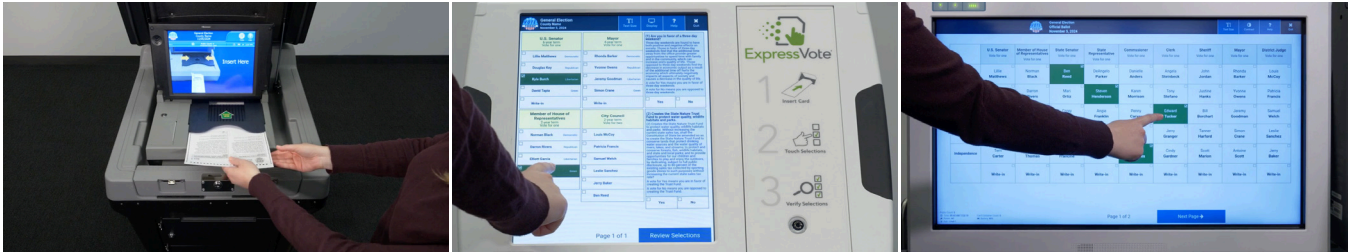# Voter Education Video Production Toolkit

As an Election Systems & Software customer you have access to complimentary, downloadable, generic voter-education videos that demonstrate how to vote on the DS200, ExpressVote as a marker and ExpressVote XL. You can post these videos to your website, share them at voter outreach events or on social media, use them as part of your poll worker training — use them however works best for you and your needs.

For customers who need to produce custom voter-education videos, ES&S has developed this complimentary Video Production Toolkit which provides guidance and tips to help ensure a smooth production process, a successful shoot and a well-produced video. In addition to a library of video assets and the conditions for use of these guides and assets, throughout the toolkit you will find links to more resources online and insider tips including:

- How to identify a video production company that will create the video your jurisdiction deserves.
- What must happen before the camera starts rolling.
- How to film election equipment in action.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE SURE YOUR VIDEO PRODUCTION COMPANY IS A GOOD FIT?

When looking for a video production company ask local marketing firms or businesses who they use to produce their videos. Plan to interview and compare three to five companies. When researching which companies you want to interview, check out any portfolios or demo reels shared on their website. Pay attention to the style of videos they produce. Look for product demos, product overviews or "how-to" videos to get a feel for their style. You can use ES&S' voter education videos as a point of reference!

The goal is to evaluate if the company you're considering can make videos that fit your needs.

When interviewing video production companies be sure to:

- **Describe the kind of video you need** – point to the examples of their videos you like and send them a link to the ES&S voter-education videos.
- **Ask how long they need to produce a one or two-minute video** – assume that a video this length will require about four to six weeks for production. Confirm they have the time available to produce your video by the deadline.
- **Ask what video format they shoot in** – a good standard is 1920x1080 (HD) MPEG-4, shooting at 29.97 frames per second. Companies can shoot in higher definition, but the final edited videos will likely be exported at 1920x1080.

- **Make sure you have a budget** – "What's the budget" is going to be one of the first questions you'll be asked. They cannot give you an accurate picture of what they can accomplish without knowing the budget.
- **Identify upfront what you expect to get from your production company** – different companies offer different services from storyboard development and script writing through post-production. What assets do you expect to walk away with — e.g., will you need a shorter cut of the video to use on social? Will you need them to capture any still images during the video shoot?

> We can't state this enough: Read through the contract language carefully to ensure that you clearly understand the give-and-take terms of your agreement with the production company, and that you don't incur any unplanned costs due to changes or revisions throughout your video development process.

You can share this toolkit with the company you hire. Let them know that there are scripts, graphics and footage available for them to incorporate into new video work. Regarding use of these assets, the company you hire should understand that they are not granted ownership rights to the assets but can use them for projects with you as our customer.

WHAT IS ESSENTIAL TO A SUCCESSFUL SHOOT AND A WELL PRODUCED VIDEO?

The answer is pre-production — and you should plan to spend considerable time in the pre-production phase of your video development. Here's a rundown of what should take place before the camera starts rolling.

Draft a Script

The toolkit's library of assets includes the DS200, ExpressVote as a marker and ExpressVote XL generic how-to-vote video scripts. Use any one of these existing scripts as a starting point and edit it to reflect the voting process in your jurisdiction. Below are a few factors to consider as you're developing the script:

- **How long should the video be?** Aim for a one to two-minute video. Longer videos tend to contain more information than viewers can absorb and retain. If your script is reading longer than two minutes, consider breaking it up into a series of shorter videos.
- **Do you need to educate your users on any other equipment or processes?** Get the most bang for your buck by capturing everything you might need to educate your audiences about. For example, educate about voter check-in along with how to vote.
- **What specific actions need to be demonstrated?** Consider the voter's experience and what they might need to see demonstrated.
- **Does your audience require additional languages?** This could be achieved through recording the voice over script in alternate languages or through subtitles.
- **Do you need to demonstrate the multi-lingual options on your equipment?** If your voters prefer their ballot in another language, demonstrate in your video how to select a language on the election equipment.
- **What will be the setting for your video?** It could be in a polling place, an elections office or in a generic training room.
- **Who will be speaking in the video?** You can have a representative from your jurisdiction speaking on-screen, professional voiceover talent, or a mix of the two. Using voiceover can make it simpler to create alternate language versions of your video. If you want someone to speak on-screen, try to break up their lines into shorter segments to avoid long takes.

Develop a Shot List

- **Use the script to make a list of the specific shots needed.** Try to anticipate shots you might need for alternate versions of the video, including wide and close-up shots of each action, different angles of each action, alternate languages shown on the equipment, and all available ADA features.

