

# Technology 101: Practical Tips on Using Video to Reach Teens

Day: Monday, Feb 6, 2017

Time: 8:30AM - 9:20AM

Location: GC 101

Abstract: In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Paul revealed that regardless of where he was at, he embraced the culture surrounding him in order to reach more souls. Today, our culture (and especially our youth) is heavily consumed in media and technology. My goal in this session is to see how we, like Paul, can effectively embrace the culture around us by means of videos to impact more souls for Christ.

## INTRODUCTION:

I. A few crucial statements to start when it comes to using videos in your ministry.

- A. Each video must have a purpose and it must align with your overall goals and purpose as a minister.
- B. Videos will not fix your ministry; videos must be viewed as a supplement, not a cure.
- C. Posting videos, or anything else for that matter, on social media makes the church and your ministry vulnerable to negative publicity. Posting something online with the churches name on it is a huge responsibility and must not be taken lightly.

II. Let's start with purpose! What is your purpose as a minister?

- A. Mission Statement: Serving and encouraging your congregation's youth and families to develop a heart to love, honor, and serve God.
- B. Can videos be used to fulfill this mission statement? Absolutely! However, if you are not careful, it can also damage it.
  - 1. The videos you choose to implement into your ministry must be purposeful; and they must align with your overall mission as a minister.

III. We must also understand that videos will not FIX your ministry.

- A. Videos cannot fix your attendance numbers. Videos cannot stop kids' misbehavior. Videos cannot save their soul.
- B. Videos must only be used as a supplement to your work as a minister.
  - 1. There are all kinds of health supplements and work-out supplements you can buy. If you were to only take those supplements and neglect exercising and eating right, you will not become any healthier or stronger. Supplements build upon and improve our continual invested work.

2. In the same way, videos are not the cure that will fix your young people's heart. The cure only comes from direct contact with the word of God.
  3. Videos supplement the work you have already established. It grabs our young people's attention and helps be become more attentive to our goals and message.
- IV. And again posting content with the church's name makes the church vulnerable to negative publicity and vicious attacks by others. It's a great responsibility that you must not take lightly.
- A. Anyone can post a comment on your page. You have no control of what others post. It can be extremely harmful to the church if not properly monitored.
  - B. You must also cautious of what you post with the church's name on it. It can very easily turn someone away from God rather than towards him in used foolishly.
- V. Alright, here's how I'm going to break up the rest of this session. Feel free to interject at any point with questions, comments, or feedback throughout the rest of the lecture.
- A. First will start off by looking some **ideas** videos can help reach your goals. Like I eluded to earlier, we will look at what options you have when it comes to videos and how you can implement those tools in your ministry.
  - B. Second, we will look at both production and marketing **tools** used to produce and distribute your videos.
  - C. Lastly, we'll briefly discuss the **effects** videos can have on your ministry and some of the stories I've heard and witnessed from others. – Let's get started!

## DISCUSSION:

- I. **[IDEAS]** What type of videos can help you, as ministers, reach the goals and aspirations you have for your congregation? This is not an exhaustive list of options. But it may spark some ideas. So, let's start brainstorming a little bit!
  - A. Promotion Videos (Reminder Videos) - These are very quick videos ranging from 10 sec. – 1 min. (optimally 30 sec.) that catch the eye of your youth group.
    1. It's goal can be to reminding them of an upcoming event, encourage them to sign up for an event, encourage them to invite their friends, get them excited, etc.
    2. These are attention grabbing videos that require some creativity or a crazy mind.
    3. General Rule: don't go over 1 minute. Think about it, the videos they watch on snapchat last no longer than 10 seconds. Normally they close the video before it ends. To make a successful video you want something fast, eye catching, and memorable.
    4. Think this is too hard? Not creative? Why don't you get your kids to make it?

- a. This generation is good at coming up with funny ideas and catchy videos. They do it on their own every day
- b. You will get a greater response from a video if your kids are actively involved in producing it.
- c. So pick some kids to help, give them some guidelines, and let them help you create a fun productive video.

