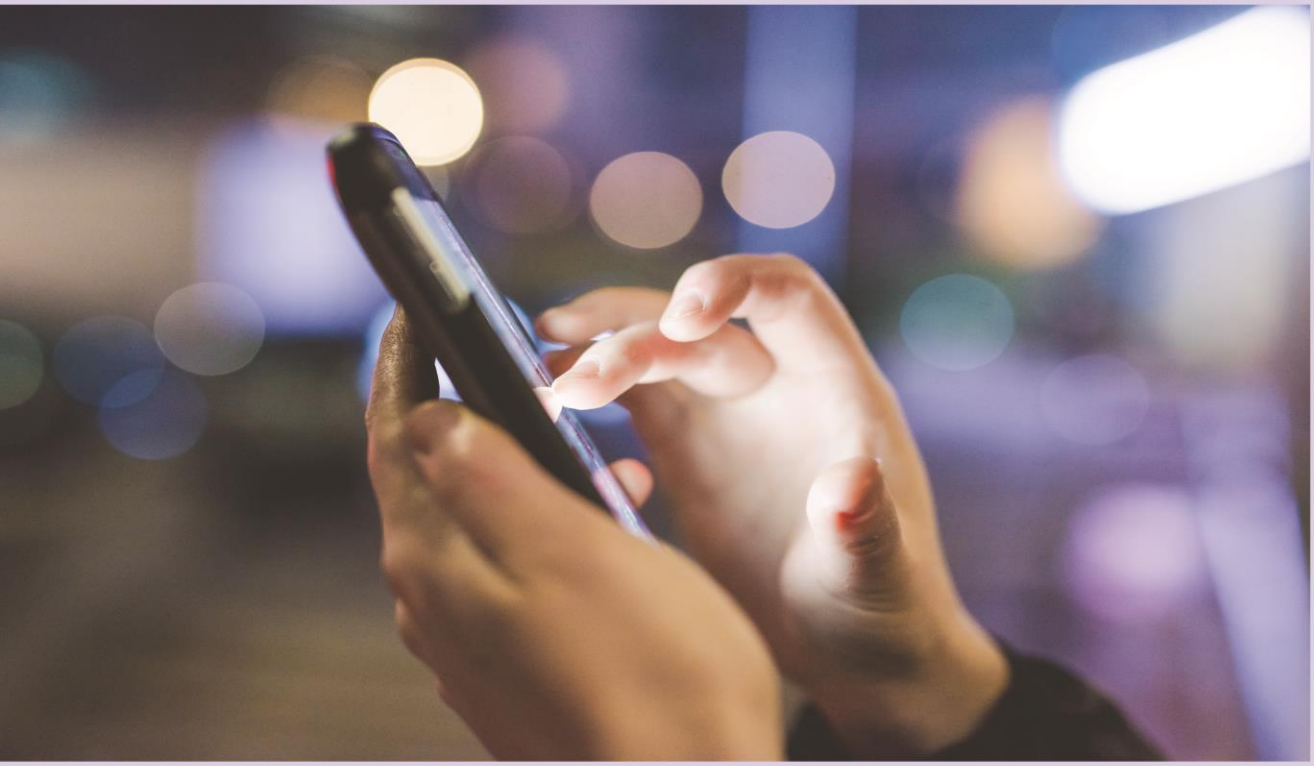
Top 10 Tips to Shooting Better Videos on your Phone



inside HOSPITALITY SOLUTIONS

A Resource for IHS Members

Why Video?

We live in the modern age of technology and advancements in digital cameras and smartphones have put the ability to produce self-produced video in your hands.

Video can be a differentiator between you, your competitors and your social media engagement. Better videos result in increased engagement with your audience. Search optimization for video is essential and quality and well-configured video content will not only drive traffic to a website and social media platforms but also offer excellent client engagement and improve Google rankings.

There is no substitute for professionally produced video. Many self-produced videos look unprofessional and can unintentionally do more harm than good. Professionally produced videos utilize advanced cameras, lighting, actors, effects, etc. and the Inside Hospitality Solutions Supplier Directory offers professional video suppliers such as A-V-A Video Productions and Buchanan Creative Solutions, LLC who can help navigate those waters.

But, in cases where it makes more sense for you to try your hand at self-produced video, IHS has created this guide. The following ten tips will help set your videos apart from the crowd and ensure your message is communicated accurately and professionally.

inside HOSPITALITY SOLUTIONS

1. LANDSCAPE vs. PORTRAIT

When shooting video, the first lesson is to shoot your video with your phone in “landscape” mode instead of “portrait”. For those unfamiliar with the terms, "portrait" is when your phone is positioned in an upright vertical position, while "landscape" is your phone positioned horizontally, or sideways.

TV and computer monitors are oriented horizontally, hence the term “wide screen”. If your video is recorded in portrait mode, then your video will be cut off on both sides rather than filling the entire screen.

