

The Outdoor TV Show's Guide to the Industry

Secrets the Outdoor Industry Won't Tell You
About Marketing, Sponsorship, Filming,
Working on a Budget, and more...



by **Dustin Vaughn Warncke**

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The logo for Warncke Enterprises features the words "WARNCKE ENTERPRISES" in a bold, yellow, serif font. The letters are outlined in black and set against a dark green rectangular background.

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Thank You for Purchasing this Book

I want to express my deep gratitude to you for purchasing this resource guide. I spent many hours creating this resource for you and I would greatly appreciate it if you would respect me and not share or distribute the eBook to anyone else without my permission.

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Introduction: Starting Out on the Journey

The catalyst for this project came through a video I did on starting an outdoor TV show. You can see this video on my website at www.dustinsprojects.com or directly at <http://youtu.be/bfG9i4kBhSc>. While I intended the video to be a short tech tip segment, it ended up being a series that was almost an hour long. I had two start-up TV shows who contacted me saying that it was the best video they had seen on how the outdoor industry works and that the video gave them the advice they needed to push forward and keep going. That inspired me. The short notes I started writing as a resource guide for new TV shows, based off of the information I presented in that video, began spilling over into something larger and, with my ambitious nature, I simply couldn't stop. I wrote this book for outdoor TV shows, regardless of where you are in developing, promoting, or airing your show.

I am an outdoor writer, outdoor TV Show co-host, outdoor industry consultant, web designer, videographer, video editor, Pro-Staff for several companies and outfitters, sales and marketing director, and a few other things in the outdoor industry. I started my work in the outdoor industry by building a website for a hunting ranch in trade for a few hog hunts. I then used my outside sales skills from my main career in product fundraising sales to non-profit organizations to sell hunting packages and learned how sales and marketing worked in the outdoor industry. I helped that hunting ranch grow into a full-time operation with several employees and a side business in exotic game live sales and trapping services. My business, Warncke Enterprises, has grown from there. I have accomplished more in the outdoor industry than I ever imagined and am grateful for every bit of it. I thank God every day for all that I have had, all that I have, and all that I shall have one day.

My accomplishments in this industry did not come easy and, most likely; yours won't either if you are just starting out. That is the cost we all pay to play this game. Some TV shows never make it past a thought or a dream of one day having their own show. I believe in realizing that success. This book should serve as a resource guide to anyone at any stage of the process from already having an established outdoor TV show to looking at starting one. I have jam-packed this project full of my years of knowledge and experience from all of the roles I play. In many way, I have the perspective of the sponsor, TV show, outfitter, and non-profit organization in the outdoor industry due to my work with all of them in various roles. I know how they all think and what most of them view as important because I have helped many people, TV shows, businesses, and organizations grow and prosper. Likewise, that is my goal for you.

As the old saying goes, "The price of success is hard work and dedication and the rent is due

every day". My challenge to you is to do something, however small it might be, every day to build your brand in the outdoor industry. This is a crowded market and everyone thinks if they have a video camera, they are worth the world's attention. The truth is that, unless you are wealthy, famous, or both, the road can be long to get to a reasonable level of success. The nice part is that there are guys like me who are along with you for the journey. I have experience in many areas of the outdoor industry and I am here to help you. Thank you for purchasing this book and I assure you that you will gain a wealth of knowledge from dedicating some time to reading what I have produced.

Since I am not a fan of ridiculously long books, inflated with a lot of filler just to make them longer, I formatted this book with easy to read bullet-points, covering a different point in each section. That being said, as I promise all of the folks I work with in the outdoor industry and other parts of my life, I promise you the best quality, value and service, from the material I have presented here. I also decided to make this an e-book instead of a traditional print book so you can easily navigate to the resources I have provided, via providing hyperlinks and other resources, to allow easy access to the outside websites, videos, and other content, on whatever device you are using to read this. We also saved a few trees together. See, outdoorsmen are better environmentalists than the hippy tree-huggers would have you believe! Regardless of where you are in the development of your show, know that I am here to help you. I have a network of professional videographers, video editors, successful outdoor TV show hosts, sponsors, and more to help you get where you want to be. My contact info is at the beginning and end of this book and I hope you will stay in touch if we can be of service. Thank you again for purchasing this resource and I hope you enjoy the journey with me.

Warmest Regards,

Dustin Vaughn Warncke

Finding Locations to Film on the Cheap and Networking with Non-Profit Organizations

- Trade promoting business on your show in return for hunting and fishing trips or other outdoor adventures with ranches, guide services and outfitters, or ask for a discount in trade for promotion on your show. Nothing comes for free in this world and the outdoor industry is no exception. Businesses are in business to stay in business and most are looking for ways to increase market reach and exposure for little to no cost or no cost if possible. As Andy Rooney once said, “Opportunities are never lost; Someone will always take the ones you miss...” Don’t let another TV show or other outside company make a deal like this first. Contact potential sources for opportunities like these early and often.
- Use networking skills to find places to film your outdoor adventures and find different scenery and activities to give your show some variety. In my own adventures, I have two urban hotspots which are great for deer hunting with a crossbow. One came from my father’s friend who had a small parcel of land. He wanted a little deer meat in return for allowing me access to his hunting land. Easy trade-off! I have filled many Whitetail Buck and Doe tags on that hunting spot and a neighboring spot that I connected with after that landowner moved and sold his property. Most people in the area don’t even know hunting is legal which results in low pressure and high success rates. I make a kill shot almost every time I hunt that spot. The new landowner of the neighboring property didn’t care for deer meat but was a single elderly woman and needed help with some chores around the house and yard. I either did these chores or hired someone to do them if time was an issue. The cost of that kind of trading is far less than what many people pay for hunting land, especially here in Texas. Be creative and don’t be afraid to knock on a door and ask for permission if hunting is legal in a particular area. The worst that can happen is that they tell you to go away. No big deal there. If you are able to secure neighboring property, just ask for permission to cross over a landowner’s property if needed to retrieve a deer or get to a hunting spot.