#### B. Highlight Videos (Recap/Slideshow Videos)

1. Kids love seeing pictures and videos of themselves. Why do you think selfies are so popular?
2. Create a video (or getting one of your kids to create a video) of the last youth trip or even just posting pictures. This is a great way to get your kids excited about your youth program.
3. These videos can be as simple as a picture/video clip slideshow with fun (appropriate) music in the background. Or you can go more elaborate with interviews, commentary, etc. It all depends on what type of results you are looking to get from the video. (What's your purpose?)
4. Just make sure, if you have a "smaller youth group" (less than 20-30), to do the best you can to include each person who went on the trip (at least in a group shot at some point). You want to make sure everyone is recognized and feels included. This is very important to their generation.
5. These videos can last a little longer than your promotional videos because kids are actively looking for themselves in the picture/video montage. Make sure if you create a picture slide show, the image is panning or zooming in or out in some fashion or form and the image on the screen for only 3-5 seconds. Same goes for videos, a single shot should not last for more than 10 seconds (3-5 seconds is optimum).
  - a. If you have background music playing. Limit it to one song or at least the length of one full song (2-5 minutes). No Stairway to Heaven or American Pie type songs.

#### C. Special Event Videos

1. But these are the videos you might to be played during a specific event such as: Senior Banquet Slideshows, Youth Rally Introduction Videos, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Since this is kind of an umbrella category, heed the same advice I gave in the previous categories: be mindful of the time, have a variety of movement, shots, and cuts, be purposeful.

#### D. Live Videos

1. Especially apparent on Facebook and Instagram – Live videos are streamed straight from your phone/tablet/camera to your profile page.
2. Once someone starts a live video, Facebook notifies all his/her friends. Instagram has its own way of notifying people when a video has gone live.
3. I have seen several youth ministers live stream their devotions on their Facebook page so parents and youth group members who missed the devotional could watch the devotional live or on-demand (Facebook and YouTube only; not on Instagram).
4. Several ministers have related to me live videos are a major hit with their youth groups. The live videos keep the kids who missed up to date, let's parents know what's going on, also when shared can become an evangelistic tool.
5. If you record your devotionals, classes, etc. be mindful of what you say! Like I said there is a great responsibility when posting stuff online. Careful what you say about other kids in the youth group not there, other church members, other religious organizations, etc. Don't let your live videos turn people away from Christ.

#### E. Videos used for Illustrations in Classroom/Devotionals

1. This idea did not come from me, but rather a ministry friend of mine, Derrick Smith, who has used videos in his classroom multiple times as educational aids to illustrate certain biblical points.
2. You do not necessarily have to shoot or produce these videos.
3. Quote from Derrick: "For example, one time I showed a video of a campus journal asking students if there was any absolute truth and we discussed and responded to it. Another time I showed a video of sheep responding only to their shepherd's voice to illustrate the teachings of Jesus. The students enjoy these classes where video is utilized. I can see a difference in their energy and attention when they walk into the classroom and see the video equipment set up... I see their engagement, I see their attention, I see their energy... I believe video in the classroom is more successful because it helps to connect us with each other... I know that the students enjoy watching something together and then discussing it together because it connects them and involves real interaction with real people."
4. I find most notable in Derricks quote the fact that video enabled real physical interactive connection. It sparked conversation or broke the ice. I find many teenagers are missing this type of interaction because their excess intake of media. This is one tool we can use to spark attention for the gospel, and a way to build relationships inside your youth group. That's incredible.
5. Of course YouTube is the best source to find videos like these.
  - a. There are also several ministries around the brotherhood that have great information for you personally and for your kids.

b. The Jenkins Institute, Hidden Bridge Media, the AIM Series, 12 Questions, One Word Study, the skit guys, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

II. **[TOOLS]** I want to first give some marketing and social media tips, these are the tools you use to reach your kids. This information can also be applied to more than just posting videos. I will also briefly discuss video production tools you can use to create your video ideas.

A. Social media is one of the best way to market to your kids. You might have made the next viral video, but if you don't know how to publish it, the video is useless.

