close-ups, side close-ups, slow panning shots of larger groups.
- ™ Use of a tripod or some other type of stabilizer will give cleaner, steadier shots. When taping an interview with someone, make sure the lighting is flattering to the subject.
- ™ A good transitional effect is to start taping with the camera lens closed, and then open it up to create a fade from a black screen to full intensity. Close the lens after shooting a scene to create a fade-out. Some cameras include an auto-fade feature.
- ™ If a subject walks out of camera view, show him/her from another angle. Do not search for the subject with the camera.
- ™ An individual being interviewed should never speak directly into the camera. Rather have them speak towards an off-camera interviewer.

EDITING

Editing is necessary. The lack of visual variety in taping a long, time-consuming event, such as a homily or program, becomes all too obvious if the tape is left unedited.

The quality of editing is largely dependent on the kind of equipment available. Such quality can be achieved with a home PC with the appropriate software and connectors (see bibliography). For example, to transfer moving images from a digital video camera to a PC equipped with editing software, a special connection such as a “Firewire” (IEEE1394) is needed.

Numerous resources for editing may be found both from within the parish and the community. Initial time spent in discovering such equipment and experience will enhance the taping and final editing of the presentation.



Video editing allows you to remove or shorten repetitions or mistakes in scripting or answers from interviews. These cuts should be smooth, allowing sufficient transition from one shot to another. For example, occasionally the timing of a scene might be slowed down or increased for effect. However, be careful not to use too many special effects. They can become a distraction.

Tips on improving your video editing:

- ☐ Do not cut between shots that are quite similar. (For example, do not cut after a frontal close-up of one person, then show a frontal close-up of another person)
- ☐ Do not cut between shots of a subject from very different angles. Do not go from a very long shot to a close-up, or from a far left angle view to a far right angle view of the same subject
- ☐ When moving from an action shot, introduce a cutaway shot first. (For example, if moving from a left angle on subject or location to a right angle, edit in a long shot of the subject or location)
- ☐ When using testimonials, keep responses or comments to 20-second “sound bites.” You may use the individuals or couples more than once in the production.

DUPLICATION

Whether a presentation will be shown in a number of group settings (such as an Introduction Meeting) or circulated to each parishioner, duplication of the master is required.

Professional help should be considered in doing this. Personal computer DVD players/burners are not designed or equipped for duplicating large numbers of DVDs. Companies specializing in professional DVD duplication may be found in your area. Early in the production schedule, contact several firms to receive quotes based on the number of DVDs needed and time estimates for the work. Typically, a quote includes the disk, a cover for it (card stock or plastic), and a label on the DVD.

Note in the Task Management Guide the date when the DVDs need to be available for the Campaign Administrator to prepare and distribute.

“POWERPOINT” PRESENTATIONS

Microsoft® PowerPoint is a useful tool for preparing visual presentations. This is particularly good for visual representations of financial information. This type of presentation offers an affordable alternative to DVD. Or it can be included in a DVD presentation where graphics are desired.

Background templates are standard with this software, but there are several companies marketing additional choices. Consult with the Print Communications Leader(s) for the color



scheme of printed materials and choose background templates that match or complement this.

Several affordable software products are on the market that permit easy introduction of photos, sound, and other visual images to enhance such a presentation.

You can also transfer this to DVD in order to provide added variety for viewing.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

EDITING SOFTWARE AND VIDEO RESOURCES ON THE INTERNET

There are many video editing programs available on the market today. The following resources may assist you in choosing the ones that best fit your needs and budget:

This article reviews many of the leading programs for the low-budget, home user:
<http://video-editing-software-review.toptenreviews.com/>

CNet.com has an extensive review of video editing software. You may find a listing of their reviews at: http://reviews.cnet.com/4566-3670_7-0.html

This website provides product reviews, tutorials, and advice on all things video:
<http://www.videomaker.com/>

You may also find help at this site: <http://www.desktop-video-guide.com/video-product-reviews.html>



ADDENDUM



SCRIPT WRITING

1. INTRODUCTION:

The introduction should present the theme for the presentation. There should be a creative common thread that weaves throughout all the following categories. The introduction should be brief yet intriguing to the viewer and set the stage for what is to follow.

Narration: 75 words or less
Video Time: 1 minute or less

2. PARISH HISTORY:

Reviewing the parish's history is not to give a chronological order of all memorable events, but rather to reinforce to the parishioners that God has provided for them in the past and, will continue to do so in the present and future. View all past accomplishments as a foundation for the present challenge.

Narration: 75 words
Video Time: 1 minute

3. MINISTRIES:

Feature the ministries of the parish, their function, purpose and productivity. Show people in service to God and to one another. Illustrate what has been achieved through previous contributions to building and budget needs. Show the parish as being alive and productive and worthy of continued and new support.

Narration: 150 words
Video Time: 2 minutes

4. CURRENT NEED:

Once ministries have been outlined, communicate that continued productivity is being threatened by needs (expansion, renovation, etc.). The need for additional (updated or new) "tools" for service must be clearly communicated. Buildings must be positioned as a means for enhancing and expanding the parish's mission and ministry.

