If we built it, would they come? Creating instruction videos with promotion in mind

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If we built it, would they come? Creating instruction videos with promotion in mind

Leticia Camacho

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ABSTRACT
This article reports on a video project done in an academic library where faculty were included in the production and marketing of the library instruction videos. The videos allowed the librarian to provide a shorter presentation and spend most of her time working individually with each student. The results showed that 97% of the students watched the videos and were able to benefit from the content. The implementation of the videos was a success due to the collaboration of the professors teaching the three courses and the buy-in of the course coordinator; both factors were essential in the success of the video project.

KEYWORDS
information literacy instruction; business information; librarian-faculty collaboration; instructional videos; asynchronous instruction

Introduction
This article reports on a video project done in an academic library where faculty were included in the production and marketing of the library instruction videos. Library instruction for the author’s business school is a programmatic component of a business writing course required for all undergraduate business majors that also fulfills the advanced writing requirement for general education. Library instruction for this course started in 2001 with five classes, and by 2007 it had increased to 75 instruction sessions with 1,800 students per year, which has remained steady to this day. The library instruction is 90 minutes long, the first 45-minutes consist of a demonstration of business resources, search strategies, online information access, and practice in evaluating and citing business resources. This presentation is followed by a 45-minute hands-on session that is oriented around actual assignments and research projects. In previous surveys, students requested a longer hands-on session to complete their research and avoid extra visits with the business librarian.

The library literature is full of articles about creating videos for library instruction, flip instruction, and so on. There is no doubt that library instruction videos
are very effective in teaching basic research skills to students. However, if we made these videos, would the students actually use them? One of the challenges of creating instructional videos is that students may not take the time to watch these videos. Betty (2008, p. 310) stated: “Creating the tutorials is not enough, as more work needs to be done in publicizing their availability and content.” The librarian realized the challenge: if these videos were created and the students didn’t watch them, then the problems would increase instead of decrease because the librarian could assume the students were familiar with the basic concepts covered in the videos, creating a bigger knowledge gap and increasing office visits and frustration.

**The creation of the library instruction videos**

The business librarian desired to create instruction videos that could teach basic business research concepts online to students in order to increase the hands-on instruction time to interact with students one-on-one and address their particular research challenges. Also, the business librarian noticed during the library instruction sessions that the knowledge levels varied among the business students, which created a challenge during library instruction sessions because the librarian had to cover basic and advanced concepts. The creation of these instructional videos about basic research concepts could be the way to bring students to the same knowledge level and add time to the hands-on sessions. The librarian chose five basic research areas to cover in these instructional videos: “Choosing a Topic,” “Finding Articles,” “Search Strategies,” “Publication Types,” and “Evaluating Websites.” The videos mentioned in this study are available at [http://bit.ly/researchplaylist](http://bit.ly/researchplaylist).

**Literature review**

Very few articles address the marketing challenge that comes after creating library instruction videos; however, the articles that are available provide very good information on the topic. One of the keys for success is collaborating with faculty. The business librarian decided to contact the course administrator and ask for her input on creating the videos. The course administrator not only was knowledgeable about the course, but she also had created instructional videos to teach students grammar concepts. She was the narrator of the grammar videos, and when the librarian asked her to narrate the library instructional videos, she accepted. The librarian was thrilled to get her support on the video project. Maddison (2015, p. 3) stated that “Collaboration between the librarian and the faculty member is critical to the success of a flipped classroom as you are relying on the professor to disseminate your materials and also for instilling the value of the library session through their promotion of it in advance”. This is true not just to implement a flipped classroom but for any course related library project.

The course coordinator also teaches one of the course sections, and her cooperation was key in requiring professors to assign students to watch the video before
coming to the library instruction. She also reviewed a quiz created by the librarian to assess the students’ knowledge after viewing the videos. Maddison (2015, p. 7) states the “Librarians benefit from the participation of a keen colleague who is willing to explore this teaching method, promote the library session to their students and set the ground rules and expectations for the class”.

**Videos production and promotion**

The scripts were created by the business librarian and produced by student assistants’ using screencast software, and the narration was videotaped and then added to the video. The librarian created a script; however, the narrator was given freedom to adjust the content (see Figure 1). The business librarian asked the course coordinator to be the narrator for the library videos. The coordinator had produced grammar videos, and the students were familiar with her voice. She also had a YouTube channel, and she offered to add the library videos to that channel for students to

![Figure 1. Script sample.](image-url)
find all of the course instructional videos in one place (see Figure 2). This professor also assisted the librarian with the promotion of the videos by forwarding emails to professors and forwarding surveys and quizzes to students. The videos were also added to the library course page under the tab that covered that specific topic.