1. However, if you plan to use social media in your ministry, it is vital for you, as ministers, to understand how social media impacts your kids both positively and negatively.

a. Communication is where you send and receive messages from another person. Thanks to technology and media, there are all types of ways to send a message. Each medium has its own set of abilities and limitations. Picture each medium like a different size tube that can transfer messages back and forth from one end to the other.

i. With face-to-face communication, picture the tube information travels through like the size of a huge cave. When communicating this way, floods of information can pass through this tube: words, tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, hand gestures, touch, and even smell.

ii. Using a different medium, the size of the tube we send information to gets reduced. For instance, when we Facetime someone, some information gets left out: hand gestures, body language, touch, smell, etc. Picture the size of this tube, like a spelunking hole. Seems restrictive, but you can still make do with it.

iii. When we call someone, communication is further limited. Picture this like passing information through a large pipe of conduit.

iv. Sending videos, pictures, voice recordings to people takes away a timely response, therefore the tube gets even smaller.

v. Now when we get to texting, direct messaging, Twitter, Facebook, etc. there is a character limit. Picture this like passing information through a straw.

b. Humans love connecting with people. That's one of the big reasons many of you are here at Freed-Hardeman's lectureships. We love reconnecting with old friends, reminiscing about old stories, and maybe even making new connections. It's fun and pleasurable.

i. Media has been described by scholars as extensions of ourselves making connections with those we cannot reach on a physical level.

ii. Radio extended man's voice; the telephone extended our voice and ears; the television extended our eyes and ears and producers voice; smartphones have extended everyone's eyes, ears, and voice. We also have control time, by consuming media live or on demand.

iii. Go back to the example of the different size tubes carrying of information. The size of the tube in which information travels is determined by the level of connection created by the extensions of media. Hence why we feel less connected by text messages than phone calls or less connected by Facetime than face-to-face interaction.

iv. We are less satisfied with our limited extended connection than we are with face-to-face connections. Just as communication is limited by the size of our extensions, so is our warm fuzzy feelings while we make that connection. To compensate, we either meet up with that person later or constantly text, call, or facetime that person. This is one of the reasons why teenagers have become addicted to their phones.

c. Even though we are less satisfied with media communication, we have found we can be in greater control of the messages we send.

i. We don't have to be mindful of their body language, tone of voice, or timeliness of their response. Communicating in this way is easier!

ii. But when kids grow up using these technologies, they prefer communicating in this way and become addicted to "straw size" connection they have with their peers. They never learn how to develop true deep intimate connections with others. (Now you know why this generation is more depressed).

They have an addiction to a "fix" (media) that doesn't satisfy their real need for communication, relationships, and intimacy. Growing up this way hinders their ability to communicate and they become fearful of real communication. The very thing that would satisfy their needs.

Picture it like someone who is thirsty for water and finds a crack in the wall that slowly dripping water. But they ignore the huge waterfall just around the corner because that person fears it.

e. Are your kids addicted?

i. What normally happens right before Bible class? Are your kids talking with one another and enjoying each other's company? Or are they all looking down at their cellphone, scared to say anything to one another? Be watchful and mindful of who would rather be on their phones than create a meaningful relationship with Christian peers.

ii. I am not saying we should avoid social media! I am saying we should be mindful of its effects, use it appropriately, and not get too caught up into it.

- iii. Look for the warning signs with your kids who seem to never put their phone down.
- iv. Look for ways to help your kids build meaningful relationships with one another without using their phones.
- v. Not only will this help them as a human being psychologically and emotionally, but if they build meaningful relationships with other Christians, it may also save their soul.

f. Social media is an incredibly useful tool. But it can debilitate us and those around us if we are not careful. This is my warning before we get any further.

2. Now, how can we use social media in a positive manner effectively?

a. Choosing how to use each social media platform should be determined by what you are posted and who you want your post to reach.

- i. I tried to look for stats regarding which social media site our teens and parents use, but the only stats I could find were from 2014. Things have changed drastically since then.
- ii. I would suggest you survey your own youth group to determine which medium to use.

b. YouTube – post all your videos to it!

