

GROUPON

MERCHANT PROFILE STYLEGUIDE



Merchant Profiles for Groupon should showcase what makes a business unique and intriguing. These videos should achieve two goals: capture an eye-popping video for the deal page, and provide the viewer with content that defines the most exciting qualities of their business.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR PICTURE

- Resolution should be 1080p on a DSLR (or more advanced)
- The frame rate should be 23.98 fps or 24fps (in camera - not render only)
- 23.98 fps or 24 fps mp4 or mov files (must always match camera frame rate; if the shooter accidentally shoots 29.97, export in 29.97 to avoid frame interpolation)
- Turn Frame Interpolation off when exporting the footage file
- Do not use auto white balance, exposure, or focus

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR AUDIO

- Use a lavalier or overhead boom for audio. No camera mounted shotguns
- If shooting with a DSLR, do not record directly into your DSLR. Capture audio using an external audio recorder
- There should be no auto-gain compensation or compression enabled on your recorder
- Do not use any microphone that is designed to connect directly to your DSLR
- Audio should be recorded at 24bit and 96khz uncompressed .wav or .aif
- Do not run any sort of noise reduction, compression, gating or EQ to the audio. We require only the raw audio
- Capture 30 seconds of room tone at the location of the interview

CORRECT LAVALIER MICROPHONE PLACEMENT

Examine the illustration (on next page). Figure A. shows the correct microphone placement, between 7-9 inches from the mouth. The microphone cord must be hidden, and the microphone should be pointed toward the subject's mouth.

If the microphone is too close (D.), it will pick up too much low end, and not enough clear high end. It might also cause there to be more "thuds" and breathing sounds. If the microphone isn't close enough (E.), the ratio between the floor noise and the vocals will be too low, and there won't be enough low end to create a full, rich sound.

Other tips:

- Look out for necklaces, buttons, etc. that might be scratching or tapping the microphone
- Monitor your audio to ensure that there isn't unwanted noise or interference
- Be aware of noisy environments. Try not to conduct the interview near loud machinery, fans, refrigerators, cars, running water, etc.

