

1

Nutrition

2

Operations

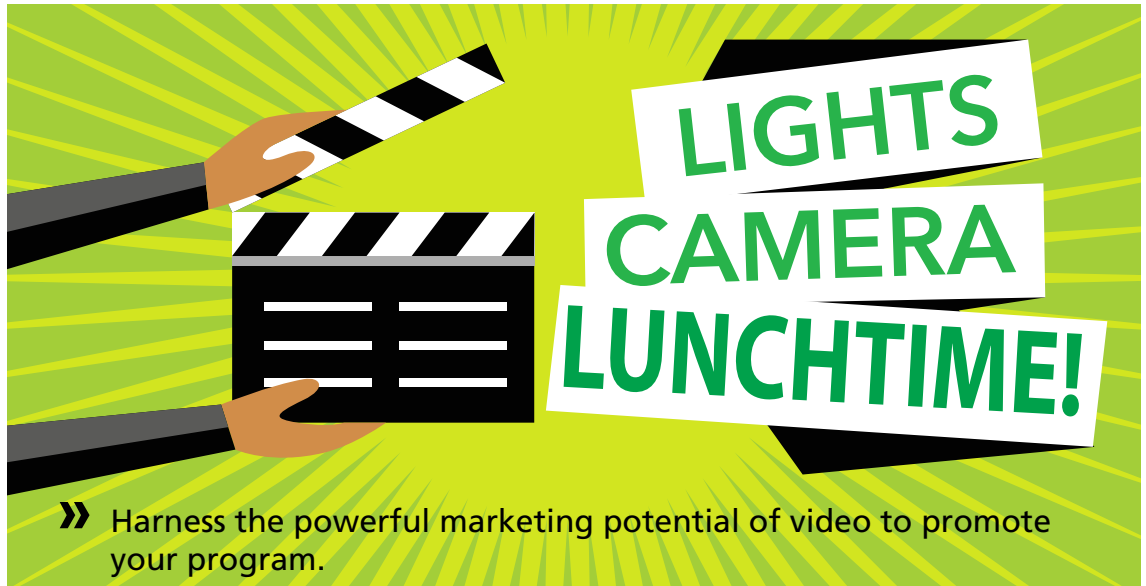
3

Administration

4

Communications &  
Marketing  
Program Promotion  
4120» to *your credit***Making the grade in your profession**

By Beth Roessner



Let's face it: Shooting and creating high-quality videos can be intimidating, particularly when they're going to be shared with other people. When starting a video project—whether it's a series of snippets to share on social media or a simple training video to provide to staff—there are many logistics to consider. You need to think about what to shoot and how to shoot it, sound quality, editing tools and camera orientation, to name a few—and let's not even talk about getting someone *in front* of the camera.

Despite their complexities, videos are a marketing dream for school nutrition departments. More so than photographs, they provide audience members with a behind-the-scenes look at the cafeteria and direct access to the staff. With that, viewers are better able to get a sense of the places and the people that feed their community's children.

"There is a lot more to be told than what's for lunch," explains Breanna Gustafson, marketing supervisor for Food and Nutrition Services, **School District of Lee County, Fort Myers, Fla.** "People want to know who is serving their kids, what the kids like and don't like and what is going on in the cafeteria. Video is a great way to share those stories with the community."

Remember, you and your team are the experts in your field. It's time to shout that expertise

from the school's rooftops—or, at least, from the department's social media channels!

#### THE IMPACT OF VIDEOS

Videos can spark positive community conversations and establish an open dialogue with members of your department. Through video, a school nutrition department can disseminate its exact mission in the form of video presentations, video blogs (vlogs), ads, webinars, tutorials, interviews, live streams and more.

Just how impactful are videos? Use among businesses is on the rise, with 87% of businesses using it as a marketing tool in 2019 alone, up from 63% in 2017, according to a report from animated explainer video creator Wyzowl. Additionally, video has become so prolific and influential that Google says 6 of 10 people prefer online video

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platforms over live television. Finally, get this: By 2020, there will be nearly 1 million minutes of video crossing the internet per second, reports tech company Cisco in its *2017–2022 White Paper*. Video has some serious power!

