

How to Build a Successful (and Profitable) Media Production



Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Great television shows and films have staying power, which means they capture and keep the viewers' attention and often motivate them to action. For some shows, this could mean tuning in week after week for each new episode.

For documentary films, it could mean changing a lifestyle or habit to help effect change. Successful media productions have several qualities that help encourage viewership, inspire action and leave viewers satisfied. For the producer, successful productions mean an increase in profit. These essential qualities cross genres, locations, production lengths and much more.

A structure to fit the genre

There are various ways to develop a storyline, but certain expectations exist for particular genres. Many television shows follow the three-act structure that tends to define literary works. The beginning, the middle and the end divide a storyline across an individual segment and an entire series. The characters, settings and plot unfold differently through these periods, giving the viewer a way to follow the show without getting lost.

It's also important to remember how the audience will watch the production. Productions developed for television must account for commercial breaks or other interruptions, such as programming changes. Building up tension with dramatic elements or omitted information can keep viewers engaged with the show and keep them from changing channels during a commercial. In a film, think about where to insert some comic relief or how to bring an audience down from an intense moment of action.

Related: 10 Ways Producing Television Taught Me to Succeed

A clear but unique point of view

For a production to receive the attention that will (ideally) make it successful and profitable, it should stand out and be distinct from other shows or films in its genre. There is an audience for every type of production out there, but chances are, someone else is already filling the market with a product.

Viewers want a fresh new take on something familiar. Changing how you host a talk show or incorporating elements you need to become more familiar with gives you a way to present something different. The newness of your presentation and idea needs to make sense while generating the necessary curiosity to see

more.

A storyline containing meaningful conflict

Whether you're filming a sports theme, documentary, talk show or comedy, it's imperative to include significant conflict elements to generate viewership and satisfy your audience. Conflict can take many forms and add to the development of an idea, such as with a talk show. Healthy conflict involves reasoning between two or more ideas to inspire dialogue. It could also include situations that test a particular character, whether physically, intellectually or emotionally.

If you're developing a television series, incorporate conflict that spans the entire series or across several episodes. The desire for resolution helps attracts viewers over the duration, but working in shorter periods of conflict within an episode can attract and hold their attention over the short term. In longer films, it's crucial to keep conflict from playing out too long, at least with brief moments that offer some sort of resolution. An audience needs hope when watching characters they can trust and relate to.

Related: 5 Steps to Craft a Story That Hooks Your Audience Every Time

A screen full of believable characters

Your storyline and presentation engage more viewers when the characters are interesting, relatable, and believable. This is important whether you produce a daily talk show, mini-series or full-length film. Your audience wants to be captivated by those they are watching, whether it's their interactions with one another, how they respond to situations or how they handle

emotional or physical challenges. While not everyone can relate to being a superhero, the drama and friction inherent in unconventional relationships are something many can appreciate.

If the media production is a newscast, keep the audience in mind when selecting anchors for a particular story or segment. Seasoned anchors may appear more sympathetic and understanding when discussing sensitive information or social problems. Characters developed for a comedy shouldn't abandon all maturity and seriousness, especially in real-world scenarios where subtlety is necessary.

Related: [Top 10 Horror Movie Entrepreneurs](#)

A dialogue that enhances character perception

Whether it's a rom-com, sports talk show or marketing production, the audience knows the importance of less is more when it comes to dialogue. Unnecessary, filler conversation is unappealing and creates the perception that the production is slow or out-of-touch. All dialogue or discussion should work to draw the audience into the storyline or segment, often done through humor, honesty, passion and more. Make sure the dialogue fits both the show and the character. When a character is known for a sense of humor or the inability to be discreet, it helps bring the characters to life and causes the show to stand out from others in the field.

These are just some of the critical factors to consider when planning your next media production. While it's important to have your idea and vision for the work in mind, it's how the audience will perceive and engage with the end result that matters. Their loyalty is what makes it successful and profitable.

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/growing-a-business/5-things-all-successful-and-profitable-media-productions/443374>