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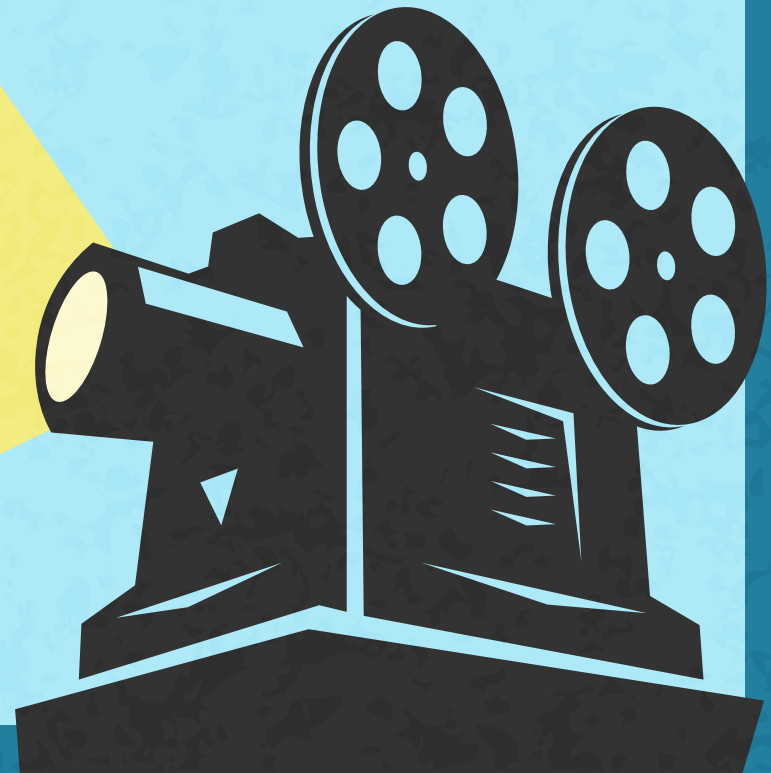
QUESTIONS

to ask your

**VIDEO MARKETING
AGENCY**

written by:

Rip Media Group



Can you imagine this? Your boss pops his head up and says:

"WE NEED A VIDEO TO TELL OUR STORY...ASAP!!!"



Easy to be the hero here, right? So, you spring into action:

"I'LL HANDLE THIS."

You search Google, ask some of your network.... and a week later you have an \$80 offer from a guy in a country you've never heard of, concept pitches from your nephew in film school ("All we need is a helicopter!"), and a \$200,000 'discount' offer from the agency that creates the Nike commercials.

Ugh! Now what?

HERE ARE THE QUESTIONS YOU REALLY NEED TO ASK:

1. HOW MANY OF YOUR ARTISTS, ANIMATORS, AND PROJECT MANAGERS ARE OVERSEAS?

The question itself is sneaky, right? If you ask, "Do you outsource?" you may get a different answer. "How many of your..." assumes that they do use overseas help and you should get the real answer.

If your project is outsourced overseas, the response time to any of your changes or revisions is typically 48 hours, which dramatically lengthens the production process, extends your delivery date and inflates your budget. You can't just pick up the phone and speak with the actual producer, editor or animator—unless it's 3am your time.

Quality drops and stress levels increase.



2. HOW MANY REFERENCES CAN I SPEAK WITH BEFORE WE START?

You certainly want to satisfy your due diligence. There are a lot of new companies out there calling themselves 'resellers' that are actually just web storefronts for other companies or fronts for overseas animation studios (See question 1).

Video production calls for a high level of service and effective collaboration—references can give you valuable insight into a company's process and quality of communication. A simple way to make sure you're getting the scoop from fellow professionals is to make sure references' email addresses and phone numbers match their business website.

3. WHAT STYLES CAN YOU PRODUCE?

We can't stress enough the importance of hiring a production company with expertise in a variety of styles of visual storytelling. Why? The visual style should fit the story. You never want to force your story to fit into a particular visual style.