My experience has been that the more you do with communication and networking upfront, the easier it is when you have a situation come up later in the season where you might need to access someone’s property. Make sure everyone you encounter understands how respectful, courteous, grateful, and resourceful you are (which can help with the image of all outdoorsmen) and offer them something in return for their hospitality. A great icebreaker for me is a package

or two of deer sausage. Most people won't turn that down.

The truth is that most people don't even know that I hunt in this particular area and I plan to keep it that way. It is poor taste to drag a dead deer carcass across your landowners' property or glorify what you are doing in front of others who may not understand or appreciate our sport the way that we do. While you should never be ashamed of the part you are playing in the ecosystem as a sportsman, even if you tell people you encounter about the meat or fish you donate to charity or the other good you do for the world, keep in mind that some people do not have the same outdoor experiences we do and may form an opinion only by watching what you do and how you act in your outdoor environment. That is one reason why I like to transport deer I have shot, clean fish I have caught, or do the other "less desirable" tasks in what we have to do as outdoorsmen with a low-profile. You never know who is watching. Even if it's legal, many people have given the outdoor sports we all enjoy a bad name by "showboating" something in poor taste or otherwise acting like a total brainless idiot in the field.

- Always be respectful, courteous, and a resource of value to landowners, outfitters, hunting ranches, etc. Good intentions aren't enough. Plenty of outdoor business owners have been burned by "hot shot" new TV shows promising them the moon and stars in return for something of value. The hunting ranch I work for has had a well-known crossbow company film several hog hunts at no cost to them but at considerable time and resource investment from the ranch. This footage featuring promotion for the ranch never saw the light of day. Another time, a new hunting show filmed several hunts, most at a discount and one hunt was even for free in trade for promotion, but the show, as of the time of this book at least, never made it on the network. What was worse is that one of the show hosts wounded a rather expensive Axis buck and it died shortly after I caught it on film as part of one of my hog hunts that did make it to national TV and web TV exposure. One of the show hosts saw this video on the ranch's website and wanted to come back out and recover the deer but by that time, he was long dead. The show hosts were less than respectful about this issue and even asked to come shoot another animal on a different hunt for FREE! The owner of the ranch was appalled at this behavior. Not everything in the outdoor world goes as planned. In fact, many times it doesn't. But handling a sensitive situation with respect and integrity should be paramount, especially for new shows trying to break into the network.
- Strive to provide more value than what you receive in return and earn the favor of those you work with. They may lead to future connections and sponsors. Never burn bridges. You never know which ones you will need to cross again. Work to build network relationships with different outdoor product and service businesses and even non-profit organizations. There are a

few behind the scenes stories I have heard about very popular show hosts “strip mining” sponsors and burning bridges then looking for greener pastures in the industry. In other words, this show host is greedy and money hungry and does what he does because he can get away with it. Regardless of how big of a name you are now or become in the future, I cannot stress enough how important a positive image and reputation is in an industry that is overrun with many shows competing for the same exposure, products, money, and other resources, all at the same time.

- Offer to promote the landowners, outfitters, hunting ranches, and other businesses on your website or social media platforms where there is a fit for them. Most businesses are on the lookout for marketing in return for what they offer you. Furthermore, most of these businesses will welcome the promotion and low-cost marketing through you and your show as long as they know your content is good and your show has a good reputation. Remember, you represent them and they, in turn, represent you. Both relationships have to be built on trust. More on that later.

With promotion in mind, consider posting a report of your outdoor adventure with the landowners, outfitters, hunting ranches, or others on regional outdoor forums/message boards and other places you have exposure to an audience. You want to showcase the business in the best light possible and give them the most unbiased but favorable review you can. Even if they become a sponsor, or are currently a sponsor, you don’t want it to appear like they put you up to writing a review of your experience or paid you off to do it. I have seen too many TV shows review hunting ranches and other outfitters in a way that looks like the business owner had possession of their souls. Reviews like that never look genuine or impressive to your audience.

- Seek out local non-profit organizations who work in or with the outdoor industry or even others who might be a good fit for your show. I personally belong to and promote organizations such as Crosswater Outfitters (www.crosswateroutfitters.com), which is a wounded warriors organization based in Central Texas. They work with soldiers and their families through an organization connected to Fort Hood (one of the largest military bases in the world) helping soldiers return to civilian life after service in the US Army. CWO introduces soldiers and their families to the Gospel and message of God through Jesus Christ and they do this through jug fishing for catfish on a three day weekend. This ministry has been a great resource for our show to feature as their mission lines up directly with part of our show’s mission statement: “God, Guns, and Country.” In return, I promote CWO and their mission to help them grow through videos, articles, and other platforms. In a recent article series titled, “Are You Gonna Eat That?” I featured the last CWO event I attended as a boat deckhand, fish cleaner, and musician. These

are a few of the many roles I play in service to this organization. I wrote about running low on catching catfish during the early part of our event and catching and eating long-nose Gar as a supplement. This article featured both a point I was writing about on eating lesser desired wild game and fish and also promoted CWO. This is a good example of what can be accomplished with a partnership like this.

