

Assignment 2: 30-second Commercial or Public Service Announcement

GROUP ASSIGNMENT

CS3343: Digital Media Production

Assigned: August 26th, 2009

Part 1 Due: Sep 4th, 2009 (by midnight IVLE)

Part 2 Due: Sep 11th, 2009 (by midnight IVLE)

Purpose of this Assignment

- To gain experience in writing a simple proposal, treatment and semi-script
- To shoot raw footage to support the preproduction (based on treatment, semi-script)
- To edit raw footage to complete the final production (i.e. postproduction)
- To have a chance to be creative (please do not just remake an existing commercial!)

MAIN TASK

You are to make a TV commercial or public service announcement (PSA) that is *exactly* 30 second in length. The commercial can be an advertisement to sell a product or a PSA for some cause, e.g.:

- Sell something: a particular product, food, restaurant, or service
- A PSA: Quit Smoking, Fight Dengue Fever, Don't Litter, etc...

You can choose any topic you like (within reason¹ – please keep it ‘clean’ and don’t get me fired). The commercial/PA must involve: 1) some footage with people and 2) dialogue *and/or* voice-over. The intent of 1) and 2) is to keep you from just putting together existing images -- instead you must shoot footage to produce your commercial. There also needs to be some voice dialogue in your commercial, this can be either from the actors, or if you want the actors to just “look pretty”, you can instead have voice-over. Either way, there must be some dialogue in your script.

NOTE REGARDING ACTORS/TALENT: There is no requirement that the group members have to appear in the video -- your friends, family, paid actors, etc, can be the “talent”.

ASSIGNMENT COMPONENTS: There are two parts to this assignment.

PART 1 – Preproduction (Due midnight Tuesday, Sept 4th - Friday) Upload all three documents in a single zip file. Documents should be in either doc or pdf format (pdf is preferred).

You must compose the following three documents typical of preproduction:

Document 1: The Proposal (1-PAGE, 12pnt Arial font)

Proposals generally have the following components:

An opening statement about your commercial/product production

Goal of your production and targeted audience

Script format

Schedule/Budget – (you can just make up some numbers for the budget)

Document 2: The Treatment (2-5 PAGES, 12pnt Arial font – length depends on your production)

You need to prepare a treatment of your production. A treatment is a play-by-play write up of the production and is intended to help the reader visualize the overall production. Treatments are written in 3rd person using highly visual language. They are similar to the script but less restrictive in format. For a 30s commercial/PA the treatment should be about 2-5 pages. The length depends on the complexity of your production. It is better to be brief than wordy.

¹ Avoid sensitive topics like religion, politics, etc

Document 3) Semi-script (3-10 PAGES, 12pt Arial font, 3 spaces between scenes ; 1 between dialogue)

Working from your treatment, write a script for your production in semi-script format (see slide 24 in Script Writing lecture). The semi-script will break your production into scenes. For a 30s commercial, it may be very likely there is only one scene. For each scene, you should describe the action in one column and the dialogue in the other column. If the actors do not speak, the dialogue should be labeled as “NARRATOR”.

You should consider that another group should be able to read your treatment and semi-script and make your production. That is the level of detail you need to provide.

PART 2 – Production, Post-production (Due midnight Friday, Sept 11th)

Working from your treatment and script, create your actual commercial/advertisement. This should follow your treatment and script closely. Please use supporting music/audio to help make your commercial more appealing. You are encouraged to shoot multiple takes of your “action” to get the best quality result possible. Take care to balance the audio, video segments, etc, to make a high-quality final production. Please also, record the amount of actual footage (in minutes:seconds) you have.

The final production should contain the following:

- 1) Title slide with your groups name, 5 seconds
- 1) Your commercial/PA – *exactly 30seconds*
- 2) After your production, a slide (same as title slide) that states the amount of actual footage recorded in minutes and seconds should be shown for 5 seconds.

Exporting your video:

Same as assignment 1 – the final video must be within 35MB.

NOTE: Your final submission will be exactly 40 seconds

(5sec title, 30sec production, 5sec footage ratio)

Grading Criteria

- **Part 1: Preproduction (50%)**
 - Quality of Proposal (5%)
 - Does the proposal contain all the correct components?
 - Is the proposal well thought-out?
 - That is, would this proposal really attract an investor?
 - Quality of the Treatment (25%)
 - Does the treatment contain all the correct components?
 - Can the reader have a good idea of what the commercial/PA will involve?
 - Can the reader visually imagine the commercial?
 - Quality of the Semi-script (20%)
 - Does the semi-script follow the treatment’s writeup?
 - Is the semi-script format correct?
 - Is the semi-script sufficiently detailed to make the commercial?
 - For example, could another group make your commercial?
 - Number of pages for treatment and script
 - *More pages does not equal a better grade*
 - Use the number of pages necessary to describe your production, if you can do this in 1-2 pages that is fine, if it takes 7 pages, that is also fine.
- **Part 2: Production/Post-production (50%)**
 - Does the final video follow the treatment/script?
 - Did you follow the assignment’s criteria (i.e. title, production, footage slide)?

- Quality use of transitions and audio
- Overall neatness of the final production including balance of the audio/video, etc . .

Submission Instructions

We will submit our materials using IVLE.

Part1 (Sept 4th): Have one group member upload *a single zip file* of your three (3) files. Upload to IVLE “Assign2-P1-Submission” in the workbin before the deadline.

Name the zip file: *groupname_assign2_p1.zip*

Name the files in the zip: *proposal, treatment, script.*

Please double-check your submission to make sure it is correct. Every assignment someone/group submits an empty zip file or an incorrectly named zip file. Please don't be that someone!

Part2 (Sept 11th): Have one group member upload your final video to IVLE “Assign2-P2-Submissions” in the workbin before the deadline.

Name your video file: *groupname_assign2_p2.{avi,mov,mpg}.*

Note: A letter grade will be deducted every day your assignment is turned in late.