STORY-TELLING VIDEO MASTER

for lighting and furniture SMEs

SILEO

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EURO CLUSTERS

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SILEO BEST COMPANY STORY-TELLING VIDEO CONTEST

0. OVERVIEW

The **SILEO Best Company Storytelling Video Contest** is an international competition organized by the SILEO Eurocluster Consortium, providing SMEs with the opportunity to highlight how they have developed new or enhanced products or services through the use of advanced technologies or circular solutions by creating storytelling videos. These innovations may stem from activities provided or inspired by the SILEO project, including SILEO Eurocluster Financial Support to Third Parties (cascade funding opportunities), training and knowledge sharing activities and/or networking and co-learning. The list of the SILEO business support actions is available in the *Annex 1 of the Guidelines for Applicants*.

To assist companies in creating their SILEO storytelling videos, supporting materials, including tutorials and an online guide, have been developed by **Nicola Piccoli**, an expert chosen by Rete di Imprese Luce in Veneto. Nicola is a filmmaker and the founder of NPMEDIA, a video production company, as well as the creator of the Agile Filmmaking method, which is designed to help businesses and professionals succeed with their corporate videos.

The video tutorial is available here: https://vimeo.com/944384707/a27a7a0c2e. In the comprehensive explanatory video, the following critical aspects are thoroughly analyzed:

1. Pre-Production Phase: the essentials of why create videos and how the concept of multisensoriality enhances our storytelling capabilities, exploring how to encapsulate the core "why" of your brand into a directorial vision that speaks volumes and delving into the ancient wisdom of Greek philophy and its application in today's communication strategies. This sets the foundation for structuring our direction, translating complex communication strategies into the universal language of audiovisual content.

    i.   Why a Video?
    ii.   Multisensoriality
    iii.   Directorial Vision
    iv.   Philosophy in Communication
    v.   Structuring the Direction

2. Production Phase: agile filmmaking, the art of composition, the science of capturing light, the nuances of color, and the magic of capturing the moment.

    i.   Agile Fillmmaking
    ii.   Equipment Essentials
    iii.   Filmmaking is upgrading Photography
    iv.   Composition: Crafting the perfect shot frame
    v.   Capturing Light
    vi.   Color
    vii.   Capturing the Moment
   viii. Movement
    ix.   Lighting Choises
    x.   Sound

3. Post-Production Phase: a deep dive into the art of bringing your video to its fullest potential.

    i.   Editing ad Direction
    ii.   Software
    iii.   Music

1. STEP 1: RECORDING A VIDEO

SMEs are encouraged to create a short video highlighting success stories related to the green and digital transition, specifically showcasing new or improved products, services, or processes achieved through the adoption of advanced technologies and/or circular solutions supported by activities offered within the SILEO Eurocluster project. The video should focus on the following topic areas *(Chapter 1.1 of Guidelines for Applicants)*:

1. **SME Innovation & Circular Solutions**: Explore how SME is driving innovation in the green and digital transition thanks to the support of the SILEO project activities. Showcase examples of how products and/or processes have embraced change and adapted to align with sustainability and digitalization goals. Illustrate the implementation of circular/green solutions, showcasing in particular how the SME is redesigning products, optimizing resource usage, and/or implementing closed-loop systems to minimize waste and maximize the lifespan of materials. These improvements must be inspired or supported by SILEO activities.

2. **Advanced Technologies**: Delve into the realm of advanced technologies being adopted by applicant SME through the SILEO cascade funding opportunities (business digital transformation projects and/or advanced technology uptake projects in collaboration with the technology provider(s); and/or through the talent placement project and/or participation on the Hack Day in Romania and/or Italy), and/ or thanks to the SILEO knowledge transfer and training programmes (international masterclasses, local train-the-trainers sessions, analysing the SILEO advanced technology scouting reports).

A written plan about what you will need to record during the activity is very useful for preparing the actual recording and further editing of the final video product. Having a schedule of the planned activity and thinking about what you expect to happen in each of the moments in terms of dynamics and interaction with the participants will help you choose beforehand those parts worth paying more attention to for recording.

1.1 - Mandatory parts of a SILEO Video:

All videos submitted to the SILEO International Video Contest must include the following three mandatory parts:

1. **Brief presentation of the SME applicant** (who you are, your main mission, key activities, and primary sector, as well as the country in which you operate).

2. **Presentation of the improved product/process/service** that has been enhanced / introduced / changed thanks to the SILEO activities, which is the focus of the video.

3. **Company Logo and basic contact information**, such as your website or/and QR code, or/and social media links, or/and the name of a contact person, etc.

These three parts must be included in the video as mandatory components, in any sequence.