The Author at CWO Event with a Soldier and His Daughter (Left) and Boat Captain (Right)



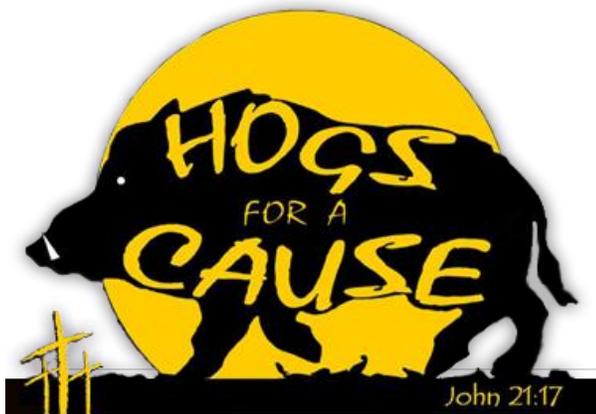
Another organization I belong to is Hill Country Bowhunters in Central Texas (www.hillcountrybowhunters.com). The main focus of this organization is to promote and encourage youth to get involved with the outdoors, with an emphasis on archery and bowhunting. Recently, I filmed an interview with the president of Hill Country Bowhunters

about the importance of 3D archery clubs for families and friends. Their purpose is to unite for fun outdoor activities as well as to promote hunting and archery to the youth of today, our next generation. This was a very well received video on our show and provided great exposure for the organization. It also gave their website more content for promotion as well as our TV show. Everyone wins. This is good exposure for the organization and it also shows viewers that you are about more than just “catching and killing” in your mission as a TV show, which is important. In my writing endeavors, I stress the importance of the positive message that we send to the non-hunters and even anti-hunters in our society today through what we do in the outdoors.

The latest organizations I have joined are True Grind Ministries (<http://www.truegrindministries.com>) and Hogs for a Cause (www.hogsforacause.org). True Grind Ministries is a drug and alcohol rehab and recovery house that I found through one of the founding members being connected with Crosswater Outfitters. Although TGM is not a direct outdoor industry organization, they welcome the exposure and support of their Christian-based message. Hogs for a Cause is also a Christian ministry connected with Crosswater Outfitters and their mission is to feed the homeless and hungry in local communities with the abundance of feral hogs, which are overpopulating the state of Texas and many other places in the US. They show up with their large refrigerated truck or their new large trailer that’s been converted into a smoker worthy of a barbeque competition and feed the poor, spreading the Christian message.

Not only is joining organizations like these beneficial to your own outdoor industry resume as well as having intrinsic benefits, but non-profit organizations like these also welcome the exposure. They may not have a lot to offer in return as many struggle, like many outdoor shows, with money and expenses, but the value you can provide them and the exposure to your viewers about your work with non-profits is powerful.

Examples of Non-Profit Organizations





- Seek out other larger non-profits who enjoy the exposure but may not be able to return anything back to you. Ask their permission to be featured on your show and feel free to show them in the end credits or as part of your show with their permission. Most of these organizations will enjoy the exposure as long as your show is produced well and carries the right message to the viewers about them. Many people have asked me why they cannot use non-profit organization logos and other media in their videos without permission. A good example of this is the Wounded Warrior Project. I have been a part of planning and promoting two fundraiser events benefiting the WWP. One of their rules is not to use their logos on any marketing material for events or any other promotions before or at the actual event unless they host the event as an organization. When people ask me why third-party fundraiser events have these limitations, the answer is pretty simple. To their credit, they want to be careful who represents them. Most well-known and nationally promoted non-profit organizations are no stranger to having a sole supporter or third-party organization run their name and organization's reputation into the ground, sometimes even unintentionally, by what they do or say on their behalf. Being on the public relations and marketing side of things, I understand this completely. It is much better for everyone involved to ask for permission from the organization you are representing first, however large or small it is, and follow the rules of the organization.

A good example of something I recently did as part of our show with a large nationwide organization is my last hunt in last year's deer season where I donated a doe to the Hunters for the Hungry program. I support my local chapter here in Texas and am in contact with their regional office on a regular basis. Part of my goal was to spread the word about deer donation programs and the value they provide to the needy families in our local communities. They welcomed the promotion and allowed me to use their logo in the end credits on all of my videos for that season. My future plans include taking processed meat to local food banks and possibly interviewing the PR director or someone else at the food bank about how wild game meat is appreciated and welcomed by many food banks. Again, opportunities like these are positive

messages to send to your audience and even share with those who do not understand what or why we do what we do in the outdoors.

- Another idea is to trade your services or volunteer your time in service to working with helping non-profit organizations. Usually, they will welcome your time and talents with open arms. For example, I trade my website building and maintenance services with Hill Country Bowhunters in trade for a free yearly membership. I also serve as an officer on the leadership board as well as the youth hunt coordinator. This also allows me to work with the local guides and outfitters, such as Garquest Bowfishing Adventures (www.garquest.com) and DB Hunting Ranch (www.dbhunting.com). I help both of these businesses in sales and marketing by bringing them business and bringing HCB sponsors in return. For sponsorship the outfitters simply donate a bowfishing or hunting trip for the annual “Fun Shoot” HCB has in September as their main fundraiser. In a way, I am involved in all parts of the puzzle. I have created great value for myself by being the one who connects HCB to the guides and outfitters I represent. Not everything you do in networking will be a fit but the more you do, the more value you can create for yourself. I realize that I am more ambitious and use networking far more than most people but I have a success story in many areas of the outdoor industry as a result. This didn’t happen by luck or privileges afforded to me by anyone besides the grace of God. I started with nothing, on the outside looking in, and I worked for every bit of the success I currently enjoy in the industry. You can do this too.