Narration: 75 words
Video Time: 1 minute

5. THE PLAN:

To meet the previously stated need, the proposed project is now introduced as a solution. A model or illustration of the proposed facility should be featured. Do not describe the facility only in terms of square footage, but describe it in terms of ministry accommodations. Share how many people, and age groups, will be affected. What will this new space allow them to do? What new ministries can be started as a result of the additional space? How will the facility fit into the overall function of the parish? How much will it cost? When will construction begin? When will it be completed? What additional parking will be realized? Communicate fully the design, people capacity, and functions of the proposed facility so that all the previously stated needs are addressed.



Narration: 150 words
Video Time: 2 minutes

6. THE PROGRAM:

As a means to making the “plan” a reality, the parish has entered into a capital stewardship campaign (the title, purpose and methodology should be stated).

Narration: 75 words
Video Time: 1 minute

7. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Emphasize that in order for this to happen, it will take each of us giving sacrificially, over and above our current giving, for a three-year period. The future depends on what we do now. Stress the importance of each person following God’s guidance for his or her life. Emphasize and explain the process of prayer, sacrifice, generosity, and commitment.

Narration: 75 words
Video Time: 1 minute

8. CLOSING CHALLENGE:

Do not close the presentation without an invitation to make a sacrificial, generous commitment. This segment should be uplifting and motivating. It should portray what the program can and should be if people are faithful stewards to God through His Church. The close should be powerful and memorable, calling each person to prayer and response.

Narration: 150 words
Video Time: 2 minutes

Some of this content can and should be achieved or supplemented by the use of selected “testimonials”– brief remarks by lay people and leadership that address the particular topic. The Pastor and staff should have a clear, but limited, presence in the DVD (usually the “Closing Challenge”).

The above is to be considered as a guide, not the final script. For further reference, please review the sample DVD presentations provided to see how other parishes have customized their messages.



EXAMPLE

DVD PRESENTATION STORYBOARD

SECTION TIME	RUNNING TIME	NARRATION	VISUALS
		<i>“Campaign Title”</i> – that was the determination of those who came together long ago to form our fellowship, <i>Parish Name</i> . They had a passion to share the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed, and so they established this place as a launch point for that ministry and mission. If they had not cared enough to take the risk and make the commitment, we might not be here today. But they did care, and to those faithful few we are grateful.	
		Consider what has grown from the seeds of faith they sowed. Look at what we have become, who we are, how we care. We are a parish of people who <i>have</i> cared; a parish of people who have <i>come</i> to care; and a parish for people who <i>need</i> our care.	
		There are many ways we care for and serve our parish family ... (highlight current ministries and programs of fellowship, discipleship, and worship).	
		And there are many opportunities to reach beyond our doors to those in need ... (highlight current outreach ministries and mission projects).	
		To properly care for those within our parish, and for those within the reach of our ministries and missions, we must have an adequate facility. This means a parish home that meets the needs of those who are here now; a center for equipping those who reach beyond our walls; and an inviting facility for those who want to join with us in our journey toward Christian maturity, nurture, and service.	



SECTION TIME	RUNNING TIME	NARRATION	VISUALS
		Our commitments should be “over and above” our regular giving so that we don’t jeopardize the current ministries and programs already in place.	
		These commitments would be for a three-year period. That helps the parish financially, and provides a time frame for each of us to be both creative and generous in our responses.	
		When you begin considering your gift, remember the phrase, “Not Equal Gifts, But Equal Sacrifice.” It simply means that all of our commitments and responses will vary in size and source, but we can all share an equality of effort in determining what our gifts represent from us personally. Only we can gauge what is the “extra measure” of a generous response to the grace of God in our lives.	
		We have set “Milestones” to gauge our commitment progress as a parish family, and surpassing our “Milestone III” would be a dramatic demonstration of our collective response. Let’s not forget that we still want to commit as far toward our ultimate financial need as God enables us, and by our daring to “stretch” beyond our initial expectations.	
		To achieve this will require each of us to pray for God’s guidance and our willingness to act in faith. It is one thing to commit using only our calculator, budget, and our checkbook. A complete commitment will also require the surrender of our spirit to God’s Spirit.	
		As a parish we have decided to move forward and to enhance our facility to benefit many, many people. That was the hard part. Now, with our resources combined, and God as our Guide, we can transform a vision into a reality. And that is the “heart” part.	



SECTION TIME	RUNNING TIME	NARRATION	VISUALS
		We have a history and a pattern of people coming to <i>Parish Name</i> to receive and to give care. People are continuing to come. If we choose to be as faithful as those who came before us, then we will provide for those who come after us, for those we may never meet. Someone has said, “To be young is to sit in the shade of a tree that you did not plant; to be mature is to plant a tree in the shade of which you may never sit.” Are we willing to commit to the future? Are we willing to “sacrifice”? Are we willing to continue to care?	
		The time has come to share our faith, to affirm our commitment to the past, and to the future of <i>Parish Name</i> . The time has come to act – because we“ <i>Campaign Title</i> .”	