In the midst of the creative process, you may want to pull in filmed footage or create multiple videos, or you may find motion graphic is a better way to explain your story. Be sure your agency can deliver what you need, when you need it. You have many stories to tell, don't limit yourself from the get-go.

4. HOW DO CHANGES AND ADJUSTMENTS FIT INTO THE PROCESS AND BUDGET?

If you want to be an active part of the creative process, providing input and making changes, be sure that your agency has planned for this in the schedule and the budget.

Many small agencies quote an artificially low price to start, but make a few changes and you may find your initial budget has now doubled. Large agencies can be less flexible when it comes to 'creative differences,' so make sure creative flexibility is built into your choice of agency. You know your business better than anyone. We believe it's the production company's job to listen to YOU!



5. HOW MANY PROJECTS CAN YOU MANAGE SIMULTANEOUSLY?

Be sure you know how many people are at the studio and how many projects can be managed in a single week. Be cautious of small shops or freelancers who can't handle multiple jobs. Once they get you started will they become scarce when a bigger payday comes along?



It's much like a small home improvement project: the plumber shows up and starts the work, then no one shows up for the rest of the week, you can't reach anyone, and you're stuck waiting for work to complete. As the video production industry grows, be sure to hold your agency to a high standard of quality, affordability, and attentive service.



6. CAN YOU SHOW ME ORIGINAL AND DIFFERENT STORIES?

Beware of companies that use the same story in every video. Templates that have been used over and over again may save time and money, but you're putting the most important goal of a video at risk: making an impact. It's simple: if a story has been heard a million times before, it won't be very effective.

It's scientifically proven that original and unique stories stay in our memories longer. Anyone can create a video, but it takes a committed agency to create a video that makes people feel emotion and take action.

7. CAN YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR PRODUCTION PROCESS?



If there is no defined process, your project can suffer from 'project creep' and take much longer than expected.

Look for something similar to our proven 5-step collaborative production process that keeps you in the loop and projects on track. Be sure it includes previews of key elements in your video so you can comment and sign off on each step of the production process.

See: <http://ripmediagroup.com/process/video-production>

8. HOW DOES YOUR AGENCY HANDLE AND TRACK NOTES?



Some client projects involve multiple stakeholders and decision makers, making collaboration and feedback a challenge. If the agency is managing a project via email, this could become a nightmare.



That's why it's critical to have a rock solid collaboration and project management system in place. Save yourself headaches from the beginning. Find out if your agency uses a Cloud-based system that makes it easy for everyone to access at the appropriate level of involvement. Ask to see it in action.

See an example of a solid Project Management System: <https://vimeo.com/71939634> p/w: Rip

9. HOW LONG IS THE PRODUCTION CYCLE AND HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?



While production budgets can vary according to the visual style, a brief project description should be sufficient to give you a reasonable estimate of time and money. If you have a rush project, be sure to get in touch with previous clients who were in a similar spot, and ask them how it went.

Always get a completed project rate quote, never hourly rates. With so many moving parts involved in the production process it's best to have clear delivery dates and budgets. Avoid uncertainty and feeling like the clock is ticking on your budget.


10. CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW THIS CAMPAIGN WILL FIT IN WITH OUR BRANDING?



Is the video being made to fit **your** branding, or does the video look a little too much like the brand of your video producer?

Even if all of the previous questions check out and you find you're dealing with a sterling, professional production company, it's important that you don't underestimate the significance of this question. Remember: you are not commissioning a painting—you are making a video for **your** company!

Video has a wider reach than anything you may do in marketing, so it is imperative that you are represented with **your** brand, **your** look, **your** feel, and **your** voice.



BE EMPOWERED!
ASK QUESTIONS!
AND GOOD LUCK!

P.S.: WE LOVE PRODUCING VIDEOS TO HELP YOU
REACH YOUR GOALS, WHETHER IT'S LIVE ACTION,
MOTION GRAPHIC ANIMATION OR WHITEBOARD
ANIMATION (A.K.A. SPEED DRAWING)!

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