

## **Firelight Newsflash! 22 September 2009 – Focus on Digital Video**

### **What is Digital Video?**

Whether you work for an advocacy organization or you provide a service, consider producing a film or video to describe what you are doing. It could be a very powerful tool to raise visibility, and possibly to raise funds. Some possibilities of using digital video include video advocacy, video publicity, and videos for educational or training tools. Advocacy videos require setting specific objectives and identifying target audiences such as community members, large international donors or small private foundations. Digital video is increasingly used by NGOs and individual advocates working on a particular campaign. Video is relatively easy to learn and you do not need to be a filmmaker to master it.

Here are some tips on creating an advocacy video:

- Aim to make a film that people want to watch for its compelling storyline and its potential to inspire and increase the viewer's understanding, empathy, and engagement in effecting positive change.
- Advocacy videos help viewers see a problem in a new light. They leave audiences feeling excited about taking action and joining others to make a difference. Advocacy videos are sophisticated exercises in persuasion; they make a strong argument, involve the viewer, and engage the audience in what happens next.
- An advocacy video is longer than a public service announcement (or PSA, which is usually less than one minute in length) but well under a half an hour. Ranging from five to 15 minutes, advocacy videos provide a unique opportunity for your organization to raise important issues and convey key information to wide audiences.
- An advocacy video is more powerful if it is specific in its message. Avoid making your video a laundry list of the organization's accomplishments, or a litany of problems existing in the community. The viewer will not be moved to action by a visual representation of an annual report. However, filming a person who works passionately on a specific issue and speaks articulately about its importance can be enormously effective at enabling viewers to perceive an issue in a new light. And that is empowering.

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### **How to share your videos and watch other's videos**

**YouTube** ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) is a video sharing website on which users can upload and share videos. Unregistered users can watch the videos, while registered users are permitted to upload an unlimited number of videos. YouTube can be a helpful tool for learning and sharing information all around the world using videos. Other organizations in Africa are using YouTube to broadcast what their organizations are doing, and use these videos to fundraise and network with

similar organizations.

**Here are some sample YouTube videos that you may find interesting.**

- Firelight partner, *Families for Children* in Zambia, has already started posting their videos on YouTube!  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DVvg7FNyBwE>
- Here is a video by *Home of Hope Rwanda* showing a playground in Jabana  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsNSgkyKWFQ&feature=channel>
- Karis Juma helping street children in Kenya (This video is mostly in Swahili)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rrteqLJdPA>

**Here are some directions to get you started.**

Further instructions and help forums can be found at:

<http://www.google.com/support/youtube/>

- **To watch videos**, go to <http://www.youtube.com/> and search for video titles (such as the name of an organization or a broad topic). Related videos will appear in the side bar on the right hand side of the screen, scroll to browse related videos
- To become a member of and have the ability to upload your own videos on YouTube, go to the "Signup" page, choose a username and password, and enter your information. Then click the "**Sign Up**" button and you're done.
- **To upload a video**, edit your footage and save the video file on your computer. Once you've finished editing your video, make sure it's less than 10 minutes, smaller than 2GB in size, and in an acceptable format, you're ready to upload it.
- Click the "**Upload**" button in the upper-right-hand corner of any YouTube page.
- Click the "**Browse**" button to browse on your computer for the video file you'd like to upload to the YouTube site. Select the file you want to upload.
- Click the "**Upload Video**" button to start the uploading process.
- As the video file is uploading, enter as much information about your video as possible in the relevant fields (including Title, Description, Tags, and Category). You're not required to provide specific information, but the more information you include, the easier it is for users to find your video!
- Click the "**Save changes**" button to save the updates you've made to the video file.

*Note:* It can take from a couple minutes to an hour for your video to upload to YouTube based on the speed of your internet connection. Dial-up connections take significantly longer than digital connections to load video.

- If you're receiving an error with your Upload, you might want to make sure

- you're attempting to upload a file that's recognized by YouTube.
- YouTube accepts video files from most digital cameras and camcorders, and cell phones in the .AVI, .MOV, .WMV, and .MPG file formats.
- Please note: your video must meet YouTube's uploading requirements: no larger than 2GB and no more than 10 minutes in length. If your video does not meet these requirements you will need to re-edit the video file on your computer then upload the new file to the YouTube site.
- Have more than one video file to upload? Not a problem! You can upload up to 10 video files in a single uploading session.

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**You can also help you put a video on your web site or blog.**

This is called *embedding* a video. Some of you may know how to code in HTML, while others use a service such as Joomla or Wordpress to design your personal web page. Here are directions for both ways of embedding:

**If you manage your own HTML website, here is how you embed a video:**

- Once you have uploaded your video to YouTube, embedding your video to your organization's website is easy. When you locate your video on YouTube, look to the top right of the page. There are two form fields: one form field is labeled URL, which is the address of that page itself, the other is labeled Embed. By simply clicking your mouse within a field, all the text in that field is highlighted.
- Right click in the Embed field, and copy the text.

Here's what the Embed code for the video from Families for Children looks like:

```
<object width="425" height="344"><param name="movie"
value="http://www.youtube.com/v/DVvg7FNyBwE&hl=en&fs=1&"></param><par
am name="allowFullScreen" value="true"></param><param
name="allowscriptaccess" value="always"></param><embed
src="http://www.youtube.com/v/DVvg7FNyBwE&hl=en&fs=1&"
type="application/x-shockwave-flash" allowscriptaccess="always"
allowfullscreen="true" width="425" height="344"></embed></object>
```

- To embed manually, you'll need to edit the HTML of your blog entry or web page.
- To do this, open the source code of your web page, and paste the Embed code within the body of the code, where you want the video to appear on your organization's web page.
- The Embed code will be pasted into your web page. Save the page and upload it to your web server.
- You can resize the video player by editing the *object width="425"* and *height="350"* fields at both the beginning and end of the embedded player code. Make sure that the sizes you choose have the same ratio as the default numbers, so that the video doesn't get

stretched—just multiply the width by 0.8235 to get the height.

**If you manage your organization's website by using a service such as Joomla or Wordpress:**

There is a "video upload" option in the admin dashboard that will allow you to browse your computer for the saved video file and upload it to your website directly from your own computer. The procedure varies by company. To find directions on how to embed a video, use a search engine, such as google.com, to find tips and instructions (for example, search for: "Wordpress embed video").

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**Interested in making your own video?**

There are many video camera options on the market, but a common digital video camera used by NGOs is a FlipCam.

**FlipCam (<http://www.theflip.com/>)** is a simple camcorder used to capture digital video in excellent quality. The FlipCam is a tool that is getting increasingly cheaper and more commonly used by NGOs around the world. The video files collected through the Flip camera can be directly transferred to a computer simply by inserting the camera's built-in USB cable, and the camera includes integrated video software that allows users to quickly upload video to video-sharing websites.

FlipCam ranges from \$149.00- \$199.00 US dollars. The company that makes FlipCam has a matching purchase program and partnerships with charitable organizations: <http://flipvideospotlight.com/SpotlightHome.aspx>

Read the following testimony on how Global Fund for Children's grantee partners are using FlipCam to share their stories:  
<http://www.gfcontheroad.org/?q=node/287>

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As part of the Firelight Foundation's Monitoring, Evaluation and Technical Assistance (META) Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.htm>.

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at [newsletter@firelightfoundation.org](mailto:newsletter@firelightfoundation.org).