



October 2022

Video Guidelines for Social Media

1. Planning considerations

- What do I want to achieve with the video? Specifically: What effect should the video have on the viewers? What is the core message?
- Who do I want to reach with the video? The more specific the target audience, the easier it is to tailor the content.
- Where will I publish the video/where will I reach my target audience? Is video really the right medium for my target audience?

These three key questions will determine the content, tone, distribution and format of the video.

2. Filming tips

- The first 3-5 seconds are crucial: Put scroll stoppers at the beginning of the video.
- Do not use an intro.
- Avoid backlight and bright sunlight.
- Include changes of perspective (e.g. after a long shot have a close-up showing a detail).
- Show movement in the image rather than moving the camera. Use a tripod.
- Sound quality is important: Use a microphone.
- Pay attention to the background: It should fit the topic, no distractions, vertical/horizontal lines should be straight.
- Pay attention to the framing: If you want to crop the video to different formats later (e.g. 16:9 and 1:1), the shots should not be too close to the person and nothing important should take place at the edge of the picture. If necessary, leave space for subtitles or captions.
- Keep filming quietly for 3 seconds at the end of each scene; this will make the editing easier later.

Social media videos can be filmed well using a newer-model smartphone. For best results, do a test in advance, set the phone to flight mode when filming, and make sure the battery is full and there is enough memory.

3. Particular points for interviews

For the person behind the camera:

- Golden ratio, or rule of thirds: Do not place the person in the center of the image, but mentally divide the frame into thirds and position the person on the left or right dividing line. On many smartphones you can display a grid to help you do this.
- Record the core message twice so that the best version can be used during editing.



For the person in front of the camera:

- Clothing: No small patterns as they can flicker on film. No obvious logos.
- Consider beforehand what the core message is. Use short sentences, main clauses, little/no jargon. Active phrases are better than passive ones.
- Stay in role for a short time after each answer or statement and do not “relax” too quickly.
- If there are several speakers, be careful not to cut each other off too much. This also makes editing easier.

4. Legal information

- Check image rights. Always obtain the consent of the people who appear in the video. An exception to this rule is groups of people in the background in a public space as long as none of them stand out particularly.
- Anyone wishing to film on UZH premises can apply for a permit here:
<https://www.del.uzh.ch/en/bewilligungen/foto.html>

5. Post-production guidelines

- Intro: None. The first frame must be appealing, as it is automatically used as a thumbnail on some platforms.
- Outro: Use UZH outro (black logo on white background).
- UZH acronym: Always insert in the upper right corner so that it is always clear that it is a video from UZH.
- Subtitles: We subtitle all social media videos whenever possible because a) on most social media platforms, videos are often viewed without sound and b) it makes the content accessible to people with hearing difficulties.
Language: German and English wherever possible.
Specifications: Font size 50, font with black outline (outline 5), centered, background transparent, font: PT Sans. Color: White; if bilingual: DE white on top line, EN #ccd4ed on bottom line.
- Thumbnails: Are the first impression of the video and therefore key. They should spark interest and if possible also have a title template.

Tip for Adobe Premiere: Animated UZH templates are available for titles, captions and other text elements. For subtitles, use Premiere’s default subtitles.

CI/CD templates, Communications: <https://www.cd.uzh.ch/de/vorlagen/video.html>



6. Format recommendations for social media platforms

YouTube

Format: 16:9

Subtitles: Export as .srt files and upload separately.

Thumbnail: Upload separately.

Facebook and LinkedIn

Format: 1:1

Subtitles: Burn in, as users are less used to changing settings here than on YouTube.

Thumbnail: Upload separately.

Twitter

Format: 1:1

Subtitles: Burn in.

Thumbnail: Can only be uploaded separately in Twitter Media Studio; with regular uploads the first frame is shown (therefore make sure that it is not just black).

Length: Max. 140 seconds.

Instagram Reels

Since July 2022, new video posts shorter than 15 minutes will automatically be shared as reels.

Format: 9:16

Subtitles: Burn in.

Thumbnail: You can select a frame from the video or upload your own thumbnail. In addition, you can choose which (square) section of the cover image appears in the feed.

Length: Max. 90 seconds if you film the reel within the app. Max. 15 minutes if you upload the video.

Layout: Do not place important information/design elements/subtitles close to the edge as they will be covered by the text field in the lower third of the video and function icons on the right.

Instagram Stories

Format: 9:16

Subtitles: Burn in or place directly over IG in keywords; it must be possible for viewers to understand the video very quickly and easily as there is no accompanying text (unlike the post).

Length: Max. 60 seconds. Stories disappear after 24h.

Layout: Do not place important information/design elements/subtitles close to the edge as they will be covered by function icons at the top and bottom and cut off on the right/left depending on the smartphone.

The format specifications are recommendations. Some platforms allow other formats, but the 1:1 format is usually better than 16:9: You can use it on several platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter) and the video takes up more space on the user's screen, thus commanding more attention.

Contacts

Good luck with your planning and filming! Please contact us if you have any further questions:

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