Tell a Story in Your Hunt

- Share the history of the land or water you are on in your video. Did people settle there in previous generations or is there any other back story to your location? For instance, the land where many man-made lakes now stand had a rich history of towns where people once settled. Sonar and other technologies available today can show roads, foundations, and more of these former towns. One of the lakes I frequently bowfish on used to have a moonshining industry during prohibition and also had ranches and cattle stockades before the area was impounded by the lake. When the lake level was low, I once saw the remains of a cattle corral, complete with old fencing and more. One of the fishing spots I frequent on the Texas Gulf Coast has an island which used to be a military installation in World War II, complete with runways and buildings that are still present. A lighthouse on this same island was used in the Civil War by Confederate soldiers to ambush Union soldiers. Even further back in history, in 1687, French explorer Robert de La Salle's ship, La Belle, sank in a bad storm near the same area and was discovered in 1995. Most viewers are interested in history like this and I personally love this kind of stuff.

One of the places I hunt even had a pre-historic history. In one of my hunting videos at this location, I talked about the discoveries of the remains of a civilization that was over 10,000 years old which were discovered during the construction of one of the major roads around this area. People hunted and fished along this same creek area back then! While your story may not be near as interesting at your next filming location, seek to educate and entertain and have some fun. Cover some new territory and be innovative.

- If you are using a guide or outfitter, consider showcasing or interviewing them as part of your show. How did they get started and what is their specialty? What is their story? Why do they do what they do and have a passion for it? One of the guides I have fished with on the Texas Gulf Coast started out as a real estate appraiser and would guide fishing and duck hunting trips during the winter months when the real estate market was slow. This developed into a full time business for him. Another fishing guide I know in the Central Texas area started out as a High School Science teacher and still has a "day job" teaching school during the week and guiding crappie fishing trips during the weekends, holidays, and summer months. The owner of the hunting ranch I work with, the same one who helped me get started in the industry, began his hunting ranch business part-time and owned a car and marine audio installation and window tinting store. He was listed as one of the top rated installers of car and marine audio equipment in the nation in major trade industry publications before he started doing the hunting ranch

business full time. These are great stories to share.

- What are the goals of your show and why? Have a purpose for each video you do. What message are you trying to convey to the viewer? Tell the viewer why you are there and what you plan to accomplish. Do this as pre-roll in the studio before or after the main filming of your trip. Whenever you are “setting up a hunt” in a studio setting or on location, remember to always speak in present-tense, as if you are right there in the action.
- How did you get there and how long have you been there? Show footage of your trip. Was there a flat tire or overheated truck on the way to your location? It could also be something funny as my urban hunts are where, “I am 15 minutes away from my house and there are people running on the hike and bike trail 200 yards away!” Viewers love to be entertained and this is part of the process and goal of each show. Unless it was catastrophic, life-threatening, or in poor taste, don’t be afraid to show it if it is funny, entertaining, detrimental, crazy, or maybe all of those! You never know the lessons you can teach from the good, bad, and ugly experiences you have along the way. I look at each video I do as a challenge to build trust with the viewer and establish a relationship that will make them feel right at home in watching my content. I always begin with the foundation that most people who will watch my content most likely know nothing about me or what I do in the outdoors and I have to build that relationship with them in the first few minutes of my video. They have to like me before they can trust me and they have to trust me before I can have any credibility with them in the future.
- Don’t be too wordy and consider showing B-Roll footage of the area as you talk. This happens mainly in the editing process. The truth is, no matter how good you look on camera, people don’t really care about seeing your face and hear you talk the whole time. Instead, they want to see video footage of the road trip, the people who are with you, where you are staying, where you are eating your meals or the flora and fauna of your location mixed in with your set up of the next scene. Don’t be afraid to tell your story but don’t spend too much time on it either. Get to the hunting, fishing, trapping, or other outdoor adventure before too long.

Share the Experience

- Consider the viewer when filming. What are you doing to “put them in the outdoor experience” with you? Are you showing the beautiful view enough? Are you showing your jitters and excitement when the buck of a lifetime walks out? How about the frustration of missing a 40 yard archery shot or a 5 pound bass getting off the line right as you are pulling him in the boat? Don’t just film for yourself or your friends with your own purposes in mind. Again, assume the audience knows nothing about you or your show. Assume many viewers will casually run into your content on a variety of platforms somewhere, as we covered before. This happens more than you think and it is how an audience is formed. You have a short amount of time to close the deal on making an impression on them and interesting them enough to learn more about you and your show. Put your best foot forward.
- Share the good, bad, and even ugly parts of your hunt where you feel it fits in. Most outdoor pursuits don’t go as planned or according to schedule and that is part of the experience. As we covered in the last section, it is alright if everything doesn’t come to fruition in a perfect scenario. That is part of what we signed up for on this adventure into the outdoor world. While you don’t want to feature wounded game which you don’t recover or other scenarios that can and do happen on a trip, don’t be afraid to show a missed shot or a mistake that was made. Viewers will learn from your experiences and you can turn many things into teachable moments.
- Did something funny or crazy happen? Keep your cameras close by and film what you can. You can always erase footage you are not going to use but it is impossible to add footage that was never caught on film. There are many moments that many of us wish we “would have had” on camera if we had the chance. If you are filming with a large camera, consider having a smaller camcorder or even a FLIP camera or your Smartphone with you at all times in case you need to film something on the fly. It may not be the best tool of the trade but it’s better than having nothing at all.