2. DON'T SHOOT INTO WINDOWS

When filming indoors, you may be required to use the light coming in from the windows to light your subject (see Tip #7 for more on filming in dark spaces). Positioning someone in front of a bright window, your phone will automatically choose to expose for the outdoors. The result will be a bright outdoor light and your subject will have been rendered into a shadowy silhouette.

The fix for this situation is easy: Just turn it around.

With you holding the phone, put the window at your back and let the light fall on the subject. The light shining on your subject will illuminate their features rather than overpower them.

Having problems with your lighting setup?
InsideHS can help.
Visit the IHS Supplier directory at insidehs.com for access to video production professionals such as A-V-A Video Productions and Buchanan Creative Solutions.

3. USE A TRIPOD

Tripods are an essential tool for any video project, and they don't have to be expensive in order to be effective. Almost all tripods are easy to use and operate the same across a wide range of brands.

With smartphones being more commonly used to capture video, many tripods are available specifically for their use. If your budget is tight, try the following tip:

Using an elastic clamp, available on the web or nearby hardware store, mount your phone to a standard tripod. This simple life-hack will do more to improve your video than almost any other tip on this list.

4. ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP?

Nearly every shot you film has a central feature that you want to emphasize, so try to get as close to it as possible. For example, if your subject is in a room, don't stand in the back and expect people to see the details you intended. Unless making an art film, extreme close-ups should also be avoided.

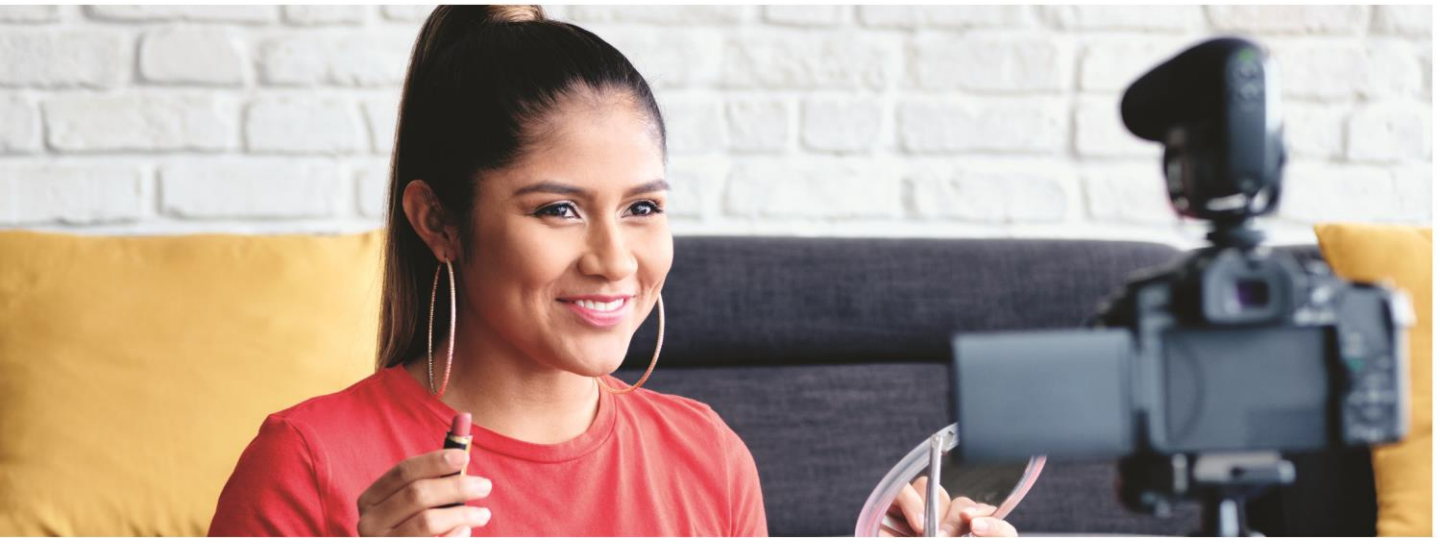
Vary your shots between close ups and some shots at a distance. The balance between the two will enhance your final video and provide engaging viewing for your audience.

5. KEEP A LEVEL HEAD

If your video includes an interview subject, then this simple setup strategy will help add to its professional appearance:

Avoid a camera setup that has your subject seated while you stand or has the subject standing while you're seated.

