

## **Pre-Production Planning Worksheet**

### **What will your program be about?**

Start with a strong message; A compelling idea will always make good television, but no amount of technical razzle-dazzle can save a weak one.

### **What are your objectives? What do you want to accomplish in this program? (i.e., “I want everyone who watches the program to help stop crime in East County”.)**

Keep your objectives realistic and narrowly defined.

### **What can you use as a motivating force for your audience? Why should people care about this? “What is in it for me?”**

Although your program may lack the technical polish of shows on other channels, it will have a local flavor that they can't match. You and your audience are neighbors, and share many of the same interests and concerns; Use this to your advantage.

### **Who is your audience? What age are they? (Kids need different motivators than senior citizens do to watch a program.)**

Decide (realistically) who will be interested in the subject of your program. Then, design your show so that the format, pacing, language, music, graphics, etc. will appeal to that group. Trying to create a show that reaches everyone will only result in a show which is “watered down” in its impact.

### **How could you tell your message?**

Some examples of formats that are available:

- a) Interview program
- b) Magazine/News show
- c) Game Show
- d) Performances
- e) Teleplay

**When using the Interview Format, add more interest to the program by...**

- 1) Live, call-in, audience participation \*
- 2) Visual aids (charts, graphs, photos, models)
- 3) Demonstrations
- 4) Chroma-key for interesting background
- 5) Two set areas
- 6) Pre-produced video segments
- 7) Free advice

**\* NOTE: If the program will be live, you'll need to schedule channel time to coincide with your studio reservation. Contact the Equipment Room for details.**

**Ways to get people to watch your program from the start.**

- 1) Use Teasers, "Next on Crime Watch, we'll see.."
- 2) Snappy but short opening.
- 3) Promise them a solution they will get if they watch the program. "What is in it for me?"

**After you decide on the format, write out an outline. What do you want to say? In what order? Have you done the necessary research?**

Imagine someone who knows nothing about the topic. How can you tell them your story?

**How long should the program be?**

MetroEast will play programs of nearly any length; They don't need to fill 30 or 60 minute blocks. The length of your show should be based on the strength of the material. Don't pad a program that deserves to be short. Don't delete material that begs to be seen.

**What are your equipment needs?**

Is the EFP camera best for your project, or would a mini-mobile be more effective? What type of microphone will work best? Will you need lights? MetroEast staff are available to discuss your equipment needs by appointment, or daily during Equipment Room hours below:

**Monday, Thursday, Friday - 2:00 pm to 10:00 pm**

**Saturday and Sunday - 11:00 am to 9:00 pm**

**What are your crew needs? Do you have enough people to help you, and if not where can you get them?**

MetroEast lists certified volunteers in the VOLUNTEER DIRECTORY, available in the equipment room and lobby. Also, if you are a producer looking for crew, or a volunteer looking for experience, tack up your name and phone number on the bulletin board by the front entrance

Planning Your Production: Continued

### **Do you need to build a set? What will it cost? Do you need “props”?**

MetroEast maintains a collection of set decoration items available for your use. Due to limited storage space, you may need to take away any furniture or set pieces you bring to the studio.

### **Do you need release forms for the talent, and did you get parental permission for talent under 18 years old?**

MetroEast has blank talent release forms available in the lobby.

### **Do you have budget needs and if so how will you meet them?**

MetroEast permits certain types of underwriting or grants to assist producers in meeting expenses. Please consult your MetroEast handbook for more information. Also, the MetroEast library contains books and VHS videotapes with information about how to secure such funding.

### **Contact your talent and guests well in advance (at least a month) and then CONFIRM the day before your shoot. Also CONFIRM your crew’s attendance the day before.**

Remember that talent and crew on your shoots are volunteering their time; Treat them accordingly.

### **How will you publicize your program, and how will you develop your audience?**

No matter how interesting, informative, or entertaining a program may be, it is ultimately a failure if nobody watches. Once you’ve finished your project, take a little more time to make sure it’s seen.

#### **1) Write a Press Release**

The EAST METRO section of the OREGONIAN, and the GRESHAM OUTLOOK are two good places to begin.

#### **2) Newsletters**

MetroEast publishes a monthly Program Guide and newsletter. Contact the Volunteer Coordinator for information about submissions. Whatever your target audience, there is probably a newsletter designed to reach them that would welcome a brief article about your project. Trying to reach senior citizens? Check with senior centers or retirement homes. Is your program directed at students? Call your local school district office.

#### **3) MetroEast**

Produce a short promo to be played between MetroEast’s regularly scheduled programs. Post a sign on the lobby bulletin board, and encourage your crew and talent to tell family and friends. When possible, schedule playback dates before your shoot, and announce them at the event.

