

Live Video Recording Production Specifications for Professional Speakers

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. It includes video recording instructions and a general conduct code of ethics. Your production company has been pre-qualified by Primeau Productions. You will be sending the digital recordings on a thumb drive or external hard drive after the recording is created. The address to ship the digital video recording to is:

Primeau Productions

1878 Star Batt Drive

Building 2E

Rochester Hills, Michigan 48309

I am glad we found you and have your professionalism on our side for our client's upcoming video recording. We are a professional team who is working for a professional speaker who is presenting to an audience of their customers. We must be sensitive to the fact that we are the least important part of this program and that the client and their audience must have the utmost respect. Our main purpose as a video production team is to be a fly on the wall and capture that presentation and the room environment as best as possible without disrupting the speaker and their presentation.

It is crucial that your video recording process does not interfere with our client's message delivery or the conference, convention or meeting taking place.

Live Seminar Video Recording

After 30 + years of video recording all over the world, we have developed some processes and procedures that we believe are important and worth sharing with you so that our client can receive the best recording and customer service possible. Even

though you have been contracted by our client directly, consider you and your on site team to be a representative of Primeau Productions.

First off, please make sure to tape down wires, keep lighting safe and out of the audience members eyes and to not interrupt the presentation. One caveat- if the recording has the potential of being ruined because of an unexpected interruption in sound, use your judgment as to what to do. Ask the presenter how comfortable they are if you have to stop them for an unexpected reason. This is not always possible, however, as you may find out.

We have had video recordings where all was perfect, and then the in house production team decided to kill the room lights unexpectedly. That lowering of the room lights ruined the recording as the stage lights were few to begin with. If this happens, consider it an emergency and ask the in house production team to please put the room lights back on. Perhaps discuss this with the in house production team before beginning the video recording.

Keep in mind as professionals you charge for your services accordingly. This is a significant amount of money for our client to spend on a video recording. Please do everything you possibly can to make the client comfortable and assure the footage you send to us is first class.

Here are our requirements, our 'dream list of details', for this video recording session.

Rehearsal

Rehearse either before the client goes on the day of the presentation or the night before after set up. This would include checking the lighting for nice, even, consistent lighting, wireless audio microphone radio frequency drop outs or interference and equipment functionality. Test record a 2 or 3 minute section of the client's presentation and play it

back, listening to the audio through headphones and viewing from your confidence monitor or viewfinder. Show the test recording to our client for their review. Make sure they feel they like the shot and/or cropping and make any suggestions for their physical appearance. Listen carefully for hums or buzzes in the audio, such interference will not be acceptable.

You will hear room noise and HVAC (heating and cooling) systems. Not much you can do about that. After all, it is a hotel or meeting facility and not a sound stage!

Equipment

Digital camera tapeless DSLR preferred;

Back up external hard drive (please discuss once we book you)

(2) 400-600 watt lights minimum or adequate stage lighting, general wash.

(1) Back light as a general wash if possible. Make sure back light is not in the A camera shot.

(1) Back up wireless lavalier to use in case house patch is not acceptable.

(1) Audience reaction microphone (more if possible), can also be built in camera microphone. Assign audio to separate channels. Speaker microphone isolated.

(1) Audio mixing board with 2-XLR -10db outputs if necessary, not mandatory

High quality professional camera tripod with fluid head.

Microphone cabling

Extension cords

The Room

Oversee, or give, video friendly input for the set up of the room. Do what you can to make sure it looks good on tape. This may include recommending a stage direction (if kitchen doors and exit signs, windows and/or mirrors could ruin a look) that will look best on video. If possible, suggest that they build the room set from the rear forward.

Give as much distance from the wall behind the stage as possible. If there is a drape, please make sure client does not blend in with the color.

In the back of the room try to set up two risers for the main camera. One riser is for the A camera and one for the camera operator. (Avoid footage that is shaky) Double this for two cameras.

What does the shot look like in your viewfinder or monitor?

It is our preference to NOT have a center aisle. It adds energy and value to see backs of heads in shots. If this is not possible, place the camera to one side or the other in the rear of the room instead of shooting straight up the middle, center aisle.

Take into consideration what the camera will see from each back corner location. If you choose the back right corner because there is AC easily available, turn the camera on using your battery to take a quick look at the shot before setting up to stay at that location. What do you see in the viewfinder? If there are undesirable exit signs, thermostats or kitchen doors in the shot, move the camera so they are NOT in the shot. PLEASE, recommend pipe and drape if you are not happy with the background look. A black drape sucks out light but looks better than royal blue or maroon.

Audio

Do you own an audio mixer and a wireless lavalier? Bring them as back up just in case. Use the mixer, yours or the house's, to get your main audio feed of all microphones used for the presentation. If this includes laptop audio, you may need to filter it to remove buzzes using a direct box. Let's discuss once we know if our client is using laptop audio.

Use a direct box to filter buzzes and hums from the house feed (if the house feed is used). If you are not familiar with a direct box, it has several different audio inputs and outputs and allows you to convert jacks and plugs, select your input and output levels and lift grounds. Most all buzzes have grounding origins. This could be a bad cable or inconsistent AC grounding.

Also, if you experience an audio buzz, you can use a three prong AC ground lift to help remove the buzz. In other words, lift your ac ground on all your equipment so the third prong on your AC plug is not connected to the house AC ground. Often times light dimmers, coffee service equipment and other hotel service instruments cause buzzes in your delicate audio components.