1.2 - Recording: Basic technical requirements

- **LENGTH:** min. 1,5 max. 5 minutes – The optimal duration for a video that includes all mandatory parts is a minimum of 90 seconds and a maximum of 5 minutes. This time frame is sufficient to introduce your company, describe the improvements made thanks to the SILEO project, and maintain the audience's attention without being too long. It is essential that the dynamic audio-video flow be high-impact to keep the viewer's interest.

- **FORMAT:** .mp4 or .mov. In addition to the .mp4 and .mov formats, you can also use formats such as .avi and .mkv. However, it is important to ensure that the final file is in one of the required formats (.mp4 or .mov) to guarantee compatibility with most video sharing platforms.

- **ORIENTATION:** Horizontal or vertical

- **STYLE:** All styles are permitted, e.g. personal statement, short interview, report, collage, animation, explanatory video, etc.

1.2.1 - Recording: Technical Tips

- ❖ **Composition**: a well-composed shot can guide the viewer's eye and make the narrative flow smoothly, providing clarity and enhancing the storytelling.
- ❖ **Capturing Light**: Light affects mood, texture and the overall tone of the scene. In filmmaking how you choose to light your scene can drastically change its emotional impact. Natural light from a window is ideal. Facing your light source is always better than having it at your back, which creates shadows.
- ❖ **Adequate lighting:** Make sure you have good lighting to avoid unwanted shadows and ensure optimal image quality. You can use portable LED lights or take advantage of natural light.
- ❖ **Color**: colors have the power to influence perception and evoke emotions.
- ❖ **Sound**: Avoid very noisy or windy environments. If possible, use a dedicated microphone to capture clear audio. Clear audio is crucial as it greatly influences the viewer's experience and can elevate the perceived quality of your video. Great sound complements your visual content and can significantly enhance the storytelling impact of your video.

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❖ **Background**: Choose a simple background with no distractions. Keep a distance from it to blur it as much as possible.

❖ **Shot stabilization**: Use tripods, gimbals, or stabilizers to avoid shaky footage that could distract the viewer.

❖ **Use the main lens of the smartphone:** If you are recording with a smartphone, avoid using the front (selfie) camera as it usually has lower quality compared to the main lens.

❖ **Check battery and storage space:** Before starting to film, ensure the battery is charged and there is enough storage space to avoid interruptions during recording.

1.3 - Essential Equipment

When diving into essentials of equipment for your video, it's vital to understand that the choices range widely, from **mirrorless cameras, smartphones to cinema cameras**. The choice of equipment depends on your needs and the level of quality desired. Each tools opens different pathways to creativity, allowing SMEs to explore and express their ideas in diverse ways.

→ **Mirrorless cameras** offer a good balance between quality and portability, making them a favourite for filmmakers who are always on the move.

→ **Smartphones** - iPhone 11 or above, high-end Samsung Galaxy, or similar: the continuous improvements in camera technology, make the smartphones incredibly accessible tools for capturing high-quality video. Smartphones are ideal for their simplicity and convenience.

→ **Cinema cameras** are perfect for high-quality productions and require a certain level of technical expertise. Designed for professional use, these cameras bring your vision to life with cinematic depth, color accuracy and detailed imagery

1.3.1 - Extra Equipment for enhanced video quality

While not essential, additional equipment can significantly improve the quality of your video recordings. Here are some options to consider:

- **Tripod, Selfie Stick, or Gimbal:** Using a tripod, selfie stick, or gimbal can enhance stability and overall production quality. These tools help prevent shaky footage, ensuring smoother shots and better framing.

- **Portable Lighting:** Incorporating portable LED lights can greatly enhance your footage, particularly in low-light situations. Proper lighting is key to achieving a professional look and can dramatically improve the overall visual quality of your video.

- **External Microphone:** Investing in a good external microphone can significantly improve your video's audio quality. Directional and lavalier (clip-on) microphones are excellent options that easily connect to smartphones and cameras, providing clearer and more professional sound.

- **Using Filters:** ND (neutral density) filters are beneficial for managing exposure in bright lighting conditions. They allow you to maintain a shallow depth of field, resulting in a more cinematic look while preventing overexposure.

By considering these additional tools, you can elevate your video production and create more engaging content for your audience.

2. STEP 2 – POST-PRODUCTION

Video editing is a multifaceted process that involves manipulating and rearranging video shots to craft a cohesive and engaging new work. It is typically regarded as a crucial component of the post-production phase, which encompasses a variety of additional tasks such as titling, color correction, sound mixing, and more.

