

Race Video Tips & Ideas

1080 Media TV is a multi-award-winning company and is the official Host Broadcaster for Transpac '51, producing a 25-minute TV show of the race which will be available to a worldwide audience.

However, we are aware that many people will be shooting videos on the race, capturing the best, and worst, of the experience, so we thought we'd offer a few suggestions about how to get the best results. We'd love to share your footage and use it to tell your story in the TV show too, and explain to viewers what you and your team went through on this amazing race!

What to film – what are WE looking for as ideas for the TV show?

Below is a link to a show we produced called 'The Race of Their Lives'. We are in Season 4 of this now, and it's about the Clipper Race, an all-amateur race around the world. You'll see that we try and focus on the crew experience of this, and create some key characters on the yacht, and what the team are experiencing through this crossing. So, I am sure there many ideas you can create that might be suitable. What stories can you tell going across, that show the range of emotions and experiences you and your crew go through?

Surfing big swells for example, how do you keep the boat straight? Can they explain what they are doing while they are doing it, or is an interview below decks better – we'd need about a 3-minute interview or so, and then what we call 'cutaway shots' to illustrate what they are saying... get shots of the person on the helm, front on, side on, from behind; close up of their hands on the wheel; of the cockpit area looking back at them. We 'paint' the interview with a range of images to illustrate and get the raw power across.



In the galley – how do you cook for everyone while bouncing along?

We'd need a wide shot of the galley area; close up of the food being prepped; of the gimbaled stove swinging; of the dishes, of the hands close up, the face and different angles of the process; serving up, and people chomping it down...

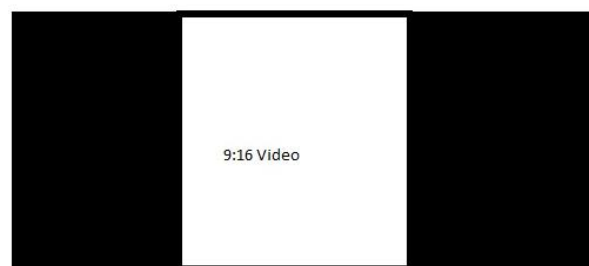
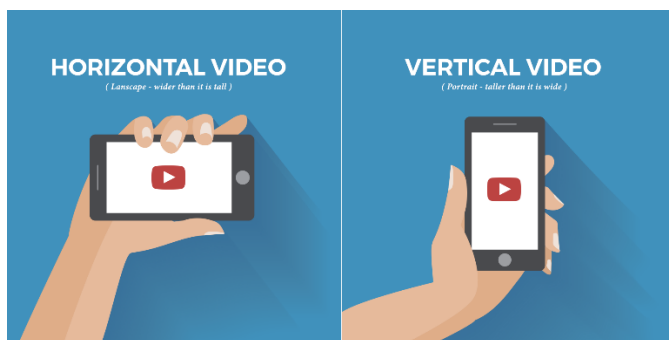
Sleeping – how and where do crew sleep? Watch systems? How often are changes and how do they feel? What happens when you have to wake someone after 4 hours and it's wet, dark and miserable out there? Get shots of all of this and interviews talking about it.

Show us your life aboard and how you cope, what you enjoy most, tell us a story! More importantly, tell people who have never experienced a crossing like this, or perhaps aren't even sailors, what it's all about, what you are going through, and WHY you do it...

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUcv_GmRp4I&t=210s - The Race of Their Lives, Show 5 Series 3. North Pacific. The race itself gets going after around 11 minutes...

Tech tips & advice

Holding the camera – Firstly, don't shoot in 'upright/vertical' mode – shoot in landscape/horizontal mode. TV screens and computers are 16 x 9 ratio format; if you shoot with the camera in an upright/vertical mode, you will have thick black borders down the sides when we use the images. If you are ONLY filming for Facebook or Instagram/TickTock or other social media, then vertical is fine not for us, TV or YouTube....



Black bars down sides of video in vertical mode filming

Holding the camera, part 2 – keep it steady! Simple tips:

Keep your horizon level. It's so easy to film the yacht heeling, and forget the horizon is also at 45 degrees...! Keeping the horizon level shows the heel better, as people can relate to it with a level horizon. That is perhaps the most basic 'rule'. You won't be heeling for too long (hopefully!) but you get the idea...



