

Packaging Your Projects

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Introduction

Traditionally 'packaging a movie' means attaching talent (via talent agencies) to a project. Or a finance package refers to how producers will piece together finance.

In our definition, we simply mean, collecting together the elements that make up your film, in order to present them and display value to a third party.

For this module we will look at packaging an imaginary film as if it were your 'lorem opus'. Remember: you don't need to be at this stage yet. This is the goal to work towards.

Consider building your career towards the point where you are able to deliver creatively on the following list.

Steps to Success:

Some physical elements that you might want to include:

- **Table of Contents**

Eventually you will want to format the materials into a high gloss booklet/pack/publication. Depending on the complexity it can get pretty big, so make it easy for people to find the things that they are looking for.

- **NDA**

A simple non disclosure agreement can be found in the resources section. Signees states that whatever you share with them, they cannot pass onto a third party.

- **A Mock Poster**

You should aim for Strong visuals & a professional feel. The poster should Immediately sets genre, style and display any bankable elements: attached names. Film have been bought and sold based on a poster alone!

- **The Story**

Include as many materials as is relevant to your pitch/project. You want to make doubly sure that the value is dripping off the pages. Why should this investor/company be excited?

The heart of the story should come through in the material/presentation. Consider including:

Logline & Synopsis & Character breakdown.

The Script (make it great!). Copyrighted and registered with the WGA. This single thing holds all the value. Without it nothing can exist.

Conceptual art & Storyboards

Proof-Of-Concept Shoot (perhaps a short film?)

Concept Trailer. (A concept trailer cut together with existing movies, to give a visual representation of the vision. Eg. Looper: <https://vimeo.com/51294350>)

- **The Cast**

Make sure to differentiate between confirmed and locked cast and 'wish list' cast. Don't think you can fool investors!

Talent is not obliged until you have them on a 'pay-or-play' contract. But this is expensive and out of the reach of most people in the early stages of your career.

Another option is a letter of intent. This is a document that assures that the party is keenly interested in participating in the project and, if the project moves forward, agrees to negotiate in good faith with aims to finalize their participation and not pursue conflicting interests in the meantime.

However, this is not a contract! It's basically saying 'I like the project, I might be involved, I might not.'

- **Key Creatives and HODs**

Director, Producer, etc. bios with track records.

Who are the core talent from your dream team that you have been gathering from connecting with talented and creative people?

Who are the designers, composers, production managers etc that can really add value to the production?

- **Executive Summary**

This is the section of the package where you demonstrate that you are a creative professional. This will set you apart from most of the noise in the industry. Consider including the following elements:

Total Budget:

Above the Line - Executives and creatives salaries eg. producers, writers, directors, principal actors, etc.

Below the line - departmental crews, labour, equipment, materials, locations, vehicles, etc.

Post Production - Editors, Processing (film), Colour corrections, foley, sound, score, VFX

Other - coverage, fringe, unanticipated expenses.

Production Schedule & Production Board:

A breakdown of the script, locations, props, characters etc and an organisational view of the most efficient shooting schedule to maximise time and resources. Exact dates don't need to be set in stone, but once a script is finalised, this process can start! When you begin to assign key cast you can begin to lock in schedules and once the money is in place, being prepared with this process will allow you to move quickly!

Investment overview, and offering memorandum:

Make sure you have set up a company that allows for investments. You will need to do some further research to see what is required in your particular area. Demonstrate that you have set everything up properly, what the deal on offer is for potential investors and you are much more likely to be taken seriously.

Sales estimates (from sales agents):

You will likely only get estimates from sales agents on higher budget production with 'bankable' elements like talent and named directors. You can sign with an international sales agent, and they will give you sales estimates based on track records of previous films.

Or you can include your own sales estimates, but you need to be able to back up your figures. Don't compare your film to outliers! Don't compare your film to projects that have celebrities in them. Be totally realistic.

- **Appeal of Your Film**

This is an opportunity to demonstrate that you have thought about who your audience are and how you could potentially reach them. Remember value isn't exploited until a project is connected with an audience.

Include the following:

Current marketing activities:

Details of landing pages/websites, Social media pages

Social media marketing activities

Demonstrate a clear audience engagement, demonstrate clear audience demographics.

Distribution Plans:

Show a potential route to market.

Festival plan.

A market overview. Who are the (potential) sales agents, distributors?

Who is the target market and how are you/the distributor going to reach them?

Outline a potential marketing plan. What combination of Facebook ads, niche publication ads, radio spots, podcast promos could reach your target audience?

- **Opportunities**

Always focus your package on the benefits for the investor/company. What is in it for them?

How does aligning with your project help them to achieve their goals?

What are the cultural/social/economic/ opportunities associated with the project?

Is there something about the story or the audience that would benefit a potential investor/partner?

Are there other opportunities? What about offering investor set visit days.

Or promotion opportunities with key cast in the future?

- **Financial projections (be realistic!)**

Summarise the total budgets, the marketing costs for initial promotions vs. project revenues and tax breaks.

What is the project ROI. Over what time period?

What does this mean for potential partners/investors?