Effective editing not only shapes the final product but also enhances the storytelling aspect of the video. In editing, there are essentially two parts:

1. TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF EDITING

The technical side of video editing focuses on the foundational elements of the editing process. This involves the actual cutting and stitching together of clips, where editors meticulously select the best takes while discarding unnecessary or redundant footage. The goal here is to ensure that the pacing feels just right, maintaining the viewer's interest and engagement throughout the video. Editors use software tools to trim clips, adjust the length of scenes, and arrange shots in a logical sequence that supports the narrative flow.

In this phase, attention to detail is paramount. Editors must be adept at managing video timelines, syncing audio and visuals, and ensuring that the transitions between shots are smooth and seamless. This technical expertise is essential in creating a polished final product that is both visually appealing and easy to follow.

2. CREATIVE DIMENSION OF EDITING

While the technical aspects are vital, the creative side of editing plays an equally important role in shaping the video's impact. Through various techniques such as montage, cross-cutting, and the integration of special effects, editors can significantly enhance the storytelling experience. For instance, montage sequences can compress time and convey complex ideas quickly, while cross-cutting can build tension and create dynamic contrasts between different narrative threads.

Furthermore, editors can employ color correction and filters to establish a particular mood or tone, allowing the visual elements to complement the story being told. This creative manipulation of visuals can evoke stronger emotional responses from the audience, helping to create moments that resonate deeply and linger long after the video has concluded.

The use of transitions between clips is another crucial element of the creative process. Effective transitions can enhance the narrative flow, guiding viewers smoothly from one scene to another while maintaining engagement. Whether it's a simple fade, a creative wipe, or a more complex effect, transitions can set the tone and pace for the unfolding story.

2.1 - Video Editing Software

When it comes to editing your video, selecting the appropriate software can significantly impact the quality and efficiency of your work. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced editor, there are various options available, ranging from free to paid software. Here's an overview of some popular video editing tools that can help you achieve your creative vision:

Free Software Options	
- DaVinci Resolve	DaVinci Resolve is a powerful free video editing software that excels in color correction and advanced post-production. It offers a comprehensive suite of editing tools, making it suitable for both beginners and professionals. The robust free version includes a wide array of features, allowing users to produce high-quality videos without the need for expensive software. → https://www.blackmagicdesign.com/products/davinciresolve
- HitFilm Express	HitFilm Express is another excellent free video editing software that provides advanced editing features along with special effects capabilities. This software is particularly popular among filmmakers and content creators looking to add visual flair to their projects. → https://fxhome.com/product/hitfilm
- Shotcut	Shotcut is an open-source video editor that supports a wide range of video formcats and comes equipped with various editing tools. Its user-friendly interface and flexibility make it a great choice for those looking for a straightforward yet powerful editing experience. → https://shotcut.org/
- CapCut	CapCut is a free and intuitive video editing app that has gained popularity among social media content creators. It offers a range of features, including easy subtitle addition, making it ideal for those looking to create engaging videos for platforms like TikTok and Instagram. → https://www.capcut.com/it-it/
- Canva	While primarily known as a graphic design platform, Canva also provides video editing capabilities. Its online interface allows users to create visually appealing videos quickly, making it suitable for both novice and experienced creators. → https://www.canva.com/

Paid Software Options	
- Final Cut Pro	Final Cut Pro is a professional video editing software designed for macOS users. Renowned for its speed and advanced features, this paid software allows for seamless video editing, including easy addition of subtitles with sophisticated formatting and synchronization options. → https://www.apple.com/final-cut-pro/

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- Adobe Premiere Pro	Adobe Premiere Pro is considered an industry standard for video editing. This paid software offers a wide range of advanced tools for editing and post-production, including features for adding and synchronizing subtitles. Its powerful capabilities make it a preferred choice for filmmakers and content creators alike.
	→ https://www.adobe.com/products/premiere.html

2.2 Video Language and Subtitling

When producing videos for submission, it is essential to adhere to specific language requirements. If your video contains spoken dialogue, it must be in English. Should you choose to create your video in a language other than English, it is mandatory to include English subtitles. The inclusion of subtitles is crucial for SILEO evaluators, as it allows them to fully assess the content of your video.

If you wish to add English subtitles, there are several software options available to assist you, including Adobe Premiere, Final Cut Pro, Canva, Aegisub (a free and open-source subtitle editor that supports the creation and editing of subtitles. It provides a range of features for timing and styling subtitles, making it a valuable tool for video editors looking to enhance their projects with quality captioning - https://aegisub.org/), Subtitle Edit (a free tool for creating, editing, and synchronizing subtitles. Its user-friendly interface and comprehensive features make it an excellent choice for anyone looking to improve the accessibility of their videos through effective subtitle management.), CapCut, and others. Additionally, numerous applications utilize artificial intelligence to automatically generate subtitles, enhancing both the efficiency and accuracy of the subtitling process.