### SOCIAL SHARING

At first, you might not think you have anything worth sharing in the form of a video with an audience that is outside the school. With a little brainstorming, though, or an ideation session with the whole team, you might be surprised at what you dream up. Video ideas include:

- ▶ Introduction of a new dish or recipe that you're excited to serve your student customers.
- ▶ A behind-the-scenes tour of the kitchen, so parents and community members can better understand how meals are produced.
- ▶ First-person interviews with staff members to showcase their enthusiasm for school meals and serving kids.
- ▶ A series of nutrition education videos featuring the staff dietitian.
- ▶ Interviews with students responding to questions about their favorite meals.
- ▶ A look at a farm-to-school initiative, including interviews with a participating farmer or a tour of the farm.
- ▶ The live-stream of a question-and-answer session, during which viewers can ask nutrition-related questions and get them answered in real time.
- ▶ A showcase of the salad bar, with a video of it being stocked and prepared prior to service and footage of it in use.
- ▶ Videos of special events or a themed meal.
- ▶ Video compilations of still camera shots commemorating an activity or celebration.

"We're promoting ourselves through storytelling," Gustafson explains, bringing up a recent example that had nothing to do with lunch. She videotaped an interview of a staff member talking about how "she goes to garage sales on the weekend and collects books for kids that come through the lunch line, so they have book to read on Read Across America Day [March 2]. Those are the

## SHOOT LIKE A PRO



**Elevate the quality of your camera-phone videos with these 14 shooting and editing tips.**

1. **Shoot horizontally to avoid black railroad bars on the sides of your videos during playback.**
2. **Use a tripod or prop the phone up against a stable object to minimize shakiness or blur.**
3. **Don't use the built-in digital zoom; instead move the phone closer to the subject.**
4. **Ensure you have well-lit subjects and surroundings. Remember, natural light is always best.**
5. **Shoot a wide variety of angles, subjects and compositions to be used as B-roll.**
6. **Tap the part of the screen on the phone where you want to manually lock focus and exposure on your footage.**
7. **Ensure there are no background noises that will hinder audio quality.**
8. **Turn your phone to airplane mode while shooting to prevent unwanted distractions and interruptions.**
9. **Consider purchasing video recording and/or editing apps to produce higher-quality videos.**
10. **Plug your phone into a power source if shooting for long periods of time.**
11. **Keep videos short, concise and to the point—preferably under two minutes.**
12. **Implement the rule of thirds. Divide the frame into nine imaginary sections and place points of interest  $\frac{1}{3}$  or  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the way up or across the frame, instead of in the center.**
13. **Play with tools like slow motion or time-lapse, but use them sparingly.**
14. **During the editing process, remove the sound from each individual clip, then add a recorded voice-over or music.**

stories that go viral... That told our story as a group of people who are passionate and care about the students."

Other videos highlighting Gustafson's operation have included a dairy farm tour to showcase Florida milk and one of a school garden lettuce harvest during the height of the Romaine lettuce recall. The school garden, Gustafson adds, is a frequent video topic.

So *where* do you share the videos you want to get public attention? Marketing videos are best shared via your department's respective Facebook or Twitter pages to reach existing followers. (Students tend to prefer Instagram and Snapchat, so consider whether your primary audience is parents or students.) While YouTube is an option, potential viewers will either need to conduct a search for the video or have the direct link. The most common misconception of video is that "it's too hard and takes up too much time," warns Gustafson, advising against making it *harder* for someone to see your results!

### TRAINING TOPICS

Don't limit your forays into video to reaching parents and community stakeholders. Consider videos as an easy and affordable training and internal communications strategy for reaching staff throughout your operation.

Let's say you want to start offering totchos on the menu. Heard of these? Use all your favorite nacho toppings, but instead of a base of tortilla chips, use tater tots for a completely different experience. Even if you are familiar with this dish, odds are that many of the team members responsible for prepping and serving it are not. When Gustafson was ready to menu a brand-new totcho dish in her district, to teach everyone in her kitchens to create it properly, she shot a video demonstrating the prep steps and rolled it out district-wide. "I am really big on showing, not telling," notes Gustafson. The video was screened first to managers, who then took it to show their individual teams. This

provided helpful, applicable training that ensured everyone knew what the new item was supposed to look like.

Other ways that videos can be used within the team to improve program operations include basic trainings on new software or equipment, answers to frequently asked questions and a welcome to new hires. Video enables everyone to get on the same page very quickly, explains Michelle Michaud, former public information officer at **Metro Nashville (Tenn.) Public Schools**, and an upcoming session speaker at SNA's 2019 Annual National Conference (ANC) in St. Louis. "Most people these days like to learn visually because of the proliferation of video," she explains.

