Video News Release

…it’s me, live at five…

News programming approaches

- General news program -- Newscasts.
- Straight news shows -- Specific topics
  - consumer affairs, garden news, financial reports
- Informational news programming -- Short pre-produced segments used as supplements in many TV newscasts, in the morning, at noon or at 5 p.m.
  - Examples?

News programming approaches

- Newsfeeds – Supplemental stories sent by major networks or newsfeed organizations to TV stations for extra stories/information.
- Niche networks and programming -- Reach a specific audience.
  - “Network marketing.”
  - TV Food Network, Health and Sciences TV Network, Home and Garden TV Network.

VNR Usage

- Similar to the common print “news release.”
  - Sent almost exclusively to TV stations and cable outlets.
- Widespread use.
- Corporations – promote product (Theme parks)
- Nonprofit organizations – promote activities. (D.A.R.E. – anti-drug)
- Educational institutions – promote research, extension. (TAMU – research, sports)

VNR ethics

- GOAL is to get positive coverage.
- Is there an ethical dilemma for broadcasters to use VNRs?
- Would you make a VNR?
- Would you use a VNR?
VNR format

- Just like a regular television story.
- Content is controlled by the producer.
- Gives up some "control" to the TV station when it airs.
  - Example: Names not included on the VNR, so TV stations can use their own text style.
- Although a VNR promotes an organization or activity, it needs to be written objectively.

VNR format

- Usually 1:30-2 minutes. Features can be 5-20 minutes.
- Follow rules of good video shooting.
- Script accompanies and is word-for-word. (No misspellings!)
- Usually has the VNR package, then followed by VO/SOT.

What did he say?? News lingo

- VO (voice over) – just video.
  - A script is sent with the video for the anchor to read while the video is shown. (Provided video/footage also known as B-ROLL.)
- VO/SOT (voice over/sound on tape) – An anchor reads a script during the voice over (video).
  - SOT is a soundbite (interview), usually 20 seconds or less.
- Package – a complete story.
  - Usually about 1.5 minutes in length.

What did he say?? News lingo

- Soundbite – part of an interview. It is a “bite” of a longer piece.
  - Soundbites in stories are usually 20 seconds or less.
- Stand-up – Reporter narrating a portion of a story while he/she is seen.
- Outcue – the last thing a reporter says.

VNR format

- Why provided in so many formats (package, VO, SOT, script?)
- Want to get airtime!
- Provide as many different ways as possible for TV station to show/use your information.

VNR format

- Color bars with audio tone (20 seconds)
- Black (5-10 seconds)
- Name/location “supers” and times they appear in story
- Countdown (5-10 seconds)
- Package – last shot should last at least five seconds AFTER the outcue
- Black (5-10 seconds)
- Full-screen slate saying what/who the VO/SOT footage is
- VO/SOT footage
VNR script format

- Title
- Running time
- Short introduction for anchor to read
- Name/location "supers" AND times they appear in story
- Word-for-word script (including soundbites)

Getting your VNR aired

- Need GOOD story ideas.
- Tie VNR to with "hot" news.
  - Terrorism, anthrax, wildfire prevention.
- Tie VNR to regular events/holidays.
  - Proper turkey preparation at Thanksgiving
- Need good visuals.
  - Roller coasters, celebrities

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