2.2.1 - Tips for effective subtitle placement

To ensure your subtitles enhance the viewing experience, consider the following best practices:

→ **Synchronize with camera cuts:** Insert subtitles in perfect synchrony with camera cuts or scene changes. This will help maintain a natural flow and make it easier for viewers to follow along.

→ **Optimal positioning:** Subtitles are most effective when placed towards the lower part of the screen, centered horizontally. Providing a clear, unobtrusive space around the text is vital to ensure readability. Make sure the text does not extend to the edges of the screen. A good rule of thumb is to leave approximately one-fifth of the screen space free on either side of the subtitles. This allows viewers to read the text comfortably without having to shift their focus back and forth across the screen.

→ **Limit subtitle length:** It is recommended to limit subtitles to a maximum of two lines. If you are confident that no critical visual information will be obscured, you may use up to three lines. However, keep in mind that shorter, clearer subtitles are easier for viewers to read and comprehend quickly.

2.2.2 – Tips for transcribing spoken words

When transcribing spoken dialogue for your video, it's crucial to maintain accuracy and clarity. Here are some essential tips to help you effectively transcribe and format subtitles:

→ Avoid reinterpreting or translating what is being said. Aim to present the speaker's actual words as closely as possible without paraphrasing. This ensures that the audience receives the intended message accurately.
→ If multiple people are speaking or if the film transitions between different speakers, consider including the names of the individuals in the subtitles or using different colors to differentiate them. This is particularly important if the video cuts away from the person speaking while their voice continues in a voice-over. Select

subtitle colors that offer good contrast with your video background to ensure readability. For instance, black subtitles on a white background can enhance visibility, while white subtitles on darker backgrounds may require a shadow or outline to stand out.

→ Ensure that captions appear and disappear precisely as the words are spoken. Proper timing enhances viewer comprehension and keeps the flow of dialogue seamless.

→Allow enough time for viewers to read each subtitle properly. Subtitles should remain on screen for a minimum duration of about 1.5 seconds to facilitate reading.

→ If you have a long sentence, consider breaking it into two or more separate subtitles displayed consecutively. Each subtitle should be segmented at natural linguistic breaks, ensuring that it forms a coherent unit. Pay close attention to punctuation in this case to maintain clarity and meaning.

2.3 – Additional elements

Adding extra elements to your videos can significantly elevate their quality and impact. Incorporating effects, graphics, and music not only enhances visual appeal but also enriches the storytelling experience, making the content more engaging for viewers.

MUSIC

One of the most crucial elements you can integrate into your videos is music. The choice of music plays a pivotal role in setting the tone and atmosphere of your content. It can evoke a range of emotions ultimately affecting how viewers perceive and connect with your message.

Music can also serve as an important narrative device. It can guide viewers through the video, accentuating key moments or transitions and enhancing the overall emotional journey. Therefore, choosing the right music is essential for creating a compelling viewer experience.

However, when incorporating music into your videos, it is crucial to consider copyright laws. To avoid potential legal issues, the SILEO Consortium advises using copyright-free music or tracks that are licensed for public use.

If you are unsure about the copyright status of a particular piece of music, a good practice is to consult resources such as Creative Commons. Creative Commons provides a wide range of music options that are free to use, as long as you follow the licensing requirements specified by the artist. Many of these licenses only require you to give appropriate credit, while others may have restrictions on commercial use or require you to share your work under similar conditions.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER

In addition to music, consider adding other elements to further enhance your videos:

EFFECTS: Visual effects can create a dynamic and polished look for your video. These can include transitions, animations, and filters that make your footage stand out. Effects can also help emphasize important points or create a specific mood.

GRAPHICS: Incorporating graphics such as infographics, text overlays, and animations can help clarify your message and provide additional context. Visual aids can make complex information more digestible and keep viewers engaged by breaking up the visual monotony of standard footage.

SOUND EFFECTS: In addition to music, sound effects can add depth and interest to your video. Whether it's the sound of a door closing or a subtle ambient noise, these effects can enhance realism and create a more immersive experience for viewers.

2.4 - The Role of AI in video production

The integration of **artificial intelligence** (AI) in video production has revolutionized the way content is created, edited, and distributed. From concept development to post-production, AI tools offer innovative solutions that enhance efficiency, creativity, and overall production quality. Using tools like **ChatGPT**, **Heygen**, and other artificial intelligence tools for generating ideas and business communication strategies can be extremely beneficial. These tools can help generate content, improve the efficiency of the production process, and bring creative innovations.