Wobbly cameras – a shaking camera is simply hard to watch. Brace yourself against something and try and keep it still using 2 hands if it is safe to do so.

Don't keep panning and zooming! If you have a zoom on your camera, forget you have one....people often zoom in and out the whole time, making the shot pretty much unusable. Hold a shot for 5 seconds before you move anything to be safe. Similarly, panning left and right quickly, or constantly, it makes people nauseous, and we wouldn't use it. Sure you can pan, but be steady and smooth and concise. If you pan left, for example, pan for maybe 3-4 seconds, and then stop and hold for another 5 seconds. Now that's a usable shot!

Interviews – if you are filming someone as in an interview – the golden rules are:



- a) Get something behind the person that shows you are on a yacht. A bobbing head, swaying around against a sky on deck could be anywhere in the world. Show the rigging, backstay, halyards, anything behind them, or anything that makes it clear you are not standing on the dock at home! Below decks it's much easier of course.

- b) Head and shoulders in view at the least; ideally get them to look 'off camera' not at the camera; and alternate with people being on the right side and left side of the camera. Looking at the camera is great for 'in the moment' comments and when things are happening, but not ideal for specific interviews.
- c) Generally, get any microphone being used as close to their mouth or chest as possible, and protect any microphone with a wind gag to prevent wind noise. If it's impossible due to the noise, possibly not the best place or time to be shooting feature interviews!

Cameras - If you have decided your phone is the best camera – fine, keep it safe and dry, or get a plastic cover of some kind to protect it. If, however you are using another camera, probably a digital one for filming, like a waterproof GoPro, fabulous, you can shoot some amazing footage of the race. If you are more adventurous and using a larger digital video/photo camera, or a full on 'handycam', just be aware of the water and condensation if it is not waterproof.... get a proper rain cover or water housing to protect it. We lose 2-3 cameras a year through rust and salt water damage, and they are professional models! Below decks, the temperatures can rise quickly with cooking, body heat etc, and condensation can drip off the walls and ceilings, so be careful where you store your gear, and where you charge your batteries. A waterproof Pelican case is the best for storage when not in use.

Keeping lenses clean from spray is a major issue too, plenty of soft dry cloth, kept in a sealable plastic bag...and think about some extra batteries for the camera perhaps too.



Sound/Audio - Most smaller cameras like the GoPro's have limited sound recording ability. In other words, the microphone is built in. It works and it's fine, but it's not really up to broadcast quality for interviews as it picks up lots of ambient noise too.

Bigger cameras usually have a separate microphone input which generally means the microphone can be closer or more directional towards someone who is speaking. You can also get external plug-in mics for phones of course too.

When we have on board professional camera operators, unless it is relatively light wind, we tend to shoot most of the TV feature interviews below decks as you'll see in the show link below, due to wind noise and everything else going on topside, plus it's generally more stable for filming. We use either a small lapel mic with a long cable, or a wireless mic set; and for better audio generally with all shots, we use a small mic with a wind gag on top of the camera as well. Below deck, you could feasibly use that top mic for your interviews. There is no point getting a fabulous quote or interview if you can't hear what's being said due to wind noise, or rigging banging around!

Lighting - During daylight, usually there are no issues, but night filming is completely different when it is sooo dark out there. Some cameras have an infrared option – it looks very strange and we'd only use a few seconds generally, but often this is better than getting nothing. We also use a small video light below deck at night, and occasionally, on deck if the spreader lights are on – i.e. sail changes, (yes we know, night vision etc!), but occasionally it works out well.

Equipment examples – if you are looking to upgrade...

We use Sennheiser or Sony mics generally but they are seriously expensive, as we have the Pro models of course. There are LOTS of lower cost models around that are OK. Wireless lapel or wired versions. Example here with wind cover–



Serious Wind gag for a top mic!

LED Video light. Lots of varieties – something like this



If we use your footage in the TV show, we'll also give you a camera operators name check in the credits at the end of the show.

How do we get your footage? Either we can copy it when you get into Hawaii, or we can receive it via a WeTransfer link – you can send to the email address above. If there is LOTS of material, we need to arrange an FTP transfer with you. The best bet is to get a copy on a USB stick from you in Hawaii.

That's it for now – we would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this. Email us at info@1080media.org and we'll get back to you. Thanks, and have a great race!

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