

Some Tips on Livestreaming

Written by Ben Winslett

Saturday, 21 March 2020 11:51 - Last Updated Saturday, 21 March 2020 12:00

Because a bunch of preachers have jumped into the video world while we're all in exile (lol) I thought I'd share some video tips along with some relevant images:

1. Audio is more important than video, though in these extreme times anything is better than nothing. The easiest way to livestream a video is with a smartphone. A cheap lapel mic can greatly improve your audio. For a little more punch, Rode makes a great little shotgun mic with windscreen that can be bought on Amazon. I use a Rode VideoMic Me. For short clips of me standing, I plug it directly into the phone. For longer videos at a lectern or my desk, I use an aux extension cable (it has to be 4 pole), a shock mount, and a small clamp on mic stand. Always use the windscreen. Attached is a pic of the Rode mic.

2. Lighting always helps, especially if you're streaming and Facebook downgrades the quality to 360p. This is very helpful if you're streaming from a desk. Google Images is your friend here. In a professional setup, you have key lighting, fill lighting, and backlighting. This is the standard three point lighting setup. Since few of us can manage that, especially in short notice, let me just say that a simple LED strip at 45° from one side of your face, up higher than your face, will help a lot. A pro will diffuse the light to soften the shadows. Since LED lights don't get hot, I've actually placed a couple of thin, white plastic Wal-mart bags ballooned over an LED flood light to soften shadows with much success. Wax paper also diffuses light VERY well (I used it to filter the lights over the pulpit to soften shadows on my face). Experiment with this, and be careful not to let material touch an incandescent bulb. Attached is a pic of three point lighting.

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3. Frame your shot. You want to obey the "rule of thirds." Watch TV and notice how in a conversation, the people discussing alternate between the left and right third of the screen. For a straight on lectern shot, like with our pulpits, you'd center the person, but have their face on the top third. If possible, have the camera a hair over eye level for the proper perspective (neither looking up a nose nor looking down at them). Walmart sells a cheap phone tripod that works great for holding a phone. Attached is a pic of a recent livestream's shot.

4. If possible utilize a camera man! The speaker should worry about speaking. Having someone man the camera will help things run smoothly. It also enables you to use the front facing camera, which is higher quality and yields better results. Once in your spot, have the camera man frame the shot. Then can count down, go live, and give you the thumbs up to start. Then, when you finish your message, they can stop the video. This creates good seams. since there's no editing a live video, especially on a phone.

5. Landscape is your friend! While we're now accustomed to watching vertical videos on our phones, many people watch videos on a smart TV or computer screen. On Facebook livestreams, to do this, you need to have "screen tilt" enabled, go to the page you will stream from with phone IN HAND, click to go live (your Facebook app suddenly looks like a camera app, and this is the "staging" area but you're not streaming yet), THEN rotate the phone to landscape (this is the only point you can rotate the screen via the Facebook app). The buttons then rotate to let you know it is set to stream in landscape dimensions. Finally, you click the big blue button on the right side of the screen to go live. **BE CAREFUL NOT TO ACTIVATE A FILTER!! LOL** (ask me how I know). Attached is a pic of the Facebook app on the "go live" staging area.

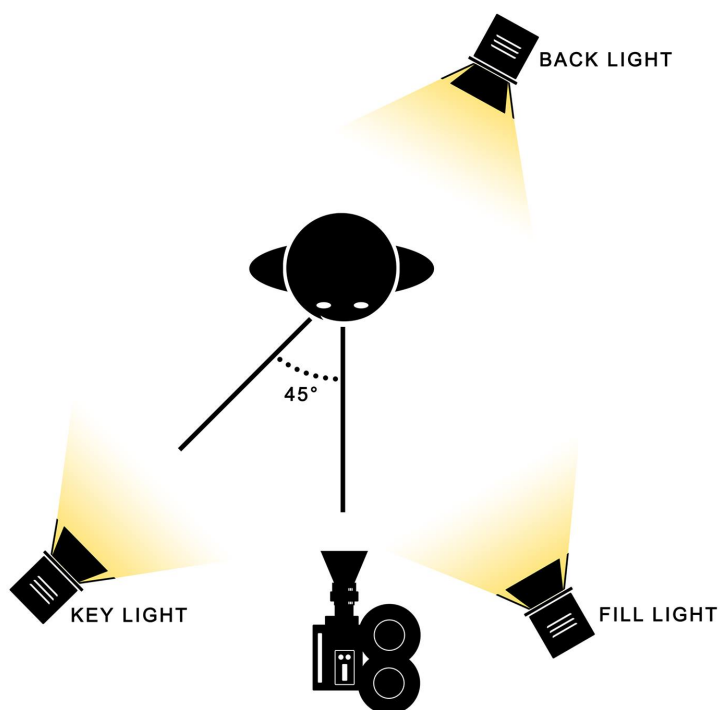
BTW, you can download livestreams after they are over and upload them to Youtube. Or, you can burn them to DVD and take them to members who are shut in. They also remain in your video archive until you delete them, so folks can watch the replay later.

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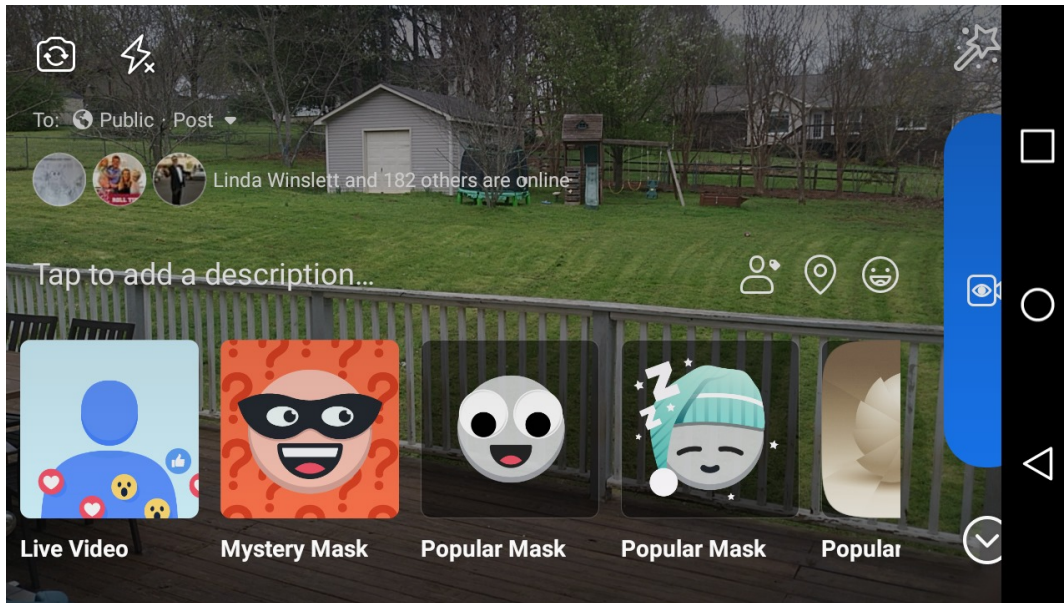
Happy streaming!



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RØDE
MICROPHONES

VideoMic Me

Directional microphone for smart phones



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