Educate Your Audience

- Most shows do not educate their viewers on why they do what they do and how they do it. This is a critical component of the mission statement of the show I currently co-host. There is usually not a reason to hide anything from the viewers. As we discussed in the previous section, don't be afraid to show something that didn't go as planned. Instead, explain what you could have done better. Viewers want to learn from you so they don't make the same mistakes. They are counting on you to give them the best information they can get from your content. Don't let them down. If you just entertain and don't educate, they will move on to a show that will teach them what they want to know.
- Always consider the fact that viewers will form an opinion about hunting, fishing, or other outdoor sporting activists from your show. This is especially true for non-hunters who are outside the normal circle of viewers and occasionally might stumble in on your content. It is also true for beginning outdoorsmen who are just starting to learn the ropes of what to do and how to do it to be successful in their pursuits. Remember, you never know who will see your show or what experiences with or opinions about hunting, fishing, or other outdoor industry adventures they may have formed. Along those same lines, consider filming youth or beginning adult hunters and take the time to reinforce teachable moments on camera with them and for the viewer as well. Accuracy, bullet selection, shot placement, and other factors are key elements that can be covered in a hunt like this. You are helping people at all experience levels and encouraging other more experienced outdoorsmen to take the time to introduce a newcomer to the sport as well. Keep in mind, as our older generation continues to age and get out of enjoying the outdoors due to health concerns or lifestyle changes, we have to keep our heritage alive with the next generation.
- What products are you using and why and how are you using them? This is an integral part of promoting your sponsors and we will cover that in another section altogether. Many shows leave out what type, brand, or even grain weight of bullet they are using and why they are hunting with it. The same is true for bowhunting. What kind of broadhead or other gear do you use and why is it your choice? This is an opportunity to promote products without having to cram sponsors or commercial ads down the neck of the viewer. Moments where you can teach the audience should never be ignored if space and time permits. Viewers ask me about these kind of things all the time and I am happy to answer them and am sure to thank them for watching my videos and our show. The more value you provide to the viewer, the more of a

following you can potentially develop.

- Don't be afraid to cover basic and advanced tips during your outdoor adventures. We will talk more about how to do this later. Try not to be too technical or complex in your explanations. When you unpack a subject, make sure you lay it out well and then wrap it up neatly. One of the biggest compliments I receive is how casual, approachable, and friendly I am on camera and how easy I am to follow when teaching something. This comes by practice and I have been blessed to have many years of experience in and around education and teaching methods. One area I have been trying to focus on lately is "teaching to the lowest common denominator" of my audience. In other words, assume my viewers know little to nothing about what I am talking about. While it might be natural to think that all of your viewers will have a range of experiences that are similar to yours, don't count on it. One thing I have learned from experienced business owners, fellow show hosts, and video producers is to make things simple enough for someone with only a 6th grade education to understand. Don't get too technical or many of your viewers might lose interest and move on. This can be hard for me in writing, speaking, and filming video as I have a college degree and naturally like to use "bigger words" sometimes to get my point across. I am not suggesting that anyone "dumb down" their content, but be informative and cover the basic foundation of information first, and then build off of that platform in what you are presenting.

Promoting Your Sponsors

- Sponsors are a crucial part of your show. They are what most shows depend on to afford to air their show and go hunting in the first place. If you don't know this already, you will quickly understand why most all outdoor shows have sponsors. Outdoor shows need sponsors for products and monetary considerations and sponsors need shows as a way to gain sales and marketing exposure in the industry.
- Try to vary the type of product and service sponsors you have so you have a range of different products and services that can help the viewer in their own outdoor pursuits. It would be unwise to have competing broadhead companies as sponsors but other products and services, such as different outfitters or even different optics companies. When and if one of those becomes a money sponsor, exclusivity may prevail but aside from that, just use good judgment. You can promote sponsors many ways during the show or in the beginning, middle, or end of a hunt as well as in the title and end credits and the beginning or end of your show or video segment.
- Use sponsor-supplied logos or even short promo videos in your show. Give them the best promotion and exposure without making it look like they own your soul or paid for your whole show. I have seen far too many shows not promote their sponsors enough and ultimately lose them. On the other side of that, I have seen others shows plug sponsors so much that I wanted to take a shower after the show was over as I felt violated and abused. As with most things in life, balance and moderation are good virtues to have in the incorporation of sponsors as part of your show.
- **MAKE SURE** you have your sponsor's written approval and blessing to use them in your video and **BE SURE** to send them videos featuring them as soon as you are able. Most outdoor product and service sponsors love watching outdoor shows and they want to know what exposure they are getting in return for what they provide you. The only exception to this rule would be promoting a potential sponsor for your show that you want to impress and sending them the video to try to build a relationship with them. As long as you are just talking about the product and showing it as part of your show you should be in the safe zone.
- Keep in mind the intended use of the products and services you are showcasing and make sure to use them in the most favorable manner. My experience has been that sponsors have left shows for showcasing their products in a poor manner and not for their intended use. Foolishly

losing a sponsor in an industry this competitive is not worth the cost.