AI tools can assist in the brainstorming and scriptwriting phases of video production. Natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, like those used in AI models such as ChatGPT, can generate ideas based on specific prompts or themes. This can help writers overcome creative blocks and explore new angles for their narratives.

AI's most transformative impact can be seen in post-production. Video editing software now incorporates AI algorithms that automate time-consuming tasks such as sorting through footage, color correction, and audio mixing. For instance, AI can analyze hours of raw footage to identify the best takes, saving editors countless hours of manual work. AI-powered tools can also enhance visual effects by automating complex processes like rotoscoping and motion tracking, enabling artists to focus on more creative aspects of their work. Furthermore, AI can assist in sound editing by automatically synchronizing audio with video, enhancing sound quality, and generating sound effects.

Moreover, AI plays a crucial role in making videos more accessible through **automated subtitling and translation**. Tools that utilize machine learning can generate accurate subtitles in real-time, ensuring that content reaches a broader audience. These AI-driven solutions not only save time but also enhance viewer engagement by making content accessible to individuals with hearing impairments and non-native speakers.

AI is also driving creative innovations in video production. For example, AI-generated content, such as deepfake technology and synthetic media, opens new possibilities for storytelling and visual effects. While this technology presents ethical considerations, it also encourages filmmakers to explore new narrative techniques and push creative boundaries.

3. Additional information

3.1 - Title and Credits

It is essential to include a title and credits within the film for any information, images, audio, or video clips that are not your own. Proper citation is mandatory for all content presented in the video, ensuring that credit is given to the original source. This not only upholds ethical standards but also adheres to legal requirements regarding intellectual property.

When creating your video, use only original, copyright-free, or public domain images, footage, and music. This ensures that you are compliant with copyright laws and avoids potential legal issues. There are many resources available online where you can find high-quality, free-to-use content to enhance your video without infringing on copyrights.

3.2 - Licence Agreement

To ensure that we can publish your video on SILEO social media channel (LinkedIn), on the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) and on the SILEO partners' websites, you must declare in the Declaration of Honour that you have cleared all copyright issues, including music rights. This declaration confirms that you hold the necessary permissions and licenses to use all content featured in your video. By doing so, you grant us the right to share and promote your work across various platforms, amplifying your reach and impact.

3.3 - Data privacy

It is crucial to respect the privacy and data rights of all individuals appearing in your video. Everyone featured must be informed about the purpose of the video, where it will be published, and their data privacy rights. This practice ensures transparency and compliance with data protection regulations, fostering trust and accountability.

By adhering to these guidelines, you not only protect yourself and your company legally but also demonstrate a commitment to ethical standards in video production. This thorough approach enhances the credibility and professionalism of your video content, ensuring it meets the highest standards for public distribution.

4. Tips & Tricks by Nicola Piccoli (CEO and FILMMAKER — NPMEDIA SRL)

DESIGNING DIEGETIC LIGHT

Designing diegetic light serves two main purposes: optimizing the use of your lighting/furniture products and simplifying the lighting setup process. In the film industry, particularly on less agile sets, the person responsible for lighting is known as the Director of Photography (DOP). The DOP is supported by gaffers and electricians who handle large, energy-consuming lights. For smaller productions or those without extensive technical resources, creating diegetic light - light sources that are part of the scene, such as lamps or windows - can be a more practical and efficient solution.

INCORPORATING LIGHTING AND FURNITURE PRODUCTS

For companies in the lighting and furniture sector, video content offers a unique platform to directly showcase your expertise and products. Here are some tips and tricks to ensure your video content stands out and effectively communicates your brand's strengths:

- Real-world demonstrations: Use your products in practical, real-world settings. Show how your lighting solutions can transform a space, enhance ambiance, or improve functionality. This helps potential customers visualize how your products might work in their own environments.
- Creative integration: Incorporate your products into the storyline of your video. For instance, show a workspace illuminated by your desk lamps or a living room brought to life by your ambient lighting. This not only highlights the product's practical uses but also its aesthetic appeal.
- Styled settings: Present your furniture in beautifully styled settings that reflect the latest trends and design aesthetics. This not only showcases the furniture but also inspires viewers with ideas for their own spaces.
- Functionality and comfort: Highlight the functional benefits and comfort of your furniture. Demonstrate adjustable features, ergonomic designs, and any unique selling points that set your products apart from competitors.

By following these tips and tricks, lighting and furniture companies can create compelling video content that effectively showcases their products and solutions. Whether through thoughtful design, creative storytelling, or strategic marketing, video can be a powerful tool to engage with your audience and drive business growth.

For any support needed, please contact:

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