**Figure 2.** Video in YouTube.

**Figure 3.** Links to Videos in Subject Pages. The arrows show the location of the links.
Please answer the following questions:

1. Where do you find ideas for a research project?
2. Name one good database for locating business articles.
3. Which search strategy will get you more articles?
   a. Motivation OR Incentives
   b. Motivation AND Incentives
4. How will you limit your internet search to only government reliable sources? Write the query.
5. Why are peer-review articles considered authoritative?

(see Figure 3). Kirkwood and Evans (2012, p.112) stated, “Creativity and a willingness to experiment with alternative methods of instruction can lead to successful collaborations. Building a relationship with specific faculty can lead to opportunities to connect IL in new and exciting ways within courses.” During the creation and promotion of the videos, we found that the strong relationship the librarian had with the faculty helped in the success of the videos.

**Methods**

A pilot study was conducted during the summer of 2016. Three professors agreed to participate and required their students to watch the videos before attending the library instruction. The professors also agreed to give their students points for taking a quiz and agreed to forward a survey to their students at the end of the course. Survey participation was not required, and no remuneration was provided.

**Quiz**

Students were given a short quiz (see Figure 4) at the beginning of the library session. The librarian collected the quizzes, and students were given chocolates and points for participation. The students didn’t know if their quizzes were going to be graded. This was done intentionally to encourage their best effort, but ultimately they all received the same points. The librarian explained that the information will be used solely to evaluate and improve the quality and content of the videos.

**Survey**

A survey was sent at the end of the course, and the information retrieved from those surveys is discussed below. An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 80 business students. The body of the email included a hyperlink to an online survey created using Qualtrics software. To ensure confidentiality, the librarian made responses anonymous and offered no remuneration. The email and link was forwarded by course professors. The survey consisted of 10 questions about students’ experience using the videos. A total of 30 students completed the survey, an effective response rate of 37.5%.
Before entering the survey, the students were asked if they would watch the videos; 97% responded “Yes” and proceeded to the survey. Only one participant responded “No,” and the survey ended after that response. The participants were also asked if they were business majors because this required course is also taken by other majors. Sixteen were business majors and seven were majoring in different fields, including landscape management, construction management, statistics, communications, music composition, Asian studies, and recreation management.

Question 1 asked, “Which of the videos did you find more useful?” The “Search Strategies” video received 11 responses, followed by “Evaluating Websites” with six responses and “Choosing a Topic” with five responses. This was interesting because only six students chose “Evaluating Websites”; however, most of the students’ responses to the rest of the survey refer back to content in the “Evaluating Websites” video.

Q1 - Which of the videos did you find more useful?

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<th>Answer</th>
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<td>Finding Articles</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Evaluating Websites</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
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</table>

Figure 5. Question 1.

Question 2 asked, “How many times did you watch the videos?” Twenty-one students watched the video once and nine students watched the video twice.

Question 3 asked, “Did you learn at least one new search technique? Please give feedback.” Twenty-four people responded that they did learn one new search technique, and about half of these were able to describe what they learned: “the wild card character,” “I learned about using wildcard and truncated characters!” “I learned about limiting my results by certain sites or domains,” “use site:.org to narrow search to nonprofit sites,” “phrase searching,” and “under search strategies I learned different techniques of how I can improve my search.” The other half simply illustrated what they learned: “site:.org,” “site:.gov,” “site:.edu,” “Images you can use to limit your search better,” “? and * technique,” “searching wom?n to get more results,” “I learned that a ? can be used in the middle of a word.” There were six “no” answers and one explanation was, “I took an entire class on database management, so I had an unfair advantage.” The second answer validates the use of videos regardless of whether students are already familiar with basic search concepts: “I know a lot about research so I didn't learn anything new, but I was reminded of useful things I've already learned.” Regardless of whether students knew the correct term to describe what they learned, it was obvious that the majority did learn a new
search technique that could be beneficial in their future research, and the ones that already knew could benefit from a reminder.