Organize and Prep Equipment and Props

- **Do you currently have in your possession the product(s) to be shown on-screen?** If not, now is the time to identify how and when you can get products for filming.
- **What contests and/or propositions will you show on the ballot?** A sample ballot is provided in this video toolkit.
- **If you plan to use a new/custom demo election, here are some tips:**
  - › Set the election date well into the future, so your video isn't dated. The ES&S voter education videos use a demo election programmed for November 5, 2024.
  - › Avoid names of actual candidates.
  - › Be inclusive in the names of candidates. Include names that represent a variety of races, genders and age.

Note: Your ES&S account manager can give additional support regarding the election equipment and ballots. Reach out with any questions you may have.

Plan Locations

- **Be sure to visit and evaluate the location before the shoot.**
- **Look for locations/rooms that you can reserve or schedule for your shoots.**
- **The location should be quiet** and without distractions (no phones, no windows, etc.).
- **The location should be well lit.** Your production company will likely have additional lights they can bring, but these should be used to enhance, not replace the existing lighting in the room.
- **Neutral backgrounds,** like blank walls, will help keep viewers focused on the presented materials.

Select Talent

Whether you're using voiceover or on-screen narration, you'll likely need people to demonstrate specific actions on the equipment. Your staff, poll workers and family and friends are great resources to ask for help. Consider the following when selecting actors:

- **How many actors will you need?** Will you need enough actors to play the roles of poll workers and voters in the same video?
- **Are you going to demonstrate the ADA features of the equipment?** Consider using talent who can effectively use these ADA features.

Dressing for the Camera

- **In General**

  - › Communicate the expectations for wardrobe and grooming to your actors well ahead of the shoot day and confirm that they can comply.
  - › If your video(s) require multiple shoot days, you may want the actors to wear the same clothing on each day for consistency.
  - › Is there a dress code for poll workers that they should follow for the video?

- **Guide for Actors' Clothing**

  - › Wear a shirt with some color — avoid a solid black, bright reds, bright whites and nude shirt colors – all can cause lighting problems.
  - › Wear shirts in cooler colors like teal, purple, coral — will pop on screen.
  - › Avoid shirts in a color that closely matches your skin tone — can wash you out, make characteristic facial features disappear and cause an optical illusion making you appear nude.
  - › Avoid clothing with a busy design or stripes. Big patterns can be distracting and small patterns can create an on-screen buzzing effect — e.g., zig-zags, narrow stripes, repeating patterns like herringbone, thin stripes, and small checks – even on ties.

- › Avoid clothing with visible logos, brand names or loud text.
- › Avoid khaki pants for men – wrinkle easily, revealing.
- › Wear clothes that allow heat to escape your body — long days, small spaces, nerves, lighting etc. can cause your body to heat up quickly. You want to avoid sweat marks or sweating off makeup.
- › Wear layers or bring backup options. It's helpful to have alternatives to choose from, as well as to be prepared for weather changes if filming outdoors.
- › Match the outfit you're wearing with the subject matter. You wouldn't want to wear a suit and tie for a shoot at a park.
- › Wear clean and appropriate shoes.
- › Avoid scarves and turtlenecks — can interfere with audio/microphone.
- › Avoid anything that can make your video appear dated — e.g., seasonal clothing like sandals, signature jewelry.

- **Guide for Actors' Jewelry, Glasses and Makeup**

  - › Avoid excessive jewelry – resist large, shiny pieces and noisy bracelets, like bangles.
  - › Wear contacts or just skip the glasses while on camera — glasses create reflections.
  - › Wear light and natural makeup and bring with you for touch-ups.
  - › Bring facial powder or oil blotting sheets to dull oily/shiny skin reflecting shine from lighting.

TIPS FOR FILMING WITH ELECTION EQUIPMENT

Over the years, ES&S has learned a few tips when it comes to demonstrating the use of election equipment on camera.

- **The videographers should white balance the cameras based on the light in the room**, rather than on the screens of the equipment. White balancing to the screens will result in the rest of the frame appearing too yellow.
- **Have filming lights match the color temperature in the room**, to help with white balancing.
- **Place election equipment in front of a blank wall**, and light the area surrounding the equipment as well as the equipment itself. This will reduce shadows.
- **Check to make sure the angle of the equipment doesn't result in their screens catching glare** off the room or filming lights.
- **Ensure that the videographer is shooting wide and close for each shot.** This will allow post-production edits to look natural.
- **For shots that show a voter making selections, have the actor make the same selections in every take or angle of that shot.** This will ensure continuity when the shots are edited together.

POST-PRODUCTION CONSIDERATIONS

Music

The soundtrack is an essential part of an engaging video. Ask your video production partner to help you find, select, and license music to accompany your footage before editing the video. Royalty-free music libraries offer tracks in a wide range of musical styles at affordable, one-time fees. The music you select should fit the tone of your video, not overwhelm or distract from it. In general, instrumental music works well to enhance educational videos.

VIDEO ASSET LIBRARY

You can access ES&S-created scripts and other digital assets on the media asset download pages of essvote.com:

- **DS200:** essvote.com/download-media-assets-ds200/
- **ExpressVote as a Marker:** essvote.com/download-media-assets-expressvote/
- **ExpressVote XL:** essvote.com/download-media-assets-expressvote-xl/

On these pages, you'll find:

- **Sample scripts**
- **Product footage**
- **Election-related B-roll footage**
- **Icon images** that can be used for on-screen graphics.

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