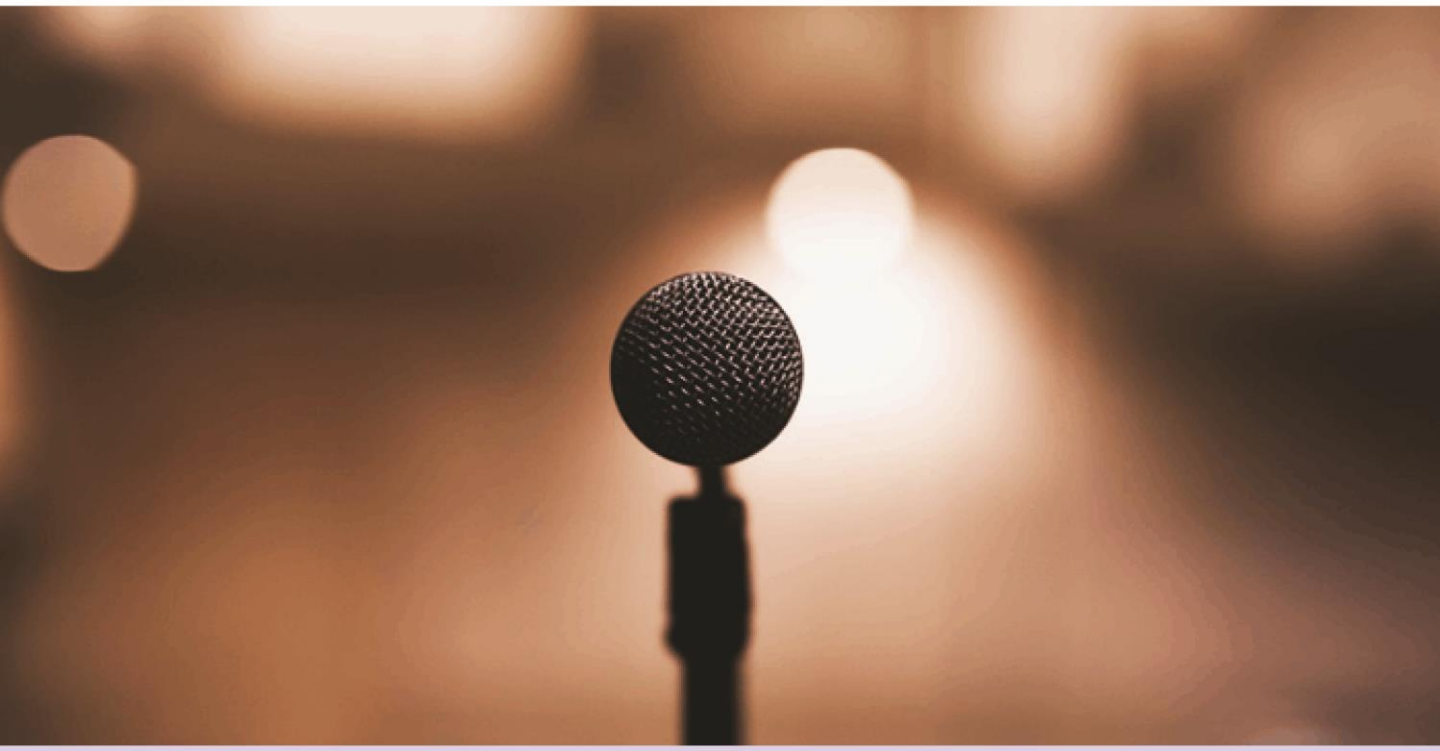
Instead, place your tripod so that your phone rests at the same level as the interview subject's head.