## Planning Your Production: “Run-Down”

A “Run-Down” is simply an event-by-event breakdown of each segment of your studio program. With it, you can map out in advance the order of subjects, how much time will be devoted to each, and what video and audio sources will be used for each segment.

### The Run Down consists of 4 columns:

- 1) **Video.** Sources may include pictures from studio cameras, pre-recorded videotaped segments, and graphics.
- 2) **Segment Time.** How many minutes and seconds will be used for each segment.
- 3) **Total Running Time.** Where each segment will start. For LIVE shows, this is usually calculated from the “On-Air” time (eg.- 8:00 pm) and is tracked with a clock. For TAPED shows, the number usually begins at 00:00:00, and is tracked with a stopwatch.

Below is a sample of a typical rundown.

Producer: Al Klascius

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Production: “Vietnam... 1959-Until...”

VIDEO	SEG	TRT	AUDIO
<b>TAPE:</b> Opening, VTR A	:30	8:00 pm	<b>CD:</b> “Showtime” Cut 14
<b>STUDIO:</b> Paul Hanson Intro (Wide, zoom-in) Show concept, etc.  Paul intros Historian Jeffrey Barlow	3:00	8:00:30	<b>STUDIO:</b> Mic 1
<b>TAPE:</b> Jeffrey Barlow Interview	24:25	8:03:30	<b>VTR A:</b> Ch 1 & Ch 2
<b>STUDIO:</b> Paul comments and intros Sandy Hendron	2:00	8:28:00	<b>STUDIO:</b> Mic 1
<b>TAPE:</b> Sandy Hendron Interview	3:15	8:31:15	<b>VTR B:</b> Ch 1

### Why a Rundown?

The rundown permits each crew member to know what will be expected of them during the show, and to anticipate what’s coming up. It also helps to ensure that you won’t finish early, or miss segments because you are behind schedule.

### Timing the Rundown

Some complex productions will assign a crew member to call-out segment and run-times as the show progresses to assist the Director in keeping on schedule.

# Producing a Studio Program: Step-by-Step

- 1) **Get a “Program Number.”** Each program produced at MetroEast is assigned a number which is used for tracking equipment usage and playback scheduling. Before you can reserve or check-out equipment, you must get a new Program Number.
  - Call 667-8848, Extension 307, or stop-by the Equipment Room to get a number.

## Equipment Room Hours:

**Monday, Thursday, & Friday:** 2:00 pm - 10:00 pm  
**Saturday & Sunday:** 11:00 am - 9:00 pm

- 2) **Reserve Equipment.** Call or stop by the Equipment Room during the hours listed above to reserve Studio time.

Most productions require **4 to 5 hours** of Studio time to complete a show.

You may reserve the Studio up to 3-months in advance. Because the Studio is heavily used, you probably won't be able to get your first choice of dates. Ask Equipment Room staff to provide several available dates.

You must pay the \$50.00 Annual Producer Activity Fee before reserving equipment.

If the program will be **LIVE**, you'll also need to reserve time on an MetroEast channel. Ask Playback staff for more information.

- 3) **Recruit Crew.** A studio production requires from 5 to 9 certified crew members, based on the complexity of the production. Each crew member **MUST** have completed the MetroEast Basic Studio Workshop. You may be able to have some crew members perform more than 1 position:

### Control Room Personnel:

- 1 - Director
- 1 - Technical Director
- 1 - Audio Technician
- 1 - Character Generator Operator
- 1 - Videotape Operator

### Studio Personnel:

- 1 - Floor Director
- 3 - Camera Operators

## Volunteer Directory

To find crew, ask for a Volunteer Directory at the Equipment Room. It contains names and phone numbers of certified volunteers, along with information about their availability.

**MetroEast**  
COMMUNITY MEDIA

### EFP Request

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Production Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Prog. # : \_\_\_\_\_

Check-out Date: / / Time: : : AM / PM

Title of Request: \_\_\_\_\_ Return Date: / /

**Equipment Requested**

CSR-200 Camcorder  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Camcorder (Check out: 06A-300 PD-1)

Check all needed equipment on back of request

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**Equipment Usage Agreement**

The licensee has indicated the equipment described herein is to be used for the production of the program and the licensee understands that the equipment is loaned to the licensee for the production of the program and that the licensee is responsible for the safekeeping and return of the equipment. The licensee agrees to indemnify and hold MetroEast Community Media harmless from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, that may be incurred by MetroEast Community Media as a result of the use of the equipment described herein. The licensee also agrees to hold MetroEast Community Media harmless from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, that may be incurred by MetroEast Community Media as a result of the use of the equipment described herein.

