

# Thinking Beyond Described Video with Integrated Described Video (IDV)

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# We are Accessible Media Inc (AMI)



- AMI is a not-for-profit media company that entertains, informs and empowers Canadians who are blind or partially sighted
- Operating three broadcast services, AMI-tv and AMI-audio in English and AMI-télé in French
- AMI's vision is to establish and support a voice for Canadians with disabilities, representing their interests, concerns and values through accessible media, reflection and portrayal
- Description experts

- We are unique as a broadcast entity: I believe we are the only broadcaster that is mandated to carry 100% of its broadcast content with description. And we accomplish this using open descriptions – which are always on. This
- We have been designated a must carry service by our regulatory body the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)

# Described Video = Audio Description

To get on the same page regarding terminology, and avoid confusion – audio description is referred to as described video in Canada.

- In Canada our regulatory body, the CRTC, has separate definition for audio description: defining it as methodology for describing live news type programming
- The term described video, or DV, refers to the narrated description of a program's main visual elements, such as settings, costumes or body language. DV provides essential story information in an audio format, enabling television programming to be more accessible to people who are blind or partially sighted.

# What is IDV?



- Form of description incorporated throughout the duration of a production
- Pre, production, and post production phases
- Script, narration / voice over, soundtrack eg. environmental audio and SFX
- Analogous to radio productions of from the early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century

# IDV Principles

# Universal Design

Everybody gets the same  
information at the same time



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# Why is IDV necessary?



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Often times I don't want to burden my family with having to watch TV with the description on, so I wait until later and watch by myself

-- Research Panel Member

- We have a research panel consisting of over 1200 people from our primary demographic that we regularly conduct research to ensure we are hitting the mark
- The following quote was taken from a previous

# Why IDV?

## Methodology Improvements

- Provide a naturally descriptive programming
- Promotes inclusion universal design approach

## Other Benefits

- Everyone gets the same information at the same time
- Single file format simplifies transmission / distribution

# DV vs IDV Methodology Showdown!

## **DV**

- Reactive
- Executed after final produced media
- Second voice
- Separate delivery format

## **IDV**

- Proactive
- Executed throughout entirety of production
- Natural integration of description
- Single delivery format

Example time!

# Show Me Your Art

# For Reals

# Production process

- Script writing / preparation
- Sound design
- Production
- Post production: Rough cut / fine cut / picture lock
- Audio post
- Quality control (QC) – happens throughout

# Script writing

- Ask yourself – what am I trying to describe?
- Anticipate potential disparities in the experience for viewers and rectify in writing
- Dialogue, Voice over, and sound effects (SFX) are tools to convey information

# Preparation

- Preparation of cast, crew, interviewers / interviewees, etc ahead of shoot can save time.
- For scripted content, consider script walkthrough with cast. Identify potential problem areas for shoot and strategize solutions
- Plan keys ahead of shoot - information on lower thirds to ensure visual information can be communicated verbally when shown on screen.

# Lower third example



# Sound design

- Extremely important and underutilized tool in description.
- Happens throughout process
- Be cognizant of shoot locations and potential unwanted noises which can causes distraction and confusion
- Background noise can be used to provide context. Avoid annoying or overpowering audio - can take away from overall user experience
- Capture high quality sound – avoid compression

# Production

- Approach as if creating a radio production – don't assume visuals will adequately convey all information.
- Avoid ambiguous language eg “this”, “that”, “here”, “there”, gesturing to objects without clarification
- Introduce locations where necessary, this can help people identify ambient sounds
- Shoot multiple takes of each scene. Provides options in editing.

# Post-production

- Editing phase
- Assembly, rough cut, fine cut, picture lock
- Highly iterative process leveraging production notes to shape edit process
- Identify disparity in experience and edit accordingly
- Do not mix DV and IDV!

# More Samples!

# Audio post

- Picture lock
- Identify and remove / fix ambiguous sounds
- If sound cannot be removed it needs to be explained in some way – eg .VO
- Manipulation of audio palette, sfx, that add context

# Quality control (QC)

- Happens throughout production
- First run through, watch with eyes closed / screen curtain. Identify gaps and areas of confusion (hard to do this after you've seen it)
- Watch again with visuals
- Make notes (w/ time codes) as guide identifying
- Identify areas where key visual information is not provided aurally

# What's Next for IDV?

## Expansion of IDV into:

- Broader range of programming
- Live Events
- Online video production
- Academia

## Reference Materials

- IDV how-to video series
- Best Practices Guides

There are many other areas where we feel this methodology can help to improve accessibility and inclusion in general

Thank You