

## Studio Production & Control

### ❖ Studio Production

#### Set Design

- Scenic design (also known as stage design, set design or production design) is the creation of theatrical, as well as film or television scenery. Scenic art should provide an experience that engages your heart and mind. It takes you to a person, place or thing that can cause us to value it.

#### Composition

- The arranging of all the visual elements in a frame in a manner that makes the image pleasing to look at, satisfactory & complete.
- The way in which something is put together or arranged the combination of parts or elements that make up something.

#### Single-Camera Production

- The single-camera setup, or single-camera mode of production, is a method of filmmaking and video production.
- An alternative production method, which is more widely used is still called a "single-camera", but in actuality two cameras are employed - one to capture a medium shot of the scene while the other to capture a close-up during the same take, which saves time as there are half as many set-ups for each scene.
- Action films will use three or more cameras to capture multiple angles as action scenes take a great deal of time for only seconds to a few minutes of footage. With this method multiple set-ups for the same sequences can be largely avoided.

#### Multi-Camera Production

- Multi camera production is a method of shooting television programs and films where several cameras are employed on the set to record or broadcast a scene simultaneously.

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- There are two outer cameras for close shots of the most active characters and a central camera for the master shot, capturing the overall action and establishing the geography of the set. Multiple shots are thus obtained without interrupting the action.

### Field Production

- It is a television industry term referring to a video production which takes place in the field, outside of a formal television studio, in a practical location or special venue. Typical applications of electronic field production include awards shows, concerts, major newsmaker interviews, political conventions and sporting events.
- It places the emphasis on high-quality, multiple-camera setup photography, advanced graphics and sound.

### Production Management

#### ❖ Definition

"Production management deals with decision-making related to production processes so that the resulting goods or service is produced according to specification, in the amount and by the schedule demanded and at minimum cost."

#### ❖ Meaning

- Production management means planning, organising, directing and controlling of production activities.
- Production management deals with converting raw materials into finished goods or products. It brings together the 6M's i.e. men, money, machines, materials, methods and markets to satisfy the wants of the people
- Production management also deals with decision-making regarding the quality, quantity, cost, etc., of production. It applies management principles to production.
- Production management is a part of business management. It is also called "**Production Function.**"

### Production Team

- A production team is the group of technical staff who produce a play, television show, recording, or film. Generally the term refers to all individuals responsible for the technical aspects of creating of a particular product, regardless of where in the process their expertise is required, or how long they are involved in the project.
- In a theatrical performance, the production team includes not only the running crew, but also the theatrical producer, designers and theatre direction.

### Wardrobe

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- The Costume Designer is responsible for all the clothing and costumes worn by all the actors that appear on screen. They are also responsible for designing, planning, and organizing the construction of the garments down to the fabric, colours, and sizes.
- The Costume Designer works closely with the Director to understand and interpret "character", and counsels with the Production Designer to achieve an overall tone of the film.
- The Costume Supervisor works closely with the Designer. They supervise construction or sourcing of garments, hiring and firing of support staff, budget, paperwork, and department logistics. They are also called the Wardrobe Supervisor

### Make Up

- Make-up Artists work with makeup, hair and special effects to create the characters look for anyone appearing on screen. Their role is to manipulate an Actor's on-screen appearance whether it makes them look more youthful, larger, older, or in some cases monstrous. There are also Body Makeup Artists who concentrate their abilities on the body rather than the head.

### Sets & Properties

- The production set is the set of possible input and output combinations. So that this set can be defined by restrictions on a collection of vectors with the dimension of the number of goods, one element for each kind of good, and a positive or negative real quantity in each element.

### Floor Management

- A floor manager is a member of the crew of a television show. The floor manager is responsible for giving information from the director in the control room, to the crew on the studio floor, and then back to the director.
- Ensure all equipment is working on the set, before and during show, Inform director and producer of off-camera action, Give the talent/floor staff/guests time counts and cues' Understand entire show in order to make changes when needed to set, props, etc, Brief talent/guests on what to expect during show.