- i. If the video is only 2 seconds or if it's clip of something funny your kids did, I wouldn't worry about it.
- ii. But if it's a video you took time to edit and put together, I would suggest you submit to YouTube, then share the link on your youth group's preferred social media sites.
- iii. Why? YouTube does a great job providing stats, analysis, and figures to see how productive your video was. It has an accurate view count and it can give you demographic information on the viewers.

iv. Sample stats:

You got 100 views. 70 views from Tennessee. 35 views from Tennessee were kids 12-18 year olds, 20 views from Tennessee were 35-55 year olds, 15 from TN were 55+. 10 views from Alabama, 15 from KY, 2 from Africa, 3 from Mexico.

60 views were male, 40 were female.

Your video was 1-minute long. Average watch time was 35 seconds. The average watch time in Tennessee 55 seconds.

- v. You can gain a lot of intel about your video through these statistics. The intel can help improve your reach, impact, and video quality.
- vi. Beware, due to copyright laws, you will not be able to play some songs on your YouTube video (Facebook is also strict about this). You won't know till you post it. I've only had this issue a couple of times. It's normally for songs that just came out, or particularly stingy record companies.
- vii. This is a good time to say, use good judgement when it comes to copyrighted material. Again, it goes back to the purpose of your video; make sure you use copyrighted content appropriately. If you have any questions regarding this, let me know.

c. Facebook - Almost everyone is on Facebook now. 81% of all Americans are on Facebook. 70% of Facebook users get on daily.

- i. Even if your youth group members do not prefer Facebook over other platforms, their parents do! It's vital to include them.
- ii. One thing about posting videos directly to Facebook: the "number of views" indicator counts impressions not actual views.
  - Impressions are where someone saw the video.
  - Views are where someone watched the video.
- iii. If you are on Facebook for over 5 minutes you end up scrolling through hundreds of videos. Facebook counts that as a view for each video you scrolled past.
- iv. To accurately assess the outreach of your videos, upload them to YouTube and share the link rather than directly posting it to Facebook. The video plays the same and you receive more accurate feedback.

d. Instagram - huge hit with younger generations (especially millennials).

- i. Mom, dad, grandma, and granddad haven't started using it yet. This makes it more appealing to the younger audiences.
- ii. Instagram is designed to post videos you have taken from your phone. It is not ideal to post a 2:30 minute edited video directly to Instagram.
- iii. Ideally you should not post a video on Instagram over 30 seconds long (maybe only 10 seconds).



- iii. However, you can use Instagram to promote your full-length video. Take a screenshot of your video or make a 5-10 second clip. Post that video/picture to Instagram with a link to the full-length YouTube video.
- iv. Instagram can also be used to post pictures and videos you take during a youth event. It's a great place to post your "group photos".
- v. Also, post pictures or videos when you attend kids' sports games, choir concerts, etc. Getting "tagged" in a post means the world to your kids. It's a way you can show you care about them. Especially if you post it on your personal account and not just the youth groups page.

#### e. Twitter

- i. If your youth group uses Twitter, I would give you similar advice as I did with Instagram. It may not be the best place to post your edited 2:30 minute video. Instead post a teaser picture or video from your full-length video and the link for them to go to YouTube.
- ii. What is especially cool about Twitter is you can see how many people saw your post (impressions) and how many people click your link or watched your clip. This is extremely useful in measuring the outreach Twitter has in your ministry.
- ii. Pictures and videos catch peoples eye! If you want to stand out from all the other garbage your kids follow on twitter, attach some sort of image or short video with your written post.

#### f. Snap Chat – I really not sure hope we should approach Snapchat.

- i. It is not Practical for full-length videos and is not as versatile as Instagram or Twitter.
- ii. If you send a picture or video to someone personally, the image is gone after it is opened (but can be replayed). If you post it a story for everyone to see, it last for 24 hours. The videos have to come from your phone.
- iii. Your comments are layered on top of your pictures or videos. You cannot open a link from these comments like Instagram or Twitter.
- iv. My major issue is with the "Stories" page. Right below where your friends can post their stories, there is a what is called the featured section.
  - The featured section has profiles you can subscribe to: DailyMail, Cosmopolitan, People Magazine, ESPN, BuzzFeed, Bleacher Report, MTV, Vice, Vogue, etc.

