



produce a segment

from <http://satellite.indymedia.org>

producer guide

Indymedia is a series dedicated to giving front-line progressive activists their own television show. You can help by covering actions in your home town. Indymedia is looking for current reports of people taking action to achieve progressive social, environmental and economic justice. Segments should be 5 minutes in length. For more information on how to get your segment onto Indymedia, contact the program team by sending e-mail to: imc-satellite@indymedia.org.

Never made a video segment before? Check out the sample segment below, and tips on how shoot and edit your own piece. Of course you are by no means limited to the following format suggestions, they're just there to give you an idea for what most people need to see in order to understand a story told on video.

Don't feel obligated to duplicate how corporate networks present news. Create new ways of communicating how people are taking action to achieve social, economic, and environmental justice.

segment producer tips

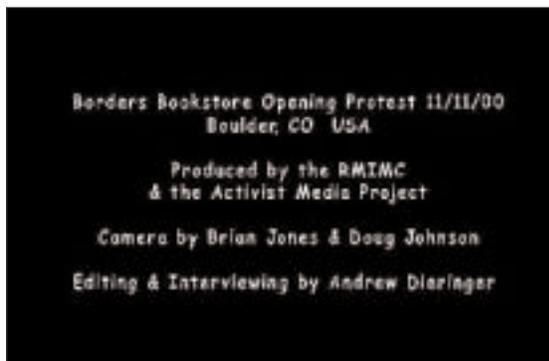
Here are just a few tips to help activists' stories be seen and heard.



basic elements of a segment

Titles

Tell viewers where the action happened, the date, and what it was about.



Credits and contact info

How can people get in touch with you, or with the organization or individual who was featured in your piece.

Narrative voices

"Narrative voices" tell the basics of a story to viewers who might not have any idea what's going on: who, what, where, when and how.



This can be done in many ways. Text, reporter on camera, interviews, it's your choice. Essentially, you are looking for something to put on video that gives answers to the following question. Who are you, why are you here, and what are you hoping to achieve?

It's good to interview at least three people. An activist or organizer who is doing something in the action. Then, interview someone who is directly affected by the problem. And interview someone from an opposing point of view. Remember to seek out diverse gender, racial and class voices. And always get on camera permission to use their statement and image for your segment.

Establishing Shots

These let viewers know where you are (in a park, on a street downtown, etc). They also indicate who is doing something (what kinds of folks are in crowd, who is speaking).



Cutaways

These are useful in telling the story as well. You can show a close up of handcuffs when someone interviewed says that people were arrested. Signs, speakers at rally, cops, victory celebration, puppets, all are useful cutaways that help let people know what was happening.



Music

Non-copyright from street is best (with permission from the musician of course). Or you can ask for written permission from local musicians, who might like to contribute to your project that way.

shooting tips in the field

Use an external microphone, radio shack has decent clip on mics for well under a hundred dollars. Remember to wear headphones to monitor audio at all times.

Avoid "back-light" that causes your foreground image to be in shadow.

Always get a release, or permission, for anything that you use in your segment. Ask permission to use a person's image on camera when interviewing, and get their consent on tape is the easiest way, and makes it "legal". If people are uncomfortable being on camera, respect that and make notes so that the footage isn't used. For interviews that can be used ask the person to spell their name, slowly, on camera, in case you want to add a title later.

Action shots are great, but also, remember to ask activists why they came out to the event, ask them to explain the issue to you, as if you have no idea what they are talking about (viewers may not know anything about issues until they hear it from this activist).

Make a point to talk with women and people of color. It's important that we not repeat corporate media's mistakes of excluding these voices. An interview with someone who is opposed to protestors is also useful in the final edit.

If the person you are talking with gets frustrated with how they are explaining why the event is important, help them relax, then just ask the question again and give them another stab at it.

Remember to get answers to the basic questions, on camera if possible: What, Where, Who, When, Why, How?

Avoid back-and-forth pans showing a large crowd. Wide, still shots, or one slow sweep is fine. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement on an event, but try and keep your camera steady at all times, using a tripod helps.

Have fun! Bringing a camera to an activist event is a great way to meet people and lend a feeling of security to an action.

Other Great Media Activist Resources

Whispered Media and the Video Activist Network

<http://www.whisperedmedia.org>

Grounding and Centering for Activists

<http://www.videoactivism.org/grounding.html>

Paper Tiger TV's "How To" Resources for Video Activists

<http://www.papertiger.org/roar/roarindex.html>

I-Contact's Video Activist Survival Kit

<http://www.videonetwork.org/kit/skit00.html>

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting's (FAIR) Media Activist Kit

<http://www.fair.org/activism/activismkit.html>

Media Access Project's list of "official" electronic media and telecommunications sites

http://www.mediaaccess.org/web_resources/index.html

The Ruckus Society's Media Manual for Activists

http://www.ruckus.org/man/media_manual.html

General Media Outreach Strategy for Activists by Saul Chernos

http://www.videoactivism.org/med_strad.html

Community Media Workshop's guide to writing Press Releases

<http://www.newstips.org/writerhelp.htm>

RAN's guide to writing Press Releases

http://www.ran.org/ran_campaigns/grassroots/index.html

Media Monopoly Chart by Media Space

http://www.mediaspace.org/MMI/mmi_frame.html