

ZigZag Pitch

When picking a ZigZag client, our group was looking for one that was in need of more advertising. We chose Booths largely because it hadn't had any major ads in almost 8 years, and it wasn't a well-known brand name among us. Once we chose Booths, we decided we needed to get a better idea of who shopped at Booths, what tone Booths might like their ad to have, and which target audiences we should craft our different ads for. We decided to make a TV ad directed towards both already existing customers as well as new ones, so we could promote the Booths card and all the deals it offers. For a Facebook ad, we decided to reach out to younger potential customers of age 18-30 who live in the Northern UK, with the intentions of broadening Booths' customer base beyond older generations. The mobile ad was planned to promote the Christmas dinner Booths has to offer to British adults who don't have the time or skills to cook their own Christmas dinner. When we figured out these three plans, we each chose a specific ad to flush out in detail and then grouped up again to get on the same page.

My job was to develop the Facebook ad pitch. I envisioned a video that would be visually engaging so that people scrolling Facebook would be compelled to stop and watch it, whether sound was on or not. The concept of this idea was that people scroll Facebook when they are bored, and boredom increases one's hunger drive, so placing a video ad with delicious food in front of them would entice them to venture over to Booths. It took some digging, but I was very happy when I found an M&S commercial that worked as a fine piece of inspiration for the tone and technique I was going for. With its aesthetic shots of food, creative use of movement, and quick clever cuts, the M&S ad was a pleasure to watch even without the sound and it worked as poetry to one's stomach.

One of the problems I had was finding any useful information at all on my target audience for the Facebook advert. Thankfully, the general research we had on Booths' customers was all I needed to plan an effective ad. It was difficult for me to understand exactly what was expected of us for this project, but once I got to work on it with my group that uncertainty was dissolved. Another problem I encountered at the very beginning was the other group members were taking off with their ideas and I had little voice in what direction our pitch would go, however, their ideas worked fine with me and I was able to get onboard and do my part.

What I learned from this was that companies such as ZigZag exist to create ads for companies that have signed up to be their client, and that such ads need to be pitched to representatives of both ZigZag and the client. This was a valuable learning experience for selling ideas to professionals and I was very glad with how impressed the ZigZag representatives who came to hear our pitch were by our ideas.

Travel Vlog

When brainstorming for our travel vlog, our group took time figuring out which hotspots in York we wanted to showcase. The Minster seemed like an obvious one, as did the Shambles, York Museum Gardens, and the wall, in addition to various other places. It was rather difficult keeping

on track with so many ideas flying around from all seven of us, but we managed to film all locations planned in the time we had. Unfortunately, after editing as much as I could, I realized we simply didn't have all the footage we needed for what our narration talked about, so I went with another group member to shoot some more. While filming, I was trying to keep an eye out for visuals that would best represent the narrated parts that didn't have any coverage. Coming back to the editing room with new footage was very satisfying then. While editing the rough cut, my aim was to display the things that stood out most to me as a visitor of York.

Problems sprung up at every turn during the making of this film. First, it was hard to all agree on a direction for the video. Then when we started filming, most of us had little to do as a couple group members filmed what they envisioned. Having seven people in our group only came in use for carrying all the gear around the city. In the editing room, we discovered that a lot of our footage was too shaky or lengthy to work in our vlog. In addition, the narration that was originally recorded had too many problems of its own and couldn't be edited into a smooth enough audio piece. So a group member and I worked together to write a stronger script and rerecorded the narration which would meet the 3 minute mark. Of course, after doing that it was necessary to re-edit the rough cut to something that would match to the timing of the new narration. With the new narration and new footage combined with original footage, my group partner and I were able to create our final 3 minute edit of the vlog. Then we handed it off to the rest of the group to edit it down to a 1 minute version.

In making this vlog, I learned that it's best to have definitive roles for each group member, otherwise people may be left feeling useless during large durations of the production. It probably also would've been better to have fewer people in the group for this project. I appreciated getting the experience editing in Avid Media Composer.