- Never forget that you are representing the sponsors you choose and who choose to work with you. In turn, they are also representing you. If someone on your team does something unethical, it reflects on everyone on the show as well as that sponsor. More on that later as well.
- If you end up with a potential or current product or service sponsor that has a product that is not up to your show's standards or a service that is not up to par, let them know immediately. Our show has had quite a few products that we flat out refuse to use because they are simply junk. No more, no less. We will not represent any company or allow anyone to work with us who has product quality issues they are not handling. Some of these types of issues have surprisingly come from well-known companies in the outdoor industry. If a company will not address a quality issue in their product or produces something not up to par, for instance, it is better to separate from them than risk losing the trust of your viewers in the long run. In any case, if an issue does arise, let the sponsor know what the issues are and why you do not want to represent them. Trust me, they want to know so they can improve and you owe that to them. Don't be embarrassed. It is best for everyone involved in the relationship if there are clear expectations and a spirit of transparency and honesty in the relationship.

Filming Your Content

- Source used, but quality, equipment. Even if you start with a basic HD consumer camcorder (new or used), modern technology has made many advances with big things coming in small packages. Don't feel like you have to run out and spend \$3,500 or more on a camera if you are just starting out. Our show's rule is to use what you have to get started and grow from there.
- Film in HD where possible and even consider using multiple cameras such as smaller GoPro Cameras. There are even smart phone mounts for tree stands, guns, bows, and more available. Think smart. For instance, in many cases, the thread on your monopod, bipod, or tripod gun rest for spot and stalk rifle or crossbow hunting will also fit the standard camera mounting screw hole. You now have a stable mount you can use for elevated camera angles and more. Be careful not to over-tighten a camera to any mount or pod as you can damage the camera. Trust me on this one as I have had personal experience with that particular issue!
- If you are on a shoestring budget, which many shows are, don't be afraid of being creative. Start with a small handheld HD camcorder, like the Cannon Vixia series, new or used. Most of these can be purchased new for \$1500 or used from \$300 - \$800, depending on the model and condition. The last HD camera I purchased used was a steal at under \$300. It is a great small camera for my own solo hunts as it is lightweight, easily portable, and offers me the option of carrying multiple cameras when I am by myself. For the best quality, film in 1920px1080p (Full HD) where possible. It is easier to film at a high resolution and convert it to smaller screen size than the other way around.

Example of the Cannon Vixia HD Video Camera



- For new filming equipment, I recommend a sponsor for our show: **Video Gear Shop**. You can visit their website at www.videogearshop.com. They carry very competitively priced video and audio gear as well as several accessories that come in handy as well. Whatever you purchase, be sure to get a sturdy case for it to protect it from the elements. Water and electronics obviously do not mix but, aside from that, keep in mind you are going to be outside and carrying plenty of other gear when you are filming. Make arrangements to pack your gear in a hard or soft case and keep it clean and dry when not in use. I carry a lens cloth to clean dust or water away from the camera as well as a plastic bag to help keep my gear dry in the event of rain.
- Most cameras have a decent external microphone but for filming indoors or where wind or other noise contamination comes into play, a wireless microphone system is a must. Overall poor audio quality, background noise, and wind noise are two very important factors which detract from otherwise good video content. What you are looking for, as with video, is clear and clean sound. Some issues that come up can be taken care of in the post-production process but it is far better if you have a good raw product to work with in the first place.

A good wireless audio system may run \$100-\$300 or more but the quality it creates in a good end product is well worth it. If you are filming an interview with two people and only have one microphone, place it between the two of you on one person's shirt collar or lapel. Shelter the wireless microphone from the wind where it poses a potential issue. If filming without a wireless microphone system, a piece of Scotch tape over the external microphone is a good way to preserve sound quality and keep wind contamination out of your audio without muffling it completely. These are tricks of the trade you will learn as you go. Some wind noise is acceptable and expected in outdoor footage but too much of it can move a viewer to another video or show without hesitation. I personally think it is a mark of an amateur show if audio is not taken into consideration during filming or in the editing process. In one interview I did, outside, the wind was blowing at 40-50 miles per hour and we did our best to shelter the wireless microphone by placing it between the two of us in order to block the wind. Earlier interviews I filmed, back when I didn't know this would be such an issue, never saw the light of day as it was simply too much. Sometimes you may never have a second chance to film something so do everything you can to make the first time count.

- You can certainly borrow ideas from other outdoor shows but don't pattern your whole show format after another show you see. Be creative. Do things different. There is nothing wrong with originality but many shows today are trying to be different just for the sake of being different. While I encourage shows to "think outside the box," you still want to give viewers what they

want out of a hunting show. In my view, these four points are crucial to any good outdoor TV show:

- 1. Education**
- 2. Entertainment**
- 3. Telling YOUR story/Where you are/How did you get there?**
- 4. How and Why do you use the Products and Services you recommend in your show?**

These are paramount topics to cover in the course of a show or event segment of a show.

