COMMENTARY: [**#1 mistake that nonprofits make with fundraising videos**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=bed1b60e52&e=0dbb70a2f9)  
*Steven Shattuck, Business2Community blog, 11/13/14*  
It’s great to see nonprofits embracing digital content, especially video. In fact, [**our own survey**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=73998e9a9a&e=0dbb70a2f9) shows that about 50% of nonprofits are producing videos in conjunction with their fundraising efforts. However, there is a ubiquitous kind of nonprofit video that really irks me. Nonprofits who do a lot of events tend to tie their video production efforts to those events. Which would be okay if it was used as a promotional vehicle (i.e. watch this video to learn more about our upcoming gala). However, what I see too often is nonprofits who invest in a video that covers an event, using the finished product to tell people that an event happened. In other words, an added expense to an already expensive event is hiring a camera crew to cover it. There are a few problems with this kind of video:

* **The audience is unclear.** Who is the intended audience? Current donors? Non-donors who know you? Non-donors who don’t know you?
* **The purpose is unclear.** A common defense of this type of video is that it can be used to promote the next year’s version of the same event. But why do so 11 months ahead of time? If you want people to know what the event looks and sounds like (as if that would somehow increase interest), rather than the *purpose* of the event, the video probably won’t be very effective.
* **It’s super expensive.** With these videos, you can only have one: cheap or high-quality. However, there is a type of video that can be cheap, low-quality and extremely effective. Make videos that express gratitude, rather than promote the organization directly. Here is [**a simple video from a theatre group**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=84e0947078&e=0dbb70a2f9) that advocates for those suffering from AIDS. They are thanking an individual donor by singing him an “original serenade.” This video is incredibly simplistic in its production. Despite its low-budget nature, it is likely 100x more impactful than an expensive, highly-produced video shown at or after an (expensive) event. I strongly believe a majority of a nonprofit’s video budget and efforts should be focused on showing gratitude.

**How to get video at an event:** If you absolutely must get video at an event as it’s happening (which certainly has its merits), try crowdsourcing. Everyone who attends your gala has a fantastic camera in their pockets (their smartphone). Encourage attendees to take video at the event, and give them a platform to share it (a hashtag or your Facebook page).  
  
**Videos *for* an event:** Charities seem to think that showing a video at event is absolutely critical. With the proliferation of email, social media and other digital distribution channels, videos no longer need in-person events to be seen. While a polished video can be very effective, it often ends up snatching defeat from the jaws of victory. I remember attending a gala where an impassioned supporter made a moving ask and [then] a 3-minute video played. Because the video was so polished, promotional and differing in tone, it completely took away from the authenticity of what came before it. The expense in producing it was completely unnecessary, and may have had a real negative impact. So save those dollars for more personal videos throughout the year.

COMMENTARY: [**Producing a non-profit fundraising video that pays**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=fc9070c36e&e=0dbb70a2f9)  
*Katherine Leonard, TOKY blog, 11/5/14*  
Fundraising can be a challenge for any non-profit organization. Video can be a powerful tool — whether shown online or at an in-person donor meeting. When producing non-profit fundraising videos, [here are] a handful of guiding principles:

* **Don’t assume your audience is familiar with what you do.** You live and breathe your organization’s work every day. You speak the jargon, you feel the impact made on the community. But potential donors — especially those outside your current network — are likely unfamiliar with these details.
* **Make what your organization does relevant to anyone.** Be careful not to produce so narrow a message that it appeals only to audiences of a certain age, region, or income bracket. Potential donors aren’t necessarily located in your city. It’s important to appeal to those relatable, emotional moments we all share.
* **Balance internal metrics with real-world impact.** Your organization is staffed with expert practitioners whose achievements ultimately serve as the backbone of big picture change. At the end of the day, though, descriptions of these achievements — words that often sound torn from the pages of a board meeting agenda — are not going to inspire action from your potential donors. When discussing your achievements, do so through the lens of change.
* **Focus not on the tangible items your donations will buy, but on the lasting effect those funds will achieve.**  While your campaign will ultimately fund tangible items, the central focus should be the change those items will facilitate. This angle will not only solicit a stronger response from your audience — it will also result in evergreen material that be reused long after your campaign is funded.
* **Remember: this is a *fundraising* video, not an *awareness* video.** While there’s a time and a place for both, these are two very different goals with two very different strategies. With a fundraising video, you want to get the viewer to care, and from there, show them that their action is necessary. Think about it like this: your viewer has $100 to give to anyone. Why your organization? What are they ultimately investing in by choosing you?

COMMENTARY: [**What is your nonprofit’s YouTube strategy?**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=947726d330&e=0dbb70a2f9)  
*Jeanne Allen, Nonprofit Quarterly, 11/12/14*  
YouTube is the #2 search engine, which means people are going directly to YouTube to learn about your nonprofit. Your organization needs to be clear on your objectives so that you can draw those views, donations, or volunteers. Additionally, since Google owns YouTube, a strong presence on YouTube can increase your profile in Google searches.  
[**A recent article from ReelSEO**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=3e65eaa066&e=0dbb70a2f9), a video marketing blog, highlighted aspects of [**the YouTube for Nonprofits program**](http://verizon.us7.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=506fb17406&e=0dbb70a2f9). If your nonprofit is not part of this program yet, you’re missing out on three unique perks.

1. **Call To Action Overlays:** All eligible nonprofits can enable and set up in-video links to any website landing page. This means your nonprofit can superimpose a headline or a display URL on your video. This feature allows viewers to learn more about your organization with a direct link to your chosen landing page.
2. **YouTube Channel Donation Button:** Place a donate button on [your] nonprofit’s YouTube channel and link it to Google Wallet. The advantage is that viewers don’t have to leave YouTube to make a donation. The donate function is available only to U.S. and Canadian nonprofits.
3. **Google Ad Grants for Paid Advertising Campaigns:** The Google Ad Grants program is the nonprofit equivalent of AdWords, Google’s online advertising tool, and give nonprofits a $10,000 monthly grant in-kind via AdWords advertising. It is important to use keywords very specific to your content. The advertising can drive people to a video, your YouTube channel, or to your website.

From the YouTube nonprofit page, you can also download two guides, [***Playbook for Good***](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=959d7e9269&e=0dbb70a2f9) and the [***Top 10 Fundamentals For Nonprofits***](http://verizon.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7b3692e5974d30da3d7aca79f&id=3b0d269140&e=0dbb70a2f9), that spell out in detail how your nonprofit make the most of YouTube.