LAVALIER MICROPHONE PLACEMENT

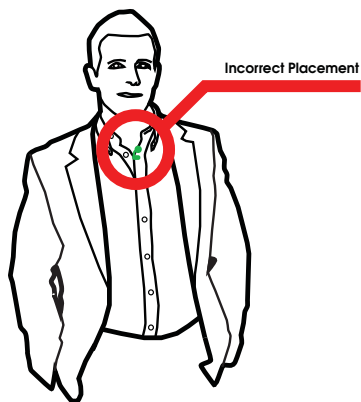
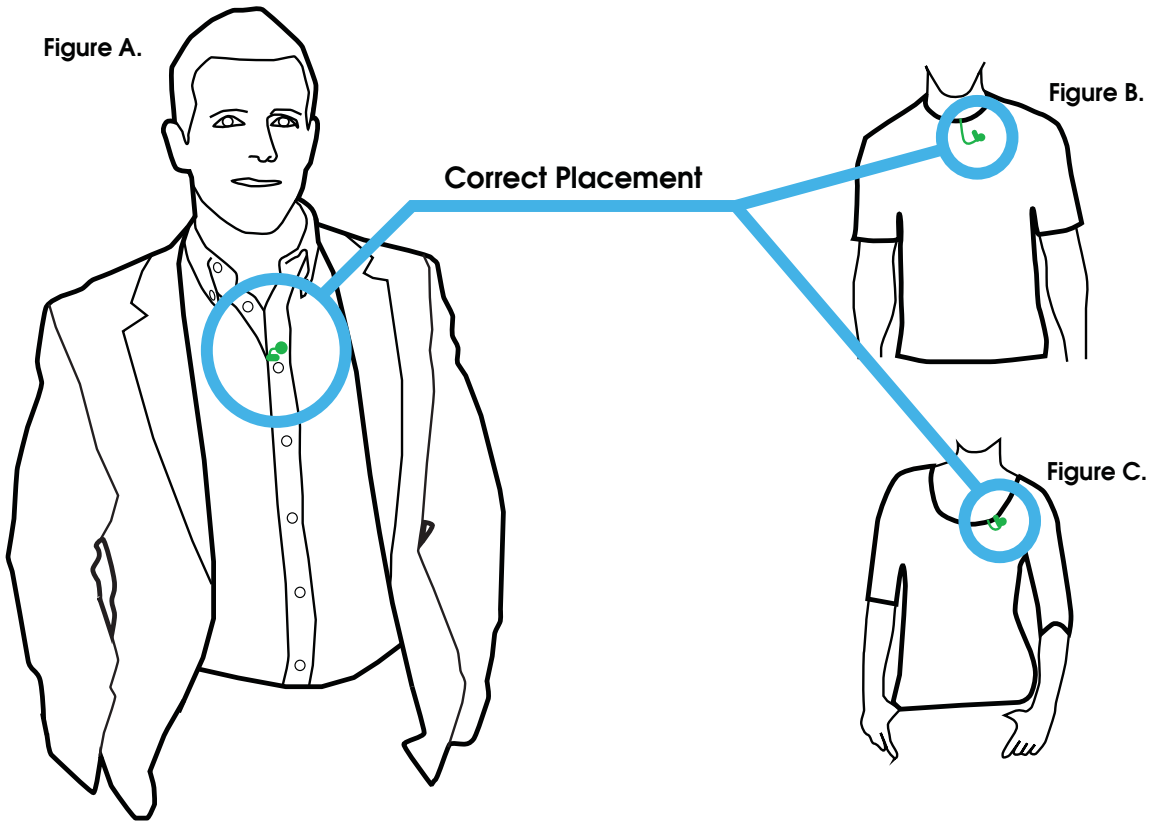


Figure D.

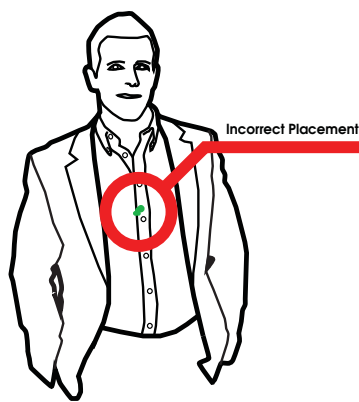


Figure E.

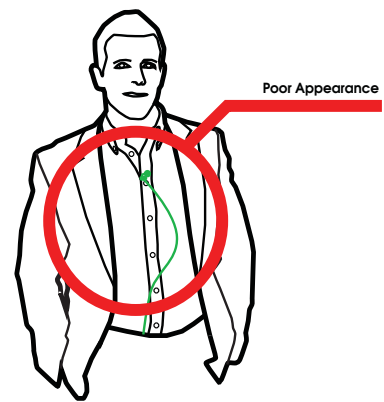


Figure F.

FILMING THE INTERVIEW

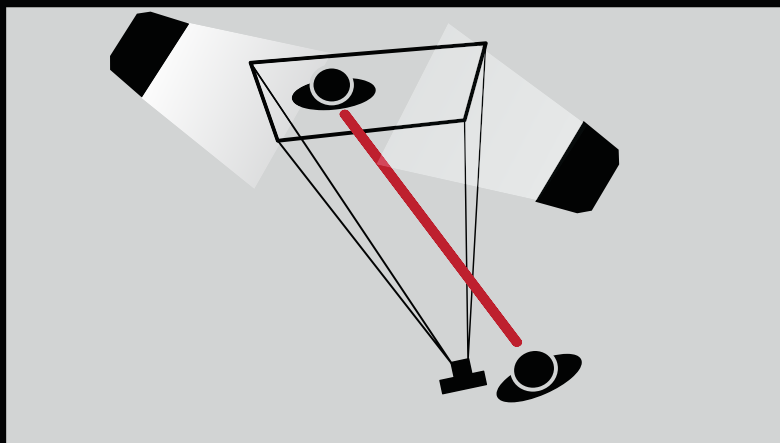


CORRECT PRACTICES

1. **EYELINE** The subject is looking opposite the direction that they're positioned in, so he is not looking directly into the edge of the frame. The light source is also in the direction of where he is looking. This allows the viewer to see the subject's eyes clearly, and get a detailed look at the features of the subject's face. This is telling the viewer, without a doubt, that the subject is at the top of the visual hierarchy