Question 4 asked, “Did you learn about at least one new resource (database) to find articles? Please give feedback.” The results showed that 28 students felt that they at least learned about a new resource, and most students mentioned the business resource by name. Their answers mentioned ProQuest, “all of them,” LexisNexis (in different spellings), Ulrich, Factiva, Business Source Premier EBSCO, “I did not know about any of the business resources except EBSCO,” “All the ones mentioned except EBSCO,” and “I had never heard of Factiva or the LexisNexis Database before, so I’m excited to check them out.”

Question 5 asked, “Did you know most of the information presented prior to watching the videos? Please provide feedback.” The answers were pretty even; 17 students said that they already knew the information in the videos, and some of their comments were “some of it,” “to a certain extent yes but I did learn some new things,” “but it was great to be reminded,” “yes, I knew most but not all,” and “yes, I had learned a lot of the information through writing classes.” When the students responded “no,” their answers included, “I had not heard of most of those databases/magazines,” and “I knew a bit of some of the movies but all the information was great to hear again and I was blown away with all of the new information I didn’t know before.”

<table>
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<th>Answer</th>
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Figure 6. Question 5.

Question 6 asked, “Did you catch the name of the librarian to contact to get further help if you have questions about doing research? All of the respondents answered “Yes,” and some wrote the librarian’s last name. One student answered, “5 times!” because every video ended by reminding students to visit the business librarian if they had questions or needed extra help.

Question 7 was similar: “Do you feel comfortable contacting the MCOM 320 librarian?” and all 30 students answered yes. One left the comment, “I did!” and another one mentioned, “I could tell the same recording was played at the end of each video and it was in a constant excited tone.”

Question 8 asked, “Do you feel the videos presented the material in an organized, easy-to-follow manner?” Some students simply answered “yes”; others wrote “and short,” “very much so,” “great videos,” and “However, sometimes it felt a little rushed. When it goes too fast, I feel overwhelmed with all of the new information.”
Question 9 asked, “Describe the most valuable information or skills you learned in the videos.” Some students left this question blank, some mentioned “site;” and others provided a little bit more information: “Need to evaluate websites just like books and journals, reliable sites,” “Use keywords, be selective,” “understanding the different types of resources and reliability,” “finding articles and search strategies,” “the tools to refine the searches,” “using the databases,” “search strategies,” “The most useful information was the repetition of the different sources that I can search to find more information”, “The breakdown made it even more clear as to what the resources offer,” “All the new databases I can go to!” and “the wild card character.”

Question 10 asked, “What suggestions do you have for improving the videos in the future?” Again, some left it blank, but others provided valuable information such as “cartoon style,” “use cartoons?? More fun but keep it short,” “add humor,” “animated,” “I zoned out at times so perhaps have more variance in graphics, such as showing videos of things without the blue background all the time,” and “Slowing down a bit? The narrator’s voice is pretty and clear, but if she talks too fast, I get lost more easily.” One person suggested to consolidate the videos; however, in the literature, most librarians recommend for videos to be short and to the point (Keba, Segno, & Schofield, 2015).

**Results**

Based on the quiz performance, it seems that the instructional videos did prepare students for the library instruction session by teaching basic business research concepts. The videos allowed the librarian to provide a shorter presentation and spend most of her time working individually with each student. The results showed that 97% of the students watched the videos and were able to benefit from the content. The implementation of the videos was a success due to the collaboration of the professors teaching the three courses and the buy-in of the course coordinator; both factors were essential in the success of the video project. Planning the marketing of the videos needs to be part of the initial phase of the video project. Deciding how long the videos need to be, what software to use, or even what content is discussed all should come after sitting down with the faculty teaching the course. Teaching faculty suggestions and input need to be part of the initial planning. Teaching faculty need to know all the details of the videos and feel ownership in the project. The librarian also needs to plan how the videos are going to be introduced to the students and if faculty members are willing to require students to watch the videos before the library visit.

The pilot results supported the decision of the course coordinator to require all courses to watch the videos before coming to the library session. The course coordinator showed the videos to professors during the fall training and asked them to require students to watch them before the library visit. The librarian also reminded the professors of the video requirement during the scheduling of the library instruction.
The business librarian also added a discussion at the beginning of the library presentation to assess their video participation and knowledge of the content. So far, students are watching the videos, and the librarian feels confident about proceeding with a shorter presentation and a longer hands-on session.

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**References**