Try to have an audio mixer, (Mackie or something with balanced XLR outs) if you can, for back up. This gives you patching flexibility. It is not absolutely necessary to have the mixer, let's consider our options.

Hopefully the facility will supply a clean audio patch and all of this will be unnecessary reading. Just in case, as a back up to the back up, have your own wireless lavalier to put as a second microphone on our client if all else fails. We must have good clean audio.

A possible scenario using the direct box is to use a 1/4" mono auxiliary out to the 1/4" direct box input. Send an XLR out audio feed using AUX and direct box to your XLR (separate from the audience microphone) audio track on the video recording. Set up an audience microphone on a microphone stand and send that to a second, separate audio channel on the video recording. This will allow mixing the audience reaction (applause, laughter) in the edit as necessary post production.

To reiterate, the audience microphone should be assigned to channel one on the camera and the client/professional speaker microphone should be assigned to channel two. This way, we will have mixing flexibility in the edit.

You can also use the camera microphone to capture audience reaction/applause and assign it to the isolated track; or you can use the B camera to record audience reaction (if we decide on a 2 camera shoot).

Bottom line, we need a 'good room' sound of people laughing, applauding and having fun watching this presentation. We need it isolated so I can control it in the edit.

Make sure all of the audio is digital safe and not distorted or too low. Please do not use auto gain for the audio portion of the recording.

PLEASE do NOT mix audio from client microphone and the audience. They must be separate.

Shots

Try to arrange for two side aisles instead of one center isle so we see backs of heads and shoulders in the shot some of the time. Speaking of shots, we would like a variety of slow push and pulls throughout.

Please shoot as if live all the time. No jerky movements. You do not have to constantly move in and out...just occasionally. Medium body shot (waist up) a majority of the time.

It is important that we have movement in the video. If the client presenting is moving around a lot while speaking, don't be concerned with zooming in and out for movement. If you own a separate pistol zoom control, please bring it and use as you

follow the speaker or presenter. If their stage movement is enough, then you do not have to do a lot of zooming in and out, perhaps only occasionally.

The background of the shot should be abstract and out of focus, as well as darker, than the lighting of the subject, our client, on the stage.

There should be no ugly walls in the background or telephones or fire plugs or other obnoxious items in the shot. Forgive our redundancy.

Hopefully the room is large enough so the video does not look too compressed and busy. We know this may be out of your control, however, one out of ten times when you arrive you will realize the room is too small; ask if you can move to a larger room. There is often one available and you will be able to move. The more room the better!

If we are shooting more than one camera, get us a variety of interesting shots with camera two. Some would include larger audience shots; others would be two, three and four people shots. Make sure nobody in your shots is sleeping, looking bored or picking their nose. Find the audience members enjoying themselves and get it on tape.

If you are comfortable, get some other shots of the performer, including behind them with the audience in front; side angle shots of the speaker performer and quick pans to the audience and back. Shots we could use for a montage, transition or edit. Wide shots from the rear of the room showing the IMAG (image magnification screens) are also desirable.

Keep your camera in manual iris and focus. Set your iris once for the stage area and adjust only if the speaker walks out in the audience or a dark spot on the stage. If you are not too far back, you will be able to keep your camera in focus manually. We do not want video footage that comes in and out of focus constantly throughout the presentation.

Lighting

Lighting should be done from far room left and right as close to the stage as possible. Back of the room lighting will cause shadows. Place your lights extremely wide so that the shadows are out of the shot. By placing your lights close to the front of the room and wide, the shadows will be far left and right behind the performer. When you are shooting, these shadows will be out of your shot because you are not shooting extreme wide shots. We do NOT want any shadows in the shot. If necessary use back lighting to help accent the performer and remove any shadows.

Place the (2) lights against the walls, stage left and right, and use sandbags or grip tape so if they are bumped they will not fall over.

Use back light a bit for depth near the back extreme side points of the stage so the lights do not get in the shot.

(The room may be big enough for this...can you site inspect before the shoot?)

Please go above and beyond the call of duty and feel free to help the client look their best. Make sure the client looks good and has no stray or fly away hair strands before performing.

If female, how does their lipstick look?

If male, is their tie straight? Is their shirt unbuttoned or is their spinach in their teeth?

I know this may be uncomfortable but I promise you we will not mind the feedback. The client will greatly appreciate you telling them if something is not right. Maybe suggest that they take one final look in your monitor before the shoot begins?

NO EMPTY SEATS IN THE SHOT!

Our client will be using this footage to produce a promotional or marketing video that will get them business. It is crucial that the footage looks exciting and interesting.

PLEASE do all you can to avoid empty seats in the audience.

If we are using two cameras, make sure the second camera (if shooting audience faces) does NOT show empty seats.

As a final thought, we prefer digital video (hard drive, DV CAM tape or MINI DV).
Clean audio and well lit footage.

You cannot ask us too many questions and none are considered to be 'bad' questions.

Hide all lavalier wireless microphone wires; make sure to always use fresh batteries.
Please let us know if something on the client is not right - like fly away hair or lipstick or a crooked tie-ANYTHING!

Make sure Microphone capsule does not rub.

Photographer

If the group has hired a photographer, please meet with the photographer, introduce yourself and ask they not get in any of your shots. Of course you can't help the flash going off. In fact, that looks kind of cool in the video. However, it has to be understood you both stay out of each other's way. The polite way of doing this is better than the rude way.