2. **LIGHTING & COLOR** The subject is lit from two light sources: a front key that illuminates the face, and a rear edge light that separates the subject from the background. A fill light can also be used to reduce the strength of shadows, depending on the desired effect. Also note the color separation between the subject and the background. The subject is "cool," while the background is "warm." This contrast can also strengthen the visual distinction between subject and background. While changing your subject's attire isn't always possible, utilizing the color temperature of your lights and the resources available at the location can help achieve this

3. **FOCUS** There is a strong focal disparity between the subject and the background. To create this look, the shooter must step back and zoom in. This shot was filmed at around a 60-70mm zoom with an F-Stop of 2.8. The distance between the subject and the lens was around 8ft



INTERVIEW CONTENT

- Customer interviews are welcome, but they are less of a priority than capturing strong B-Roll
- The subject should answer in complete sentences: “I’ve been in business for 5 years” vs. “5 years”
- Give some space between a subject finishing their thoughts and your next question. Don’t cut the subject off. If you know you’re speaking over them, be sure to have them repeat their answer
- The interview should be a conversation. Ask them to describe what they do, specifically (e.g.: restaurants should describe special recipes, cooking techniques, popular dishes, etc)



DO:

- Ask them to describe their service or product(s)
- Ask them what makes their products or services unique
- Ask them to talk about the origins of their business
- Ask them for interesting anecdotes regarding their day-to-day operation
- Ask them to talk about their “business philosophy” or what motivates them

DO NOT:

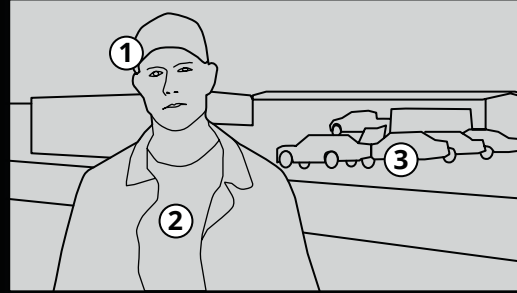
- Film more than one interview subject at once
- Have the merchant “speak to their customers” and/or look into the camera
- Mention pricing under any circumstances
- Let the merchant use marketing language (“We have good service, etc”)

B-ROLL



- There should be 20 or more diverse B-Roll shots (5 shots of the same content from nearly the same angle is not the same as 5 shots)
- Make sure that the b-roll shots correlate with the interview, so what is described can be referenced visually
- Hold shots for at least 10 seconds. If you are going to use movement (panning, tilting, tracking), make sure it is smooth
- Stop rolling between setups. There should not be any footage of a videographer picking up a camera and finding the next shot
- Use handheld sparingly. A monopod shot is preferred over straight handheld. Not everything needs to be a static, but jerky handheld footage will not be used
- Do not use drones indoors
- Do not use any whip pans or fast zooms
- Avoid shooting logos, license plates, etc.