## **Overview of Video Production**

### **What is video production?**

The differences between "video production" and "television production" have become increasingly blurred. Most video production is concerned with non-broadcast program making. Video productions are generally distributed via DVDs or online. Although video productions are generally made with a lower budget, it does not mean that few people see them. A simple tour of YouTube will show that millions of people are looking at video productions every day

Television productions, on the other hand, are usually shown to a large public audience by broadcast or cable transmission, either “live” (during the performance) or “recorded” (carefully edited video recordings). Television transmissions are required to conform to closely controlled technical standards. However, television productions may be considered to be a type of video production once they are distributed in a nonbroadcast method (DVD, Internet, etc.).

With the high quality of today’s consumer and prosumer equipment, video productions can be made with equipment ranging from that meeting the most sophisticated professional broadcast standards to low-cost consumer items (Figure 1.2). There is no intrinsic reason though, why the screened end products should differ in quality, style, or effectiveness as far as the audience is concerned. Video programs range from ambitious presentations intended for mass distribution to economically budgeted programs designed for a specific audience. This book will help you, whatever the scale of your production.

## **FIRST STEP IN VIDEO PRODUCTION**

### **The need for “know-how”**

Video production appears deceptively simple. After all, the video camera gives us an immediate picture of the scene before us, and the microphone picks up the sound of the action. Most of us start by pointing our camera and microphone at the subject but find the results unsatisfying. Why? Is it the equipment or us? It may be a little of both. But the odds are, that *we* are the problem.

As you may have already discovered, there is no magic recipe for creating attractive and interesting programs. All successful production springs from a foundation of *know-how*:

- 1.** Knowing how to handle the equipment properly and the effects of the various controls.
- 2.** Knowing how to use the equipment effectively. Developing the skills underlying good camerawork and sound production.
- 3.** Knowing how to convey ideas convincingly. Using the medium persuasively.
- 4.** Knowing how to organize systematically. Applying practical planning, preparation, and production.

As you work through this book, the know-how you develop will soon become part of your regular approach to program production. Knowing what the equipment can do will enable you to select the right tools for the job and use them the right way. In the end, sloppy production reduces the effectiveness of a program.

## **It's designed for you**

Most production equipment has been designed for quick, uncomplicated handling. After all, it is there for one fundamental purpose—to *enable users to communicate their ideas to an audience*. Video equipment is as much a communication tool as a computer or a cell phone.

### **: Learning basics**

It is not important to know *how* every function of the equipment works, but it is important to know its capabilities in order to get reliable results. Even with the most sophisticated video and audio equipment, you need to answer only a handful of basic questions to use it successfully:

- What is the equipment *for*?
- What can it *do*?
- What are its *limitations*?
- Where are the *controls* and *indicators* (menus, buttons, etc.)?
- How and when should they be *adjusted*?
- When adjusted, what will the *result* be?
- Will problems occur if these controls are *misused*?

## **Remember the purpose**

There is no shortcut to experience. As you handle equipment, you grow familiar with its use. But don't let the latest trendy camera handling preoccupy you. Many new camera operators have tried to show how good they are by quick moves, fast zooms, and attention-getting composition—where an experienced camera operator would have avoided these distractions and held a steady shot, letting the subject work to the camera instead. Smooth accurate operation is important, but *appropriateness* is even more desirable. In the end, it is *audience impact* that really counts—the effect the chosen camera treatment has on the viewer.

## **Equipment**

Don't get too enamored with the hardware. You do not need elaborate or extensive facilities to produce successful programs. Even the simplest equipment may provide the needed essentials. It really depends on the type of production you are creating. For some purposes, one camera is ideal. For others, a dozen may be insufficient.

*What* is done is more important than *how* it is done. If it is possible to get an effective moving shot along a hospital corridor by shooting from a wheelchair rather than a special camera dolly, the audience will never know—or care.

Sometimes extra effects on the equipment can tempt the camera operator to use them *because they are there* rather than because they are needed. On broadcast television, for example, wipes, star filters, or diffused shots are sometimes used in the wrong place, at the wrong time, just for the sake of variety and because they are readily available. What appears at first sight to be a sophisticated, stylish presentation may have far less impact on the audience than a single still shot that lingers to show someone's expression.