- These companies post updates daily on various topics. Most of the pages contain vulgar or inappropriate articles, pictures, and videos. These sections cannot be removed or deleted and are put on the forefront of the app. (Think pictures from the grocery store rack)
- I do not like the idea of encouraging our youth to go to an app that has this degree of temptation and this level and ease of access to “pornographic” content.
- Your kids would literally be one click away from the youth group post and then one click away to the latest Kardashian nudes.
- I would also encourage you to inform parents about this as well and have them monitor how their child is using this app. It’s all on the same page!

v. My suggestion is, use Snapchat to your discretion.

g. Facebook Live/Instagram Live

- i. It can be used to stream devotionals, youth rallies, or maybe just fun occurrences on youth trips. (Remember though, you want kids staying out of their phones while at youth events, not on them watching what you post).
- ii. Several youth ministers that I have talked to promoted the use of Live streaming.
- iii. Facebook live saves the video on your profile, which enables users to watch the video later. Instagram does not save the video. You can only watch it while it is streaming live.
- iv. Both Facebook and Instagram notify your friends when someone goes live. It also gives a live count of who is watching your video. (Because this number is live data, the results are not distorted because impressions and views would be the same thing).

h. IMPORTANT NOTE: If the kids don’t use a certain app or social media platform, don’t expect them to change what they normally use because you asked them to. There’s no sense in fighting a losing battle. If your kids don’t use Twitter, but you like it, who cares? Use what the kids use! Go to where they are, not the other way around.

- i. Luckily these days most kids are on multiple social media platform. Use the platforms that fits your youth group AND that fits the goals you have established.
- ii. If there is a mixture between Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, use all of them. Go where the kids are, don’t redirect them to something they don’t use or that is harmful/inappropriate.

- iii. Be aware as media changes, your kids' preferences may change as well. Don't just get on every new fling (You will constantly have to recreate an audience following). Assess what youth group uses, and make changes accordingly.

## B. Production Tools

### 1. Software equipment

- a. If you have a Mac, iMovie is the best free program out there. It is a miniature version of Final Cut Pro X (\$299.99), which is Mac's professional video editing software. Simple to use, extremely powerful. Great product. I've used it several times. It has the capability to do everything we have mentioned today. You can also download iMovie on your iPad. I have never used it on the iPad before so your using it at your own risk.
- b. Inside Adobe's list of programs in the Creative Cloud, you have Adobe Premiere. Right now, this is one of the leading video editor software out there. This is what I do most of my production work in.

I'm only relating this tool in case you already had the Creative Cloud subscription. I would not suggest purchasing the subscription unless you also plan to use Photoshop, Illustrator, and all the other programs that go with it.

If you already have the Creative Cloud subscription and would like to use Premier, there are all kinds of video tutorials on YouTube you can watch to learn how to use it. I will not go into the logistics of it today, but if you have any questions feel free to speak to me afterwards or contact me later.

- c. If you have a Windows computer and are not subscribed to Adobe's software, but still want to do minor video editing my last suggestion would be to use Windows Movie Maker.

Mind you, the last time I used this software was 7 or 8 years ago. It is the blunt of many jokes in the video industry, but if that's all you've got, then go for it! You can still do simple editing techniques with the program and add pictures video and text.

### 2. Online Tools

- a. Animoto.com is a great tool to use if you want to make a slideshow video with effects and cool transitions.
  - i. The website has several video templates you can choose from. You would upload your videos and pictures and add them to the template. It has its own library of background music and you create the video totally off the website (no software needed).
  - ii. It has subscription plans between \$8-64 per month.

iii. It was suggested to me by Nick Jones who has used it for Horizons videos and Senior Slide Shows for his youth group.

b. When you upload to YouTube, there are a list of “enhancements.”

i. These allow you to do simple color editing, slow down or speed up your video, crop your video, add background music, and add a screen at the end that suggests other videos on your channel or links to a website.

ii. Only use these enhancements if you cannot do them in the software you are using. Use YouTube’s enhancements sparingly.

c. Envato.com has all kinds of templates and stock footage, pictures, music you can use in your videos.

d. Just searching Royalty Free \_\_\_\_\_ can help you find all kinds of content for your videos. There is a lot of royalty free sites that let you download things for free, enter at your own risk.