- Be creative in what you film and where you film. A viewer once asked me where my “studio” was located. I love sharing this. The truth is that most of the product and tech tip segments I have filmed up to this point have been using a \$60 camo pop-up hunting blind and my kitchen table. There is my studio! I prop the blind up on two chairs and only unfold it half way, where two sides are showing. The main goal here is to cover the background view of the camera. I put a bar chair in the middle of the set up, as it allows me to sit up higher away from the table and still stay comfortably in the shot. I then use the table for showing guns, bows, and other products I want to showcase. Most people know it’s a hunting blind behind me and the feedback I have received is that it’s a neat idea. The viewer certainly doesn’t know it’s my kitchen table. It could be a studio at the news station or professional video studio for all they know. That is the point. Furthermore, I live in a relatively quiet area and no one else is home when I am filming, which gives me clean and uncontaminated audio. This is also the setup I use for my introduction/pre-roll set-up to a video segment. Approachable and casual but professional is the theme we are aiming for with an outdoor show.

That all being said, I will start off on a short rant here. I cannot stand the average YouTube video which is usually done in the bedroom or basement of a house with poor lighting and a TV on in the background. What gets under my skin even worse is when the host introduces himself off camera by his YouTube handle name of “wolfkiller1986” or something similar to that. Anyone can turn on a camera and do that. The internet is full of that kind of content. You have to stand out from the pack to be taken seriously and followed by an audience. Many people may be attracted to this kind of content if it covers a specific subject they are interested in but then you have to think about sponsorship and the general reputation you have in producing content like this. Always equate the quality and value of what you produce to what you find on network TV. One of the reasons why I think I get so many subscribers to my YouTube channel every day and positive comments on my videos is that I stand out as a professional video host floating on an

ocean of unprofessional and amateur garbage. Again, the content of some of these “basement style” videos may be good. Trust me, I have learned more than a few things from some of them. But the impression you make on the viewer with the way you present yourself and your content is equally important.

- For the best, most reliable recording quality, I recommend a Series 10 SD card. Since HD footage can take up a lot of space in a short amount of time, consider spending the extra money for a 32GB or even a 64GB SD card so you can film a few hours of footage at a time without having to change cards. A standard 2GB or 4GB card will fill up in no time with HD footage.

Examples of the Series/Class 10 SD Cards



- Have back up batteries charged and ready to roll for your filming equipment. Every camera you use should have extra mobile power options and you should carry them with you everywhere you go. You never know what you will need and when. Just about anyone who has been into filming video in the outdoors has been caught with low to no battery power and no back up option when they needed it the most. That, my friends, is not a fun feeling.
- Solicit the help of a mentor or veteran of the industry who has video production experience or even someone who has a critical eye for what looks good and what the viewer wants to see. This should also be the goal of your entire team as an outdoor show. Don't be afraid to give and receive criticism as it will usually always help you improve your skills. It may sound funny but one of my best critics is my Dad. He has never had a TV show or even the experience of running a video camera in his life but he watches several hunting shows on a regular basis and he is a veteran hunter. He constantly compliments me on my work and reminds me he could not do what I do on his own as I can but gives me advice along the way. Being a perfectionist, many people around me are hesitant to give me criticism of my videos, articles, or any of the other work I put out, worried that it might hurt my feelings, but I welcome hearing how I can improve and do things better in the future from the sources I respect. On that note, don't let some jerk's comment on YouTube or anywhere else ruin your day. It takes courage and fortitude to make a

good show and most people are too afraid of rejection and all of the work that goes into making an outdoor show to try it on their own. Keep in mind, people say a lot of things that are hurtful and demeaning behind the safety of a computer screen, Smartphone, or tablet device in today's world. A vast majority of them don't have the guts that you do or even come close to being the person you have become through your experiences. Consider the source. Let those comments roll off your back as you are sure to get them and let those miserable losers go jump in a lake somewhere. They are not worth your time or energy if they don't know what they are talking about or what goes into producing what you put out for the world to see. Save your energy instead for creative thoughts and striving towards making your show the best it can be now and in the future.

- Don't rely on scripting your hunt or what you will say. Rehearse what you want to say on film and maybe even have an outline or short notes on what you want to cover on setting up your hunt before you record anything. Shows that are completely scripted tend to not show the real emotion or "true life" feel of the situation. If you absolutely have to script something out so you remember what points you want to cover, you certainly can do so. What I suggest in place of that is to practice memorizing what you want to say before you start filming and even consider rehearsing it out loud to yourself. There are too many shows that look too "Hollywood style" and that turns off many viewers. In any case, be sure to speak from your heart. Planning what you are going to say in advance is an important measure to make sure what you film is high quality and professional.
- A cardinal rule in filming video is to keep whatever you film stable on a tripod, monopod, camera arm (for elevated platforms), etc. This can be hard for many outdoor experiences such as filming by yourself, filming from a boat, walking, and more but care must be taken to not make the viewer dizzy. Sometimes in filming, this is impossible, but measures can be taken to keep what you are filming steady or reasonably stable. I often compare videos which are shaky and not well stabilized as "Blair Witch Project" videos, referencing the movie from the 1990's which was filmed by amateur videographers in the middle of the woods. Unstable or shaky videos tend to look unprofessional and amateur to the viewer. Streaming video sites like YouTube are full of these kinds of videos that are unedited and careless attempts at having a TV show. There is too much competition in this industry to not pay attention to filming your raw hunting footage in the best ways possible.
- While you can't re-film a shot on a deer or setting the hook on a bass, don't be afraid of filming several versions of your pre-roll when you film yourself or someone else setting up your next segment or extra B-Roll. These can be sifted through in the editing process. Remember, you

can't edit video that doesn't exist. As the old saying goes, "It's better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it".