Advertorial:

For this artefact, my group consisted of me and one other person, making us a bare-bones crew. Not to mention, my partner was also the talent, so more like we were a bare-bones *cast* and crew. While having only two people for making a video is a lot of pressure, it worked well for us because we were able to choose an idea and keep on track easier than I'd experienced with larger groups. I also got a lot of experience manning the camera, sound equipment, etc.

We decided to make our video on how to use a film camera, since there's a lot of tips and tricks to it that many people aren't aware of nowadays due to the digital age of photography. Of course, since the video had to be exactly 2 minutes long, we could only cover the basics in that amount of time. Thus, my partner demonstrated how to load film in the camera, adjust ISO and aperture, take pictures, unload the film, and so on. Our target audience was people who are familiar with the basics of photography, so we didn't go into composition or any of the stuff that someone familiar with digital photography should already know.

Problems we encountered were thankfully minimal. Lugging gear around York was one issue. I also made the mistake of slightly over exposing outdoor shots and starting off at the wrong

shutter speed, but my partner and I worked out a system soon after to double check camera settings before shooting. My partner and I booked a TV Studio to film the majority of our advertorial in, but then found out it was double-booked and that nothing else was available to us, so we had to make do with shooting in my dorm room. Of course, since it's such a small room, setting up a camera and three-point lighting was tricky but we made it work. It just didn't have as much of a 'hipster lifestyle' feel as we were going for. Editing it was fairly simple. I decided to stray from the storyboard a bit and switch up the order of when each feature is presented, but I think the end result was more fluid and effective. It was a bit of a challenge making it exactly 2 minutes long as well. Some things had to be cut for it to meet the right length requirement.

I got some good experience as DP and editor making this. I learned I should establish a mental checklist of camera settings to be sure we're ready for the shoot. It went surprisingly well despite the shortage of team members.

Music Video Pitch

This assignment went fast for me. I joined up with a group of four other people and we developed the idea to plan a video that would match the band's fun, quirky style. We believed shooting for a lo-fi, retro type video would best represent the personality of The And Ensemble. We listened to the lyrics of 'Perfect Isn't Enough' and interpreted it as a song about how looks aren't everything and it's important that the singer's potential partner be kind and loyal. We decided to go with that concept in the video and show the band members destroying things that seem perfect on the outside, like a flawlessly frosted cake, and revealing undesirable things on the inside, like worm-infested batter. The fact that the band members could only be present for the film shoot for two days was acceptable because we planned to shoot them having fun at a house party for one day and then for the second day we'd shoot them doing things at various other locations. Then, for a third day, we wouldn't need the band members present because we'd just film close-ups of the cake being smashed and whatever other shots that didn't show the band members' faces.

It was hard to discuss everything as a group because this artefact was assigned late in the week and was due that Monday. We all had different things going on over the weekend, so we had to resort to each adding to the PowerPoint whenever we got the time and then catching up with each other right before the presentation. It wasn't ideal but it was the best option for what we were given. I appreciated that it wasn't as time consuming as I feared it would be though, because there's a lot of assignments springing up in these last couple of weeks that I'll be here in the UK. We didn't know we had to have a creative brief like the handouts we did for zigzag until after the presentation, so a group partner and I worked on converting our PowerPoint info to a handout later that day.

I learned during the making of this artefact that band members might not be available for all the times that you plan on shooting, but that you can make do. If you film close-up and use extras where the band members aren't important, it pans out alright.

Music Video

Talk about big groups! My group for this artefact was composed of 8 people. It took some time, but we all suggested songs to film a video for and then voted on one. The winner was 'Make It Forever' by George Clanton, which has a trippy, psychedelic feel to it. It isn't something I'd generally choose to listen to but when we started discussing ideas for the video, it was easy for me to get on board because my group wanted to have cool visuals like lots of bokeh and overlays. The idea was to work with a very loose, nondescript narrative – vague like the lyrics in the video are. Therefore, we aimed to make it more of a visual experience that could compliment the music style. The most of a story we planned was: aloof guy walking through York, aloof girl also walking through York, and then they meet at the bridge.