## TECHNICALITIES

### Equipment performance

Thanks to good design, the majority of even the most complex television equipment will perform faultlessly for long periods with little attention. But it is good practice to make regular checks and carry out routine maintenance.

It is simple enough to check that parts are clean (lenses, tape heads) and that controls are working correctly and ready for use. However, it is also important to study the instruction manuals that come with the equipment to know how to carry out the basic equipment checks and adjustments. If you are not an engineer, you may need the services of an experienced engineer to maintain equipment performance up to specification. But remember, don't tweak (adjust) internal controls unless you know what you are doing.

## Production Crew

**I've always maintained that with the right crew (producer, director, commentators, etc.), you can make a toenail clipping competition riveting television. With the wrong crew, you can make an international soccer championship boring.**

David Hill, CEO of Fox Sports Television

People are much more important than the coolest gear. The bottom line is that crew members who know what they are doing can make an incredible program with mediocre equipment. However, crew members who do not know what they are doing can make a mediocre program with the latest high-quality equipment. Because of the importance of people within a production, we are putting this chapter near the beginning of the book.

### **Production crew size**

Production crews come in all sizes. The crew for a documentary may consist of one person with a palm-sized camera. Other types of programming, such as a network dramatic production, may require a large number of people. It all comes down to what you are trying to accomplish.

## **VIDEO PRODUCTION CREW JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Most job descriptions for the crew have some commonalities from company to company. However, you will find that the actual duties may fluctuate based on the company, production style, and the talents of the individual crew members. In this chapter we describe some of the basic positions that may exist on a video production. Because this book focuses on smaller productions, we will limit the list to the most common positions.

### **Producer**

The producer is generally responsible for a specific production. Usually the producer is concerned with the business organization, budget, the choice of the staff and crew, interdepartmental coordination, script acceptance, and production scheduling. The producer may select or initiate the program concepts and work with writers. He or she may assign the production's director and is responsible for meeting deadlines, production planning, location projects, rehearsals, production treatment, and other duties. Producers may also become involved in specifics such as craft or union problems, assessing postproduction treatment, and the final program format.

### **Assistant producer or associate producer (AP)**

The assistant or associate producer is responsible for assisting the producer. These responsibilities, as assigned by the producer, may include coordinating appointments and production schedules, making sure contracts are completed, booking guests, creating packages, and supervising postproduction. This person may be assigned some of the same responsibilities of an associate director.

## **Director**

Ultimately the director is the individual responsible for creatively visualizing the script or event. This means that the director instructs the camera operators on the type of shots they want and select the appropriate camera shots for the final production. Directors are people who can effectively communicate their vision to the crew. They are also team builders who move the crew toward that vision. This involves advising, guiding, and coordinating the various members on the production team (scenic, lighting, sound, cameras, costume, etc.) and approving their anticipated treatment. The director may choose and hire performers/talent/actors (casting), envision and plan the camera treatment (shots and camera movements) and editing, and direct/rehearse the performers during prerehearsals

He or she also evaluates the crew's contributions (sets, camerawork, lighting, sound, makeup, costume, graphics, etc.). The director's job can range in practice from being the sole individual who creates and coordinates the production to a person who directs a camera and sound crew with material organized by others.

## **Assistant director or associate director (AD)**

The AD is responsible for assisting the director. Functions may include supervising prerehearsals and location organization. The AD may also review storyboards, implement the shooting schedule, and shield the director from interruptions, and he or she is sometimes responsible for the cast. The AD may take the director's notes on changes, retakes, performance, and other factors. For multicamera shoots, the AD may be responsible for lining up shots, graphics, and tapes. He or she may also be responsible for checking on special shots (such as chroma key), giving routine cues (tape inserts), and other duties while the director guides the actual performance and camera(s). The AD may also check program timing and help the director with postproduction. This person may be assigned some of the same responsibilities of an associate producer. This position may be merged with the floor manager.