III. **[EFFECTS]** So why do all this? Is it worth it? What are the results of using videos in ministry?

I asked several youth ministers who I saw actively posting videos on social media to supplement their ministry. Here’s what they said:

A. Chad Latham ran an experiment assessing the effects posting a video on Facebook had on the attendance to Church Street’s seasonal retreats.

1. Chad Latham wrote, “I noticed a 35% increase in the people who registered on time [for our retreat] ... It showed me that doing a little work and making a funny 30-sec video actually produced a positive response and helped us get more people registered on time.”

2. Chad did a similar experiment on their special monthly Wednesday Night class where he invites the kids to come early to eat supper before class.

a. After posting a 15 second video on Instagram reminding the kids of the event he wrote, “We went from having 10 or 12 to having 35 or 40, consistently.

b. And when I didn't have a video on Instagram, I did notice that we didn't have as big a crowd.

c. He asked the kids how they knew to come and where they heard about it, and nearly all of them said ‘I came because I saw your video on Instagram.’”

3. Chad is one of the leaders in the AIM Series and One Word Study. Both excellent tools.

B. If you are friends with Jerry Elder on Facebook, you see he is all about the Live Videos.

1. I know we may not all be as popular as Jerry, but on his last garage devotional video he had 684 views (impressions).
2. He told me those videos are successful because he tells all the kids to share the video before he starts the devotional.
3. By doing this it becomes an evangelistic tool for all their friends, it also allows those in the youth group who missed the devotional to still here the lesson they missed out.
4. Brandon Edwards, also mentioned he enjoys using live videos during bible class and devotionals.

C. Brandon Jackson is the editor and producer for several of the videos you see Brandon Edwards posting, helps do most the live video work at horizons, and he is a video production teacher one of the high schools in Lewisville Texas.

1. When speaking with him, he emphasized that allowing the kids to help produce videos for the church boost their self-esteem, forces them to think upon spiritual things, and gives a sense of worth and responsibility in the church.
2. He also relates using videos in youth ministry has a strong impact on the parents. Whether it allows them to see what you and their kids are doing or if their child helped you produce a video they are impressed by their child's work for God.
3. I would also like to give a shout out to Hidden Bridge Media. They have several videos and tools for you to use as well. Hidden Bridge is run by both Brandon Edwards and Brandon Jackson.

D. And again I will remind you what Derrick Smith wrote in regards to using videos as a teaching aid during Bible class and devotionals:

1. "The students enjoy these classes where video is utilized. I can see a difference in their energy and attention when they walk into the classroom and see the video equipment set up... I see their engagement, I see their attention, I see their energy... I believe video in the classroom is more successful because it helps to connect us with each other... I know that the students enjoy watching something together and then discussing it together because it connects them and involves real interaction with real people."

## **CONCLUSION:**

I. Hopefully we have been able to address some things this morning that has sparked some ideas, or help you develop current projects or goals.

A. Before we close, I want to go back and remind us again to make sure we have a purpose for how we use videos in our ministries and that our main purpose, our main goal is to bring those in whom we minister to closer to Christ.

1. If that is not our goal, we are wasting our time.

B. if we use videos to glorify Christ, I promise you God will use them in ways we could never imagine.

John 15: 1-8

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

*"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.*

2. This goes with any aspect of our ministry, not just videos. If our goal is not to produce the funniest video you've ever seen, or to make our videos look better than Brad Montague's, or to be the next viral video, but to bear fruit for God and glorify Christ, God will make sure our work bears fruit. Not just some fruit, but a lot!
3. So I urge you remember your purpose! Beware of your responsibility! And let God use you to bear fruits for His kingdom.