

Low-Cost, No-Cost Production Music Helps Set the Scene for your Video or Presentation

KERRY SHEARER – January, 2013

It's easy to get started shooting and editing video for your web site or for use in presentations. But after you complete the initial edit, you realize there's something missing. What is it?! It's MUSIC! The right music bed for your video can do many things:



It can set the scene or "tone" for the entire video.

It can increase the energy level of the production. For example, fast music accompanied by quick video cuts between images communicate action and show that exciting things are happening with your program or event.

It can help you transition between scenes, such as suggesting the passage of time, or moving smoothly from a high-action sequence to a lower-key or emotional interview segment.

So where do you get music for your videos? As much as we'd all like to use some of the latest pop hits in our productions (i.e. wouldn't you just love to drop "Call Me Maybe" into your informational video about how your city's 211 call center operates?), you can't do that without a steep price: it's copyrighted material. Unless you have access to a composer and band that will create custom material for you, the best approach is to use royalty-free production music. That's production music that you buy and own - you don't have to pay licensing fees to use the music for a limited term.

My favorite source for low-cost, royalty-free production music is Footage Firm. The music is free, but with a catch: each themed disc you buy has an \$8.41 shipping and handling fee. That means that you can buy, say, 10 discs for \$88.41 and have a nice start to your production music library! For example, here is the link to their recently-released collection of

Rock production music: <http://www.footagefirm.com/freerockproductionmusic.html> . I signed up for their mailing list, so I get notified anytime new music is released. I probably have 50 discs in my collection now, and I use the music in all sorts of productions, such as this [quick recap video](#) I produced on a Kodak Zi10 pocket camera for the California Association of Public Information Officials: <http://youtu.be/VpwplOIS5Nw> .

Another company, Digital Juice, sells affordable production music as well as video production aids such as animated backgrounds and transitions. Their "Toxic Traxx" collection currently offers a free disc when you spend \$99 on any of their other products: <http://www.digitaljuice.com/products/products.asp?pid=2540>

These are just a couple of options for low-cost production music for your videos. If there are other vendors you know about or like, go ahead and include the information in the Comments section for this post!

Kerry Shearer is a broadcaster, communicator, social media/communications consultant, and Chair of the National Public Health Information Coalition's Web and Social Media Committee. He's a frequent emergency communications trainer and speaker at national conferences on social media and web audio/video techniques.