## **Floor manager (FM) or stage manager (SM)**

The FM is the director's primary representative and contact when the director is not on the set or in the studio. He or she may be used to cue talent and direct the floor crew. During the shoot, the FM is responsible for general organization, safety, discipline (e.g., managing noise), and security. At times, the FM may be used to ensure that the talent is present. This job may be merged with the assistant director

### **Production assistant (PA)**

The PA assists the director or producer with production needs. These may include supervising the production office (making copies, making coffee, and running errands), prerehearsals, and location organization. His or her responsibilities may also include logging tapes and taking notes during production meetings. During rehearsals and recording, this person may assist the producer/director with graphics or serve as a floor manager.

### **Technical director (TD) or vision mixer**

The technical director generally sits next to the director in the control room and is responsible for operating the television production switcher (and perhaps electronic effects). The TD may also serve as the crew chief. This person reports to the director

### **Makeup artist**

The makeup artist designs, prepares, and applies makeup to the talent, aided by makeup assistants and hair stylists

### **Graphic designer/operator**

The graphic designer/operator is responsible for designing and implementing the graphics for the production. This individual is responsible for organizing and typing onscreen text and titles for a production, either to be used during the production or stored for later use

### **Lighting director/ vision supervisor**

The lighting director is responsible for designing, arranging, and controlling all lighting treatment, both technically and artistically. This responsibility may include indoor or outdoor lighting situations. The lighting director supervises the electricians, or gaffers, who rig and set the lighting equipment.

### **Camera operator**

The camera operators are responsible for setting up their cameras (unless the cameras have already been set up, such as in a studio situation) and then operating the cameras to capture the video images as requested by the director

### **Camera assistant**

The camera assistant is responsible for assisting the camera operator in setting up the camera. This individual is also responsible for making sure that the camera operator is safe (by keeping the person from tripping over something or falling), keeping people from walking in front of the camera when it is on, keeping the camera cable from getting tangled or tripping others, and guiding the camera operator during moving shots. A camera assistant may also work as a grip and push a camera dolly if needed

### **Audio mixer/sound mixer/ sound supervisor**

The audio mixer is responsible for the sound balance as well as the technical and artistic quality of the program sound. This includes determining the number and placement of the microphones required for the production. He or she also makes sure that the audio cables are properly plugged into the audio mixer and is responsible for the final mix (audio levels, balance, and tonal quality) of the production. The audio mixer supervises all personnel operating microphones and audio equipment

### **Boom operator or audio assistant**

Supervised by the audio mixer, the boom operator is responsible for positioning microphones, running audio cables, operating the sound boom, troubleshooting audio problems, and operating field audio equipment

### **Engineer**

Engineers are responsible for setting up, adjusting for optimal performance, maintaining, and trouble-shooting all equipment used in a production.

### **Writer**

The writer is responsible for writing the script. Occasionally the producer or director will write material. At times, writers are assisted by a researcher, who obtains data, information, and references for the production writer.

### **Editor**

The editor selects, compiles, and cuts video and audio to produce programs. He or she may assemble clips into segments and segments into programs, or this person may simply correct mistakes that occurred during the production process.

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### **Set designer**

The set designer is responsible for conceiving, designing, and organizing the scenic treatment for a production (perhaps even the graphics). He or she supervises the scenic crew in erecting and dressing the sets

## **PROFESSIONAL CREW**

### **Freelance crew**

Today, many productions utilize freelance crews. Freelancers are independent contractors who work for multiple organizations, hiring out their production skills on an as-needed basis. There are freelancers available who can fill every one of the aforementioned positions.

### **Below-the-line/above-the-line**

You may hear the terms “below-the-line” and “above-the-line” personnel. Although these terms may have different meanings to different companies, overall, they are budgeting terms. Here are some common descriptions:

*Above-the-line personnel* usually refers to people who may have a fixed salary but who also will share in any profits the project generates. They are generally thought of as more artistic in nature. These positions would include producers, directors, actors, writers, and possibly graphic artists and designers.

*Below-the-line personnel* refers to everyone who is paid a wage and will not share in the profits. It generally refers to camera operators, editors, engineers, production designers, costume designers, and makeup artists. Below-the-line personnel may be eligible for overtime pay.

### **The structure of a video production crew**

The structure of a production crew differs greatly from company to company. Even different types of productions, such as dramatic and sports productions, require different styles of hierarchy. Figure 2.12 shows a common general structure.

Lecture three