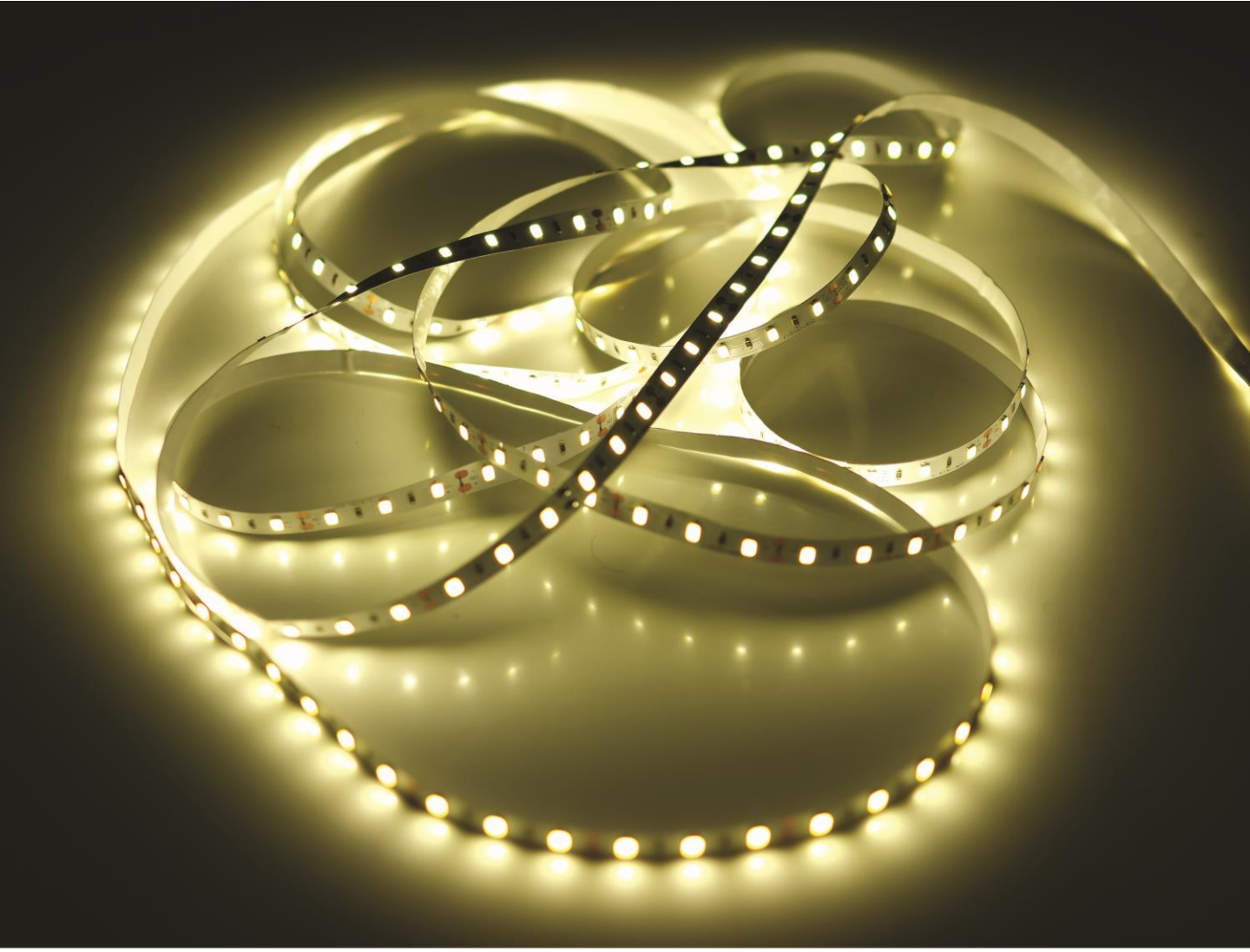
6. INVEST IN A MICROPHONE

There's an old saying in film that "people will overlook poor video quality when a story is good, but they will never forgive poor audio". This is just as true today as it ever was.

Although it might be effective in some situations, don't rely on your camera's built-in microphone for acceptable sound during an interview. Purchase an inexpensive lavalier microphone that can be plugged into your phone. Lavalier microphones, or "Lav mics" as they are called, are small and can be clipped onto your subject's clothing, hidden from the camera eye.



Need assistance with achieving the perfect sound? InsideHS can help.
Visit the IHS Supplier directory at insidehs.com for access to video production professionals such as A-V-A Video Productions and Buchanan Creative Solutions.



7. LIGHTING A DARK ROOM

If your shot takes place in a dark room, then artificial lighting is your best approach for quality results. LED lights are inexpensive and readily available at most home improvement stores. Two 100-watt LED bulbs in aluminum work light fixtures, placed on each side of your subject at about 6 feet apart from each other and the subject, will give you more than ample light for your phone's camera.

For a softer look to your shot, point the light at a white wall and bounce light onto your subject.

8. GET SHADY

If you're shooting an interview outside, do your best to keep both the subject and the camera in the shade.

By shooting in the shade, your lighting will be softer. Another extra benefit is that your subject won't be squinting from the sunlight.

In the event shade is unavailable in the location of your shoot, put the sun to your subject's back but be sure to avoid the silhouette effect discussed in Tip #2!

9. DON'T SKIMP ON THE RESOLUTION

Always use the highest video resolution settings available on your phone. The degree of quality between the highest resolution and the lower settings is a critical detail to address. Even the most well planned shots can be ruined by low-resolution video captured by a phone.

If your phone allows for the use of exchangeable Sim cards, purchase a card to use specifically for video projects. The more memory the card provides, the more video you can store before transferring your files to an external drive.

10. DIG INTO COLOR

Modern smartphones provide a wide range of filters and color settings. Check your phone's specific settings to make sure you have set the desired color balance.

Also examine any other settings related to the final look of your video recording to make sure they look correct.

If in doubt, use the "auto" settings offered in most smartphones.

NEXT LEVEL VIDEO NOW!

Let IHS help you make your next video production a cut above the rest with this hand-picked selection of IHS Suppliers:

A-V-A Video Productions has been providing high-quality video services since 1980. They can assist with all aspects of video production and provide a superior product at a very competitive price.

A high quality script is key and **EVC Marketing Communications** can ensure your message commands your audience's attention and never lets go.

AVA VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

evc MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

inside HOSPITALITY SOLUTIONS