We originally planned to have two of us as actors, two camera operators, and everyone else to help carry tripods and other gear. But while filming, we resorted to sticking as one group in the city and not splitting into two filming groups as originally planned. That worked better because then we could stay on the same page of what style to go for and what shots to film. I helped by carrying gear, scouting for possible interesting shots, and acting. Well, I say acting but all my character had to do was walk around looking moody and disconnected. We're very fortunate that York decorates so nicely for Christmas, because it offered ample opportunities for bokeh in shallow depth of field shots. We also took advantage of the Millennium Bridge since it lights up and we thought it could serve as a satisfying final destination for our characters. The only filming that took place indoors was done the next day, in one of my groupmate's rooms, where two group members played instruments in front of the camera, bathed in colorful lights.

We had problems with scheduling since half our group was still trying to film other artefacts during the time the rest of us were available. There were times when it was only a few of us carrying all the gear, and that's a lot of gear to go around. It was also cold and rainy during our outdoor night shoot and we had to walk everywhere we went. Still, that was better than the next day when four of us crammed into a tiny dorm room with a light and tripod set up for our second shoot. I was stuck sitting on the bed between a light stand and a slider for most of the shoot, except for when I was needed to help adjust the lights. It was a quick shoot though, and I was glad to lug the gear back to the equipment room for the last time that day. It's too bad some of the shots are so dark it's hard to see, but the group wanted them in the edit.

I learned during this shoot that it's important to have an umbrella handy to protect the camera if it starts to rain. One of our group members had to buy one during the shoot since none of us owned one already. I also got practice keeping an eye out for cool reflections or other sights that could be good camera shots. Not to mention I got practice trying to stop walking at the spot the camera man wants me to stop without blatantly looking down to see where my feet are.

Tech Review

For this video, I wanted to be sure to form a stellar group since we didn't have much time to make it. Soon as the email was sent to us announcing what the artefact assignment was, I reached out to the three best group mates I had the pleasure of working with before. They were Cullen Dallas, George Hulin, and James Chappell. Thankfully, they were all willing to form a group with me.

When the day came for us to film the video, my group was great at sticking to the task. We grabbed our gear, set up in an edit suite, and decided our roles. George was our presenter, Cullen was our director, James was sound, and I was camera operator. Figuring out what to say in the video was a little tricky because half of us had never used the Canon 77D, and none of us had an immediate idea of what to say about it in our review. Of course, we were all well familiar with the C100 and finding things to say about it was no problem. Cullen and George took the direction of comparing the C100's best features to those of the Canon 77D. The only things that the Canon 77D seemed to have the upper hand on was its lightweight and portability.

I enjoyed being camera operator. I made sure to level the tripod for every different shot, focus the image, pan and tilt as smoothly as I could, along with everything else necessary of the camera operator. The one thing I wished I had caught at the time was when my exposure was too bright for one shot, but Cullen was able to notice and correct it on our second take. I was glad I got this experience even though it was never vocally decided that I would man the camera. I just saw an opportunity and took it.

I also edited the rough cut for this video after filming it. I started by editing together what George was presenting, and then adding B roll of it on top. Then I handed it off to Cullen to do the fine tuning and final cut. He also added music. I liked how the 77D footage we added was in black and white, like at the start of infomercials where everything looks dreary, and then how the video goes on to show C100 footage with its popping colors and high energy music to accompany it. I thought that really helped to emphasize how much more exciting the C100 is.

Problems we encountered during filming was a dog barking outside and the difficulty of remembering what lines the presenter should say. In editing, making the video over 4 minutes long was hard at first, but it worked out OK after putting in examples of footage filmed on the Cannon 77D and the C100. Overall, nothing was too hard, especially considering our time constraint. I think the winning difference was the great team we had.

I learned that making efforts to get together the best group for a film project is absolutely worth it. I also learned that if I see an opportunity to fill an important role, I should step up first instead of wait around to see if anyone else wanted to do it more than me. Creating this helped me appreciate our privilege to use the C100s all this semester instead of the Canon 77Ds, which have much fewer handy features for filmmakers.