HOW NOT TO FILM THE INTERVIEW

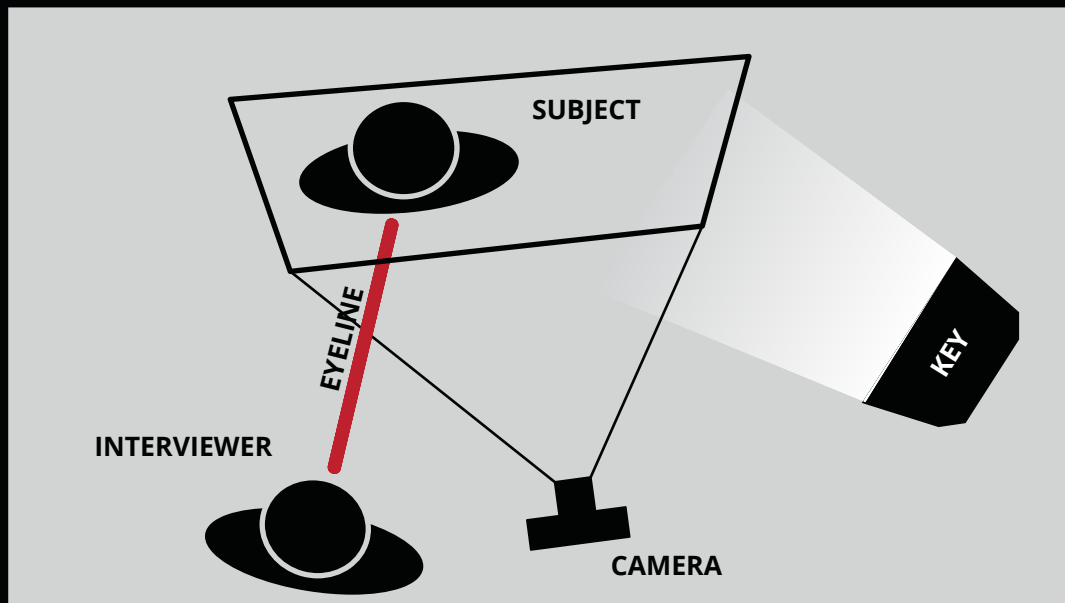


1. **EYELINE** The subject is looking directly into the edge of the frame. Given his position on the left, the subject should be looking frame-right, in the direction where there is “side room.” The interviewer should always stand on the opposite side of the subject to direct the subject’s eyeline on the side with the open space

2. **FOCUS** The subject is slightly softer than the background. Not only should this be flipped, it should be flipped drastically. The shooter should move further back and zoom in to compress and blur the background, defining the importance of the subject using focus. A wide open aperture of 2.8f or less will assist in achieving this

3. **HIERARCHY** There is too much complexity in the background. It is drawing the eye away from the subject. This, in combination with the subject’s eyeline, might cause the viewer to think that something is happening in the background that the subject is unaware of. It is unintentionally creating dramatic irony by suggesting the viewer “knows” something that the subject doesn’t know

OVERHEAD OF POOR SETUP



APPENDIX

VIDEOGRAPHER CHECK LIST

- Is your footage color balanced according to your lighting situation?
- Do you have 20 or more diverse B-Roll clips?
- Is your footage in 23.98fps or 24fps?
- Does your footage correlate with what is mentioned in the interview?
- Does your interview meet the visual specifications of the guideline?
- Is your audio recording in 24bit 96khz uncompressed .wav or .aif?
- Is your subject mic'd?
- Is your mic properly placed according to the guideline?
- Check your levels. Peaks should be around -6 and most of the audio should ride around -10.
- Are you monitoring the audio with headphones?
- Does your audio sound good? No overpowering hiss? No strong background noises? Is the subject's voice clear and crisp?
- Did you capture at least 15 seconds of room tone?

NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, DO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Film in / Export in any frame rate other than 23.98fps or 24fps
2. Film in / Export in a resolution lower than 1920 x 1080p
3. Deliver *only* handheld B-Roll
4. Deliver under / over-exposed clips, or poorly white-balanced clips
5. Deliver footage of the interview subject looking at, or addressing the camera
6. Deliver interlaced footage
7. Use a wide or out-of-focus (subject) shot for the interview. Shot should be zoomed in with shallow depth-of-field with the subject in crisp focus
8. Deliver less than 20 diverse B-Roll clips
9. Deliver only in-camera audio for the interview
10. Deliver interview audio with feedback / conflicting sounds / other low signal to noise ratio