

# HOW TO PRODUCE A NON-CHEESY BOOK TRAILER ON THE CHEAP

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# WHAT'S THE POINT OF MAKING A BOOK TRAILER?

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- According to Comscore, 100 Million people watch online video each day
- Website visitors are 64% more likely to buy a product on an online retail site after watching a video
- According to Unbounce, using a book trailer on a sales landing page can increase conversion rates by as much as 80%
- According to Invodo, 92% of mobile video viewers share videos with others
- Video and video creation was the media format most requested by marketers in 2015

# WHAT'S THE POINT PART II

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- THE DROWNING GAME's video trailer has gotten more than 45,000 views on Facebook
- Amazon rank/USA Today bestseller list—coincidence? Maybe not
- Top-of-mind awareness

# WHAT A TRAILER SHOULD (AND SHOULDN'T) DO

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- Create an atmosphere, a mood
- Don't try to tell the whole story
- Utilize appropriate music and graphics
- Clock in at between 30 seconds and 3 minutes (“sweet spot” supposedly 1:10)
- Err on the side of elegant simplicity

# DO NOT

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- Put your emoting friends in period costume / hunky, greased-up male models in dry ice and bad lighting
- Show your book cover from every possible angle while a deep voiceover reads positive reviews
- Get on camera and beg people to buy your book
- Get on camera at all unless you're exceptionally good looking/hilarious/recognizable
- Use copyrighted music, images, or footage

# MAYBE...

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- Online animation programs (Powtoon, Prezi, Animoto, etc.)
  - Drawbacks
    - You're advertising for them
    - Online access limited to 30 days
    - Some videos limited to 30 seconds
    - Some are just glorified slide shows, and you end up advertising for them anyway when you could just use Powerpoint or Keynote

# WHERE TO START

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- Your goals
- Budget (I like to spend less than \$100)
- Script/storyboard
- Royalty-free music, video, images

# SCRIPTWRITING TOOLS

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- Free scripting software
  - Celtx
  - WriterDuet
- Paid scripting software (if you plan to write screenplays too)
  - Final Draft
- Storyboarding templates
  - [http://xinsight.ca/tools/storyboard\\_template\\_4x3.pdf](http://xinsight.ca/tools/storyboard_template_4x3.pdf)



# WRITING YOUR SCRIPT

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- Start with your jacket blurb
- What is your high concept?
- Use iMovie for help with storyboarding
- Brainstorm with readers/critique partners who know your story

# CHOOSING YOUR EDITING SOFTWARE

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- Free
  - iMovie
  - Windows Live Moviemaker (this is being phased out...)
  - <https://www.lifewire.com/alternatives-to-windows-movie-maker-4129529>
- Paid
  - Adobe Premiere
  - Adobe After Effects
  - Final Cut Pro

# VIDEO TECHNIQUES

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- Create suspense
- Continuously reset the audience's focus
- End with a bang

# ROYALTY-FREE RESOURCES

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- Videoblocks.com (large library of free footage)
- Shutterstock (five video clips for \$79)
- videohive.net
- productiontrax.com/stock-footage
- clipcanvas.com
- istockphoto.com/video
- motionelements.com
- fotolia.com/Info/Videos
- Dreamstime.com
- Unsplash.com
- Wondershare Filmora

# MORE RESOURCES

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- Audacity (sound recording)
- Incompetech (music broken out into moods/tempos/vibes)
- [creativecommons.org/legalmusicforvideos](https://creativecommons.org/legalmusicforvideos)
- [freeplaymusic.com](https://freeplaymusic.com)
- [uniquetracks.com](https://uniquetracks.com)
- [mobygratis.com](https://mobygratis.com)
- [musicloops.com](https://musicloops.com)
- [music-for-video.com/free-sound-effects-for-video-makers.html](https://music-for-video.com/free-sound-effects-for-video-makers.html)

# LOCAL STUDENT FILM RESOURCES

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- Robert Mahaffie  
Colorado College Film and Media Studies  
robert.g.mahaffie@coloradocollege.edu
- University of Denver Film Studies and Production Department  
MFJS@du.edu
- Frederic Lahey  
frederic.lahey@ccaaurora.edu  
Colorado Film School
- Jacob Barreras  
CU Film Studies  
Jacob.Barreras@colorado.edu
- David Liban  
University of Colorado Denver TFVP  
david.liban@ucdenver.edu
- Amy McGrath  
Denver School of the Arts VCA Department  
Amy\_McGrath@dpsk12.org

# BAD TRAILERS

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- Windows Live Moviemaker blue screen background
- Cheesy Star Wars perspective scroll
- Swipes and rolls
- Unprofessional photographs
- Looks like a wedding video from 1990

# THE GOOD ONES

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- HOLD STILL by Nina La Cour
- The Miriam Black Novels by Chuck Wendig
- Theory of Remainders by Scott Dominic Carpenter



# GOOD TRAILERS

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- **HOLD STILL:** Great use of blurry self-shot footage
- Excellent voice acting
- Perfect music
- Ends with information about the book
- **WENDIG:** more excellent voice acting
- **THEORY OF REMAINDERS:** Atmosphere, mood, tone