

# Powerful Marketing with Visual Media

by Jerry D. Jones

**Y**ou may not see yourself as a movie producer or director, but maybe it is time to think new thoughts. You work very hard to create quality books and publications. You want to influence and help as many people as possible. Yet, many still do not know about the Christian resources you make available.

One way to make your resources stand out is through visual media—videos or DVDs.

### *Power of visual media*

You have no doubt heard the phrase, “Seeing is believing.” What you may not realize is that research shows we generally remember 10 percent of what we read, 20 percent of what we hear, 30 percent of what we see, and 50 percent of what we see and hear.

Jesus understood the value of both seeing and hearing. In Luke 10:23-24, we read His words: “Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.”

It is this quality of both seeing and hearing that makes visual media—movies, TV, video games, motion video billboards—so powerful. Consider the power of the *Jesus* film that has helped bring thousands of people to Christ. Used effectively, there is no more powerful way to communicate your message to the people who need to know about your resources.

### *Use the power*

Why should you consider visual media in your marketing and sales plans? Here are five reasons:

1. *The visual media tools are ready.* In the mid-90s the cost of purchasing a quality camera or editing system was out of reach for most people. Now, many new computers come with free video editing software already installed. Decent digital video cameras can be purchased for less than U.S. \$1,000.



You may not be able to compete with Hollywood or Madison Avenue where they spend millions of dollars to create a movie or advertisement. However, if you know your audience, you can use today's amazing digital tools with great impact for a fraction of Hollywood's cost.

2. *Visual media grabs people's attention.* When you turn on a video or DVD (even in a room of antsy teenagers) eyes tend to be drawn to the visual images being shown. Visual media is captivating. It draws people into the story or message. Even better, if it is compelling (dramatic, humorous, mysterious, etc.) you usually hold people's attention until the very end. In a world bombarded by images and messages, getting and holding your audience's attention is one of the most important aspects of letting people know about your resources.

3. *Visual media connects with people emotionally.* And, when someone becomes emotionally engaged with the message (laughter, tears, anger, etc.), they are more likely to both remember and respond.

Research in the past 20 years has proven that our brains deal with images differently than with print. As reported in a study looking at the impact of video on students in the classroom (<http://www.edc.org/cct>): “Words are processed in the neocortex where the higher thinking capability of the brain resides. Pictures, however, are handled in the limbic system...

and trigger instinct, emotion, and impulse... Brains are programmed to remember experiences that have an emotional component."

So, what are the emotional components of your print products? Focus on them to create visual marketing tools with lasting impact.

4. *Visual media helps people remember your message.* In a study by Cambridge Associates, reported in the February 2004 issue of *Emedia Magazine*, people who obtain information from video or DVD have a 40-50 percent retention rate, compared to print retention of around 20 percent.

5. *Visual media demonstrates the effectiveness of your product.* Other than one-on-one communication, visual media is the most powerful way to both "show and tell." It allows you to show your audience how to use your product; to show how others have benefited from your product (testimonials, recreations, documentaries); to show the before and after.

### **Three ways to use visual media**

Chances are you already have several ideas on how to use video or DVD to tell others about your resources. But if you need a jump start, here are three ways to begin:

1. *Brainstorm a short video to promote one of your products.*

You could show a video in area churches, at conferences, and other events. Bookstores could use it to show their customers.

2. *Produce a short video to tell others about your organization or ministry.* People may not fully understand what your company does, all the positive influence it has in others' lives. Use video to help tell this story. Include interviews with staff, customers, partners and others who have been encouraged or helped through your literature. This video could also include shots of various aspects of the operation of your publishing business. People often like to see the "insides" of an operation.

3. *Create a training video.* Video is one of the most powerful training tools possible—allowing you to show it again and again to staff, volunteers, and others involved in helping you carry out your publishing objectives.

### **Don't forget the content**

You are excited and ready to go. Before you start, develop your script or project concept. What is the message of your video? Here are five questions to consider.

1. *What need are you seeking to address?* When you develop your script, this is where you need to begin. The more focused and specific you can be, the better.

2. *Who is the target audience you are trying to reach?* Perhaps you want to create a promotional spot booksellers can use to sell your fiction titles. Maybe you want to inform donors about your ministry or show the benefits of your curriculum to Sunday school teachers. What makes your audience unique—and what might be some effective, creative ways to speak to them?

3. *What is your objective?* Decide what you hope to accomplish, and why the desired result is important or necessary.

4. *How will you communicate this message?* Use comedy, drama, an interview format, or whatever will work to catch and hold the audience.

5. *What will the content of your message be?* Imagine you only have 30 seconds or one minute to communicate with your customers. What would you most want to say?

Involve various members of your staff in the entire creative process. Some can assist in the brainstorming and concept development on the front end; others can help with the production itself—everything from placing lights to holding the microphone to arranging the furniture (or providing snacks for the crew). It can often be a wonderful team-building experience—and fun too. Using creative ideas, some basic skills, and increasingly inexpensive equipment, you can create a great sales tool. A short video can spotlight your ministry.

Jerry D. Jones (j davidjones@mindspring.com) is a published author and video producer. He has completed video documentaries in Africa, Europe, Central and South America, Azerbaijan and Cambodia. He is currently working on a documentary project on children at risk in Nepal and India.

**H**aving the tools alone does not make you a good communicator, just as having a word processor does not make you a great writer. But if you have something important to say, if you want people to know about your Christian literature, then here are the basics you will need to produce a television spot:

1. *A video camera.* Good quality cameras are available almost everywhere these days—and prices are rapidly falling. (If you can afford one, a three-chip camera will give you a better quality picture than a one-chip camera. But you can often get good quality video from one-chip cameras as well.)

2. *A tripod.* Unless you are highly experienced, keep the camera on a tripod at all times. Few things will hinder your video more than a shaky picture.

3. *An external mic.* For natural sounds (children laughing, water running, traffic, etc.) the mic on your camera will often work fine. But for interviews, make sure you have a good lav or hand held mic that you can plug-in to your camera. Good audio is at least one-half of what makes a quality video.

4. *Light.* Expensive professional lighting is not necessary. A well-pointed floor lamp pointed at your subject, or even two or three lamps, can work nicely. Or, place your subject next to a window. Avoid overhead lighting. If you film outside, it is often better to film in the shade. Just as too little light can present a problem, too much sun can also hurt your video.

5. *Editing equipment.* Once filming is done, you will need to cut and piece together the film, add music, sound effects, and create the final video. Fortunately, there is inexpensive—or free—video-editing software. What used to cost many thousands of dollars is now affordable and available.

—Jerry D. Jones