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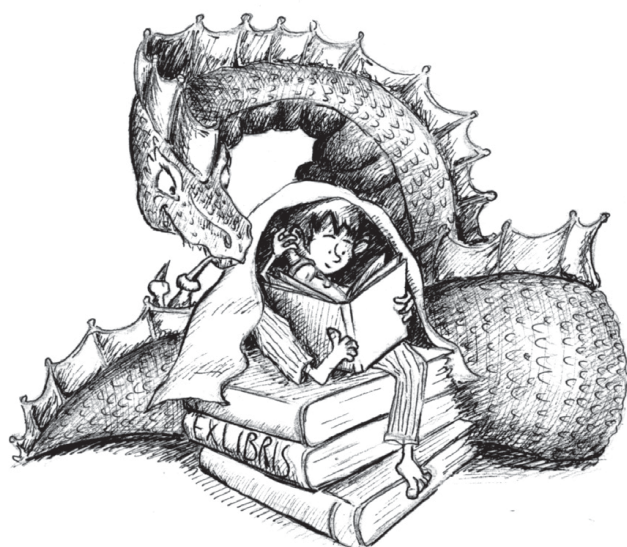
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Showcasing Your Illustrations with Micro-video

BY PATRICIA PINSK

I HAVE BEEN reading a lot about growing trends in social media. As Forbes points out in their article “The Top 7 Social Media Marketing Trends That Will Dominate 2014” (www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2013/09/24/the-top-7-social-media-marketing-trends-that-will-dominate-2014/2/), more people are using video to promote their work. Micro-videos (under three minutes) are especially gaining in popularity over longer videos. This makes sense. We are a visually dominant, increasingly attention deficit society. We love looking at images. We especially like those that have a bit of animation and audio that accompanies them.

Recently I set up a YouTube account and created a video portfolio from some still images (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jdx5UVccDDU) I had illustrated. To do so, I downloaded a free Windows Movie maker program (www.windows.microsoft.com/en-US/Windows-Live/movie-maker). Then I imported all the images, as well as some music (with copyright approval) into the program. There are plenty of royalty-free music sites out there, such as Incomptech (www.incomptech.com). You need to remember that you cannot simply add music to

your video—YouTube will eventually remove it from their site if they find you have infringed on copyright. Adding credits at the end of your movie that state what content is yours and what is licenced makes for a problem-free video.

If you plan on recording your audio, remember to do a sound check with headphones. You will be surprised at what a microphone can pick up. There is nothing more distracting listening to squeaky chairs, rustling paper or background doorbells.

When it comes to editing, Windows Movie Maker program is great for really simple edits. However, I do recommend something more robust such as Protools (www.avid.com/US/products/pro-tools-software) and Final Cut Pro (www.apple.com/final-cut-pro/), if you want to do complex video and audio recording and edits. These programs are not free though, and they are more complicated to learn.

Although the editing process I used was simple, it was time consuming to produce this video. For just under 1.5 minutes, it took about seven hours production time. Granted, some of my time was spent learning the Windows Movie Maker program. Most of my time was spent tweaking things such as the following:

- Timing of images in relation to the audio—are they in synch to the rhythm of the music?
- Timing of the text— is it on the screen long enough for the viewer to read?
- Using transitions between frames—are they smooth and appropriate transitions?

Of course you don't need to spend as much time as I did on my video. I have noticed that there are a lot of popular videos out there that appear rough and unedited. They seem more about getting a message out on how to do something, rather than presenting a portfolio of work. I guess it's all about questioning who your audience is, and what level of quality they expect from you as a promoter of your product. Personally, I recommend presenting a polished product, as you want to come across as professional as possible. As they say in the marketing world “sell the sizzle, not the steak.”

Patricia Pinsk (www.patriciapinsk.com) lives in Vancouver. She holds a BFA from Vancouver's Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (now called Emily Carr University of Art and Design), a Certificate in New Media from Vancouver Film School, and a Certificate in Technical Writing from Simon Fraser University.