



LUND
UNIVERSITY

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Corporate Communications
Media and branding

Things to consider before ordering and producing film

Why film?

Is film the best medium for what you want to achieve with your communication?

Film is not very effective if you want to deliver facts. However, film can be effective if you want to convey emotions and deliver a message through images. Think through why film would add value *before you decide to start production*.

What is the purpose of the film?

Is the film intended to help recruit more students to a specific course, to help a student complete a laboratory experiment, to document a research project or to serve as a teaser that is part of a more extensive campaign?

Be clear when describing the purpose of the film and the effect you want to achieve *before starting production*.

Who is your audience?

Make sure that you focus on your target audience throughout the production. The audience determines the approach, the images to choose, whom to interview, the length of the film, etc. Describe the film's target audience *before starting production*. Also, think through how you want your audience to react when watching the film.

Where will the film be shown?

What channels should you use to reach your target audience? What channels do you control? Develop a strategy for the channels to be used to disseminate the film *before starting production*. If your plan is to disseminate the film through channels which you do not control, contact the editor for each channel and explore the possibilities.

Film is rarely used as a stand-alone product. For a press release, film can be a complement to the written news item. For research projects, film can interact with text and images to provide information about the project on the website.

YouTube is the most common video platform for uploading material. But it is extremely unlikely that you will succeed in reaching your target

audience simply by uploading your film on YouTube or any other video platform.

Content of the film

Even if you personally will not be producing the film, it is important at an early stage to consider the content of the film: whom to interview, what environments to include, etc. Select interviewees that you think will express themselves well and effectively; try out some questions on them in advance. Prepare your intended manuscript by thinking through the various scenes. If the film will be in English, make sure that the interviewee's English is good enough.

Who will produce the film?

Are resources available to produce the film in-house? If the resources are available within the University you should choose them. *Explore what the options are before consulting an external producer.* Perhaps there are students who can do the job? If you want to use an external producer, you need to comply with the regulations on procurement. To explore the different types of film producers that are available, see <http://www.staff.lu.se/images-and-film>

Budget of the film

The costs involved are not determined by the length of the film. A film of a one-hour lecture is often considerably cheaper to produce than a one-minute commercial shown in cinemas. Specify your budget *before starting production.* The major costs of making a film usually involve the pre- and post-production work (planning and editing). The clearer you are about the purpose, content, target audience and distribution, before you get started or give anyone else the assignment, the better. If you are engaging an external producer, be clear about the financial framework from the outset.

Internal organisation

Appoint a reference group in charge of the facts, funds, and influence regarding the production. Specify the chain of command. Appoint a project manager in charge of the contact with the producer (see below).

Brief when hiring an external film producer

Before contacting an external film producer, you must draw up a mission statement – a so-called *brief*. Here you will provide a short and concrete description of the assignment – the purpose, target audience, content, and budget. If you want help with drawing up your brief, you will find the relevant contact person here: <http://www.staff.lu.se/images-and-film>

Contract with the film producer

Make sure to draw up a contract between the client and the external producer which clearly states what shall be produced, the work process (allocation of responsibilities and how often the progress shall be reviewed, for example), the budget, the proprietor of the filmed material, etc.

The same rules obviously apply when employing a student. Draw up a contract between the client requesting the film and the student before starting production. Clients usually underestimate the time required for pre- and post-production work.

File the contract in an appropriate way, so that you can always return to the terms of the agreement.

Changes are often made throughout the project, and then it is important to clearly communicate the new conditions (such as budget changes, more material to be filmed, etc.).

One internal project manager throughout the production

The contract serves as a framework that describes the conditions, but the film production must be flexible. It is important to have a close dialogue and to review the progress on a regular basis together with the film producer. Both the client and the film producer must come up with clever solutions during the production.

When you employ an external film producer, you need to appoint *one* internal project manager for the film project. This person will be in charge of maintaining contact with the external film producer.

The script and the style of the film are developed by the film producer, in collaboration with the client, before filming starts. The project manager is responsible for ensuring that the script/synopsis is thoroughly supported by the reference group, and that the filming is limited to the script. The internal project manager is responsible for ensuring that the project runs according to the timetable, and that all involved parties are informed in advance about their upcoming tasks (approval of the script, time for filming, etc.).

The internal project manager is also responsible for reviewing and making sure that the film project is supported internally. Having several people contacting the producer becomes messy and increases the cost of the film project. The more persons who have a say on the final product, the more difficult it becomes.

After production and distribution

File agreements and filmed material in an appropriate way. Currently, there is no central film database. When such a database has been established it will be important to provide clear and accurate documentation.