All programs made using MetroEast Community Media's equipment or facilities must be shown first by MetroEast Community Television.

**Check Out**

Staff Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dept: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check In**

Staff Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Volunteer Directory

June 2006

829 NE Eighth Street  
Gresham, OR 97030  
503-667-8848  
www.metroeast.org



- 8) **Create a Production Schedule.** In addition to a Rundown for the program, you may wish to create a schedule to organize work which happens before and after shooting.

**Here is a fairly typical breakdown of a one-hour live production:**

- 5:00 pm      Producer, Director, and Lighting Crew Arrives.**  
Producer must “sign-in” at the Equipment Room before work can begin.  
Producer distributes copies of the Rundown.  
Director and lighting crew discuss what areas need to be lit based on where cameras, talent, and set pieces will be placed.  
At least two crew members must be present during lighting.
- 6:00 pm      Additional Crew Arrives.**  
Director meets with remaining crew to discuss rundown and assignments  
Audio technician checks-out mics, cables, CDs from Equipment Room.  
Assigns channels on audio mixer, tests pre-recorded sources  
Character Generator operator gets list of talent and crew names, phone numbers, etc. and begins composing graphics “pages.”  
Videotape operator previews roll-in materials, notes cue times and lengths.
- 6:30 pm      Lighting Completed. Host Arrives.**  
Crew begins final set decoration.  
Cameras moved into position. Camera operators adjust tripod settings, check angles and shot selections.  
Audio technician runs audio cables and assigns mics to talent positions.  
Technical Director “White Balances” cameras, if needed.  
Director meets with Host to discuss rundown.
- 7:00 pm      Break. Crew Eats Pizza**
- 7:30 pm      Technical Rehearsal. “On-Air” Guests Arrive.**  
Producer meets guests to discuss rundown and orient them to the process.  
With host and crew in positions, Director runs through show open, transitions into roll-ins, breaks, guest changes, and show closing.
- 7:45 pm      Talent Brought Onto Set**  
Microphones are attached, and audio levels set
- 8:00 pm      Live Program Begins**
- 9:00 pm      Show Completed. Clean-Up begins.**  
Set pieces and furniture stowed, floor swept, mics and cables turned-in.  
Equipment Room Staff checks Studio.
- 9:30 pm      Producer Signs-Out**



# **Planning Your Production: Videotape**

Producers may borrow or purchase videotapes for their productions. Digital Videotapes are available in several lengths: 32 minutes, 40 minutes, 64 minutes, 124 minutes, and 184 minutes. You may also purchase blank VHS tapes if you wish to make copies of programs for home viewing.

## **Program Production:**

- 1) **Tape Loan Limit.** A producer may borrow up to 8 tapes for program production. These tapes are loaned for 90 days, after which the tapes may be erased and reused without notice to the producer. If your program will take longer than 90 days to complete, you may wish to consider purchasing a tape.
- 2) **Current “Program Number.”** Producers must have a current “Program Number” before checking-out a tape (see page 6). If the program is completed or cancelled, the tapes will be erased, and made available for use by another producer.
- 3) **“Activity Fee.”** Each producer must fill-out a Producer Activity Registration form, and pay the \$50.00 annual fee before tape check-out.

You may also make arrangements with the MetroEast Volunteer Coordinator to “work off” the fee. You will be assigned to fill one or more shifts as a crew member on a program produced by MetroEast staff in lieu of payment.

- 4) **Tape Storage.** Videotapes are stored in the MetroEast Equipment Room. They may be checked-out by the producer for shooting or editing, but should be returned to the Equipment Room after use. Please label the tape and case with your name, and the date of initial check-out.

Tapes should not leave MetroEast, except when being used for field productions.

If you buy tapes for your own use, they need not be stored at MetroEast.

- 5) **Recycling Tapes.** After you have completed your project, and no longer need the footage on a tape, please return the tape to the Equipment Room, and inform staff that the tape can be “recycled” for use by another producer.

## **Tapes Turned-In to Playback:**

- 1) **Producer Tape Limit.** Once a tape is turned-in to the Playback Department, it is considered checked back in to MetroEast, and will no longer count against the producers 8-tape-limit.
- 2) **Time Limit.** Playback will keep the tape for 90 days, and then may erase and reuse the tape without notice to the producer.
- 3) **Copies of the Program.** MetroEast has facilities to duplicate videotapes in a variety of different tape formats (S-VHS, VHS, DVD.). Call the Equipment Room to reserve time on the dubbing equipment, or for more information.
- 4) **Tape Check-out from Playback.** Producers may check-out completed programs from playback for viewing or duplication. However, once a program is submitted for Playback, it cannot leave the MetroEast facility, and may not be checked-out on a day on which it is scheduled for broadcast.