Although YouTube isn't always the best platform for videos that you're sharing with the community, it is ideal for internal videos, Michaud asserts. The site allows you to create private channels, sharing the link with select users, without giving the public access to search or view videos posted there. At Metro Nashville Public Schools, the chef creates a weekly video to demonstrate how to prepare, cook and plate a particular recipe on the lunch menu.

"What we're finding is that the 160 cafeteria managers will watch the video and sometimes bring in their entire team to watch it over their shoulder in the kitchen," Michaud adds. "Then they can talk about it and give feedback."

### BEHIND THE CAMERA

The most engaging videos showcase a variety of angles and shots, so they don't focus on a single subject the entire time. This is especially important for marketing videos, which have a more restless audience, than, for example, staff required to watch a recipe demo.

When you're shooting, don't take one long video—break it up into smaller videos to be edited together later. Let's say you want to showcase a new salad bar in one of your schools and share it on social media. Start with a wide shot that encompasses the entirety of the salad bar. Then, start a new video, shooting some footage of several of the bar's ingredient

4

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1. \_\_\_\_ are good examples of how video can be applied in school nutrition departments.

- Vlogs
- Tutorials
- Interviews
- all of the above

2. In 2019, nearly \_\_\_\_ of businesses are using videos as a marketing tool.

- one-quarter
- one-third
- 90%
- 67%

3. By 2020, there will be 1 million minutes of video crossing the internet per \_\_\_\_.

- second
- minute
- hour
- day

4. First-person interviews with staff members are uninteresting video topics.

- True
- False

5. Topics for school nutrition videos include \_\_\_\_.

- kitchen tours
- nutrition education lessons
- student interviews
- all of the above

6. YouTube is a great platform to share training videos with internal audience members.

- True
- False

7. When videotaping in your cafeteria, \_\_\_\_ is not advised.

- unusual angles
- short clips to edit together
- real-time voiceover
- natural light

8. Extra footage captured and used to help tell the story is called \_\_\_\_.

- voiceover
- B-roll
- dB-roll
- Xshots

9. Marketing videos should be \_\_\_\_ minutes in length.

- less than 2
- 3 to 5
- 5 to 10
- none of the above

10. Only professional-quality videos will get seen by your audience.

- True
- False

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To earn 1 Continuing Education Credit (CEU) toward SNA's Certificate/Credentialing programs for this professional development article (PDA) test, you must achieve a passing score and the issue date (**May 2019**) must not be older than five (5) years from your Certificate/Credentialing period. A maximum of three (3) PDAs per year is allowable for SNA's Certificate in School Nutrition program. There is no maximum of passing PDAs for those with the SNS Credential, submitted within the three-year period.

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components. Next, separately film a staff member stocking the salad bar; shots of hands (with gloves!) are important. Last, be sure to capture students filling their plates (using tongs!) with vegetables.

In professional settings, these background shots are called B-roll, which refers to extra footage that's used

to help tell the story when someone is being interviewed. Each video clip should be no more than 10 seconds long. (*More filming tips can be found in the box on page 56.*)

When it's time to edit, most smartphones have native video editing apps, but you can purchase the app of your choice via your phone's app store. To

get started with editing, follow these short steps:

1. Upload the videos into the program, and then start dragging and dropping your short video clips into a longer production.
2. Remove the sound from each individual B-roll clip.
3. If you need the voice of someone describing the scene or situation, record the voiceover separately (using a sound recording app on your phone) and add it to the video during the editing process.
4. Weave snippets of people standing in front of the camera and B-roll footage together.

Use online editing tutorials to answer questions, build confidence or explore more advanced features.

While it can be tempting to create long, impactful videos, it's best to keep them under two minutes, notes Gustafson. (Michaud recommends keeping them even shorter: under 30 seconds.) Viewers rarely have the patience to sit through a long video before clicking onto something else. Always put the most important information at the beginning of the video. The more engaging the video, the longer you'll retain viewers.

#### I WANNA BE A PRODUCER

Think beyond the lunch tray when you're shooting videos—anything and everything can be a good subject. You have great stories in your school nutrition operation—telling them visually will help them to be heard.

If your videos aren't Oscar-winning quality right off the bat, don't fret—video production is a practiced skill, and it will get easier the more videos you and your team create. "Be fearless. You *cannot* mess up," advises Michaud, noting the viral success of many amateur creations. "The average person is used to seeing all kinds: well-produced Nike ads, somewhat-produced YouTube ads and a lot of selfie content. You can't really go wrong." **SN**

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