

# Lights, camera, action

If you have a smartphone you could increase your business profile in the time it takes to read this article. Web designer Laverne Pereira examines the practical considerations and celebrity trainer Christianne Wolff explains how to look good presenting.

The chances are that, even if you don't own a smartphone, a friend or colleague will. According to Ofcom's recent communication market report, 27% of adults are smartphone users<sup>1</sup> (59% of these getting one in the last year) with half of 16-24 year-olds owning one. Smartphones come equipped with a video camera and the latest ones even film in HD quality; they can be a cost effective and easy way to film yourself to boost your profile.

## Top tips

- #1** Make sure your camera phone is steady as nothing is more distracting to your audience than the screen shaking around. If you don't think you've got steady hands, you can buy tripods and other gadgets that can help you film without any movement.
- #2** On an iPhone, you can focus and change the depth of field by tapping the screen where you want it to focus. This will also adjust the exposure to make sure you get the best possible shot for filming.
- #3** Make sure your background is clear of distractions, which will take the attention away from the subject. Don't just point and shoot – take some time to think about what your user will see regarding the background and also what the person in front of the screen is wearing. Does this fit with the message you're trying to get across?
- #4** If you are filming yourself without any help, then the latest smartphones have an inbuilt front camera with which you can preview yourself while recording. The issue with this is that the quality of the lens in the front is not that high, so it is more suited for outdoor filming with a lot of available light. Consider using

a tripod for this; most people hunch their neck forwards or forget to centre themselves within the shot.

- #5** The latest versions of smartphone software allow you to edit film length after filming. Trim and shorten your video so you can email it to a client or share it online. Some smartphones have their own settings and edit modes, where you can change the white balance (which alters the colour balance of the image), add effects, add a timer or even choose the dimensions.

Practically, you should aim for a video that is no more than five minutes long – people have increasingly short attention spans, especially when it comes to online content. [fm](#)

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## LAVERNE PEREIRA

Laverne is a web designer for FitPro Ltd.  
[www.fitpro.com](http://www.fitpro.com)

## Apps

Some smartphones lack software capabilities; if this is the case with your phone, then it's often worthwhile investigating what apps are available. There are thousands of free or cheap apps to aid your recording, editing and sharing, making it easier for you to do it yourself on the go, without having to upload it to a computer and edit it there.

### iMovie (£2.99 Apple app store)

You simply tap to add video and photos, drag to trim clips and slide to preview your project. You can also add music, themes, titles and transitions to give your video a professional edge.

### Splice (free at the Apple app store)

This is a great iPhone app that utilises drag-and-drop functionality to mix video clips, audio tracks and photos. It's a simple but sophisticated way to showcase your projects. It only works on the iPhone 4 and 3GS running iOS4.

### VidTrim

Who says Apple users should have all the fun? Android phones come with a host of incredible video editing apps too. The most popular is VidTrim and it includes multiple features. You can grab frames or trim down videos right on your device. It also has a 'save as' feature, which allows you to play back and delete videos. You can share your videos with your friends directly through the app. VidTrim is available as either a paid (pro) or free (ad-supported) version.

### Clesh

Another popular Android app, the Clesh Video Editor is cloud-based. All of its key functions, such as the ability to drag and drop frames, storyboard, mix still images and video clips, and share, etc. can be accessed through a smartphone. More advance editing features can be found through the web browser on your PC or Mac computer.

To take a look at FitPro's YouTube channel visit [www.youtube.com/fitproLtd](http://www.youtube.com/fitproLtd)

**Y**ouTube isn't just a video platform; it is also a social network. Collectively, we spend 2.9 billion hours on the site in one month. So, if you're using social media for marketing, YouTube has the potential to be an important part of your overall strategy.

You don't need access to world-famous directors or presenters to highlight and reinforce your message, improve your profile and create dialogue around your content. Flip cameras and mobile phones are the easiest way to film and then upload to YouTube. There is also a whole host of free websites where you can edit your film, adding music and text, including YouTube itself.

This is a great medium to increase your profile but it's vital that you come across well on camera, so that your content isn't diminished and people take you seriously. So, how do you present successfully to the camera?

#### Get your friend to film you

When I was filmed for my first TV broadcast, it was freezing cold, raining and I was in a little crop top in a park. I had to be bubbly and look like I was having fun. One of the other presenters there was waiting behind the camera and, every time they filmed me, he jumped up and down, smiling and waving his arms around to make me feel upbeat – and amazingly that gave me loads of energy. I have used this ever since when filming. So, when you are talking to the

camera, treat it like you are just talking to one friend.

#### Speak in sound bites

Viewers have a tendency to remember sound bites so, before you present, write down your main points on note cards. Sound bites increase the chance that the audience will remember your message.

#### Be entertaining

Work on presenting compelling information in a way that retains the attention of the audience – if you are learning a script, then sound chatty when performing it and don't be scared to ad-lib. Do it frequently so you feel comfortable and you will relax. Make sure you are really clear about what you are going to say before you film and you won't look tense. Be yourself; people get annoyed if you put on an act – your viewers want to get to know you and like you.

#### Be adventurous

No one ever remembers a boring presenter. Work on making your message special and distinctive. If you come across as ordinary, the audience will perceive you or your product as being ordinary as well. You don't have to present sitting behind a desk all the time – why not try new things?

#### Get the look right

Be mindful that most of the shot needs to be close so you have strong eye contact, then wide shots if you're showing how to perform an exercise. You don't need to spend loads of money but make sure you get the lighting

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right; light should never be behind you, so you are not bleached out by the sun. Filming outdoors looks more professional as you have natural light but make sure it's not too windy and do not have your face in the sun or you will squint.

#### If at first ...

... you don't succeed then try and try again. One of the great things about filming on a smartphone is that, if the first take isn't right, you can just do it again. There are a lot of videos on the internet from PTs who haven't invested enough time and effort in their videos. Don't be one of these; don't put something up or send it to a client until you're proud of what you've done. And remember, the more you are filmed, the more comfortable you will become on camera. [fn](#)

### CHRISTIANNE WOLFF

Christianne is a celebrity personal trainer who mentors trainers into getting into national media and helps find them a celebrity to train. She has trained A-list celebrities and presented on TV and radio. [www.celebritytrainercoach.com](http://www.celebritytrainercoach.com)

