

## **CASE STUDY 4- Video Grants**

# *Money Makers for Non-Profit Organizations*

*Writing Grants for Video Projects and (PSA) Public Service Announcements*

***AIDS Coalition of Southern NJ***

**Videos and PSA's are an important part of any Non-Profit Organization.** Videos have become a well-received type of marketing for businesses in all sectors. Corporations spend thousands of dollars on script writing, video production, post-production, background music beds, actors and lighting and sound crews. But as a not for profit organization you don't have the funds to even think about these types of expenditures. Luckily, with the upgrade to cell phone cameras, video productions for your website are now an option for even smaller non-profit organizations.

Although you will not need vast amounts of cash to produce online videos, you will need some help. Your message has to be scripted, storyboarded, and produced. My solution is to look to your local colleges and universities. Find local communications students who are looking to get samples for their portfolios. The journalism, advertising, or writing departments should be fertile ground for you to make contacts. Reach out to professors who will suggest which students may be open to your project, and get the help you'll need. When you're finished with your video, post it on YouTube. If you don't yet have an account, start one. You can then promote your video through social networks. Messages with a video get opened XX% more than written messages.

For PSAs, the quality of your video has to be a little better than you can produce with your cell phone. For these type of projects organizations will not only need funds to produce the ad, they will also need the marketing budget to buy TV Ad space. Luckily there are foundations and government grants that address these exact issues.

**First do your research.** Find a grant opportunity to help you brand and promote your organization. Print out the guidelines, they will tell you precisely what you will need to be awarded the grant money. Next, follow the guidelines exactly. They want you to dot your i's and cross your t's, so don't be disqualified because you don't think you need an insignificant piece of the criteria. The information you need can be found on your website, by talking with the directors or the board. Once you do it once, this information could be kept as a template for future grant opportunities. Finally, be sure to meet the deadline for the grant submittal. Every aspect of the grant process must be followed for you to be awarded. Once the grant paperwork is done, wait the proper amount of time, (they will tell you when the awards will be made), then follow up for their decision.

What? You've been awarded a grant to produce a video. What now? Don't panic, you can do it. Use your resources at the local colleges or universities. Find a film student who wants to add to his portfolio, find a writer willing to discount his time to get a sample, use people in your organization as talent, scout and settle on the location(s) for the shoot and get it done inexpensively.

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Then you can use what's left of the grant money to buy time on local stations. Don't forget to barter for extra time, remember, you are representing a non-profit organization that is helping people in your community.

It worked for The AIDS Coalition of Southern New Jersey