- When filming a scene, keep your focus on the subject of the camera and center your shot. This sounds like trivial advice but I am blown away when I see new shows that have the animal they are shooting in the lower right section of the scene or nearly cut the head off of the host. Attention to detail is everything. If you don't have a good raw product, editing can only do so much. Good video is stable, clear, centered, and focused. If you lose one of those elements, it will affect your overall quality of the end product.
- Take notes from other outdoor shows and watch other shows often. Try to figure out how many cameras they use and how they shot the scene. What could they have done better? How many cameras did they use and what angles did they use? Did they cover the main points of a good outdoor show? I am a critic of my own work, which is always important, but also a critic of many other outdoor shows, some of which are hugely popular. Filming and editing are art forms. Constantly ask yourself and your team questions such as, "How will this look to the viewer" or "What can I do to make this scene look the best?" These are considerations you will thank yourself for later. While sometimes filming in low light conditions can't be prevented or you are unable to get a stable filming platform, if you know what to look for when laying down your raw footage, you will be grateful for that critical eye on things when you are in the editing and production process.

Since I am filming a lot of my own content by myself, sometimes all I can carry with me is one camera. But, in the case of hunting, for instance, I film plenty of B-Roll of me watching the landscape, setting up my shot, clicking off the safety, getting settled on making the kill shot, and more before and even after the actual kill shot takes place. In the editing process, I try to make all of this footage look as seamless as possible. I want the viewer to think I had 3-4 cameras in the blind. Professional video editors can usually tell what I am doing but the vast majority of the viewers have no idea. That is the whole point. If you don't have a good eye for filming and producing good video, get in touch with someone who does. I have a network of people who can help you for a reasonable cost if you need help in filming, editing, or final production. Just contact me through www.dustinsprojects.com. Filming, editing, and producing video is talent that can constantly be improved on and I am a life-long student of learning new and better ways to do it. If you need help here, be sure to reach out to someone who can guide you in the right direction. You are not alone in this journey.

- Use a release form when filming. This covers you, or at least makes an effort to do so, in the case of a lawsuit or other legal action, should it be taken against you or a member of your team

from content you have filmed. It is a formality many of us would like to bypass but it is important to have the permission of the person or people you are filming and having that permission in writing is the best way to cover you from any issues that may come up down the road. You can come up with your own release form or have a lawyer come up with one for you. I am not a lawyer so this example below is not legal advice but it is based off of the form we use for our show. You can even print a release form on your own letterhead or use your TV show or team logo as a letterhead. What you are accomplishing here is releasing yourself and others you are connected with from any liability:

Release Form Example

Your Company and/or Name
By: List Individual Members of Your Team Here

Release Form

The undersigned enters into this Agreement with **Your Company and/or Name**. I have been informed and understand that Producer is producing a videotape program and/or production that my name, voice, appearance and/or performance are being recorded and made part of that production.

1. I grant **Your Company and/or Name** and its employee's the right to use my name, voice, appearance and/or performance in this production whether recorded on or transferred to videotape, film, or other media. This grant included the right to edit, mix or duplicate and to use or re-use the product in whole or part, including the copyright interests.
2. I also grant **Your Company and/or Name** and its employee's the right to broadcast, exhibit, and distribute the product for commercial or non-commercial television or theater. This grant includes the right to use the product for promoting or publicizing any of the uses.
3. I confirm that I have the right to enter into this Agreement, that I am not restricted by any commitments to third parties, and the Producer has no financial commitment or obligations to me as a result of this Agreement. I expressly release the Producer; its officers, employees, agents and designees from any and all claims known and unknown arising out of or in any way connected with the above granted uses.

I have read the forgoing and understand its terms and stipulations and agree to all of them:

Client's Name (Please Print): **(x)** _____

Client's Signature: **(x)** _____ **Date:** _____

(If the person signing is under age 18, a parent or legal guardian must sign below.)

I hereby certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of the client named above and I give my consent without reservation to the foregoing on behalf of him or her.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

- When you are the subject of the camera, be casual and “yourself”. Since I film most of my own video content by myself, I make it a point to be casual and laid back but informative and educational. Many sponsors have commented how much they enjoy this aspect of my work. Most of the time, there is no one else running the camera, just me and my thoughts. I usually never script anything, as I recommend early, but I will spend time practicing my “talk” in my truck when I am by myself. Doing this, if time and space permits, will allow you to polish and refine your presentation in a professional and well thought out manner. When I film by myself and it’s just me and the camera, I imagine that the camera is a person or even a group of people I am telling a story to or teaching something of value. In some cases, I will even imagine a small group of people in front of me taking notes on what I am saying, as if I am teaching a class or a small seminar. Filming video like this allows you to be creative, authentic, and have fun in the process.

One of my specialties is short tech tip segments. These tech tips videos, or even “Tips of the Week”, are usually helpful nuggets of information which can be used by themselves as part of your show line up or mixed in as part of a full show, if airing on TV. I sometimes film these in the hunting blind, as I tend to get restless at times. When I get ready to leave my morning hunting spot or settle into my evening hunting spot are the prime times I run the camera on what is on my mind. I have done tech tips on various subjects from positive thinking in the outdoors to crossbow and rifle ammunition advice. These are short tidbits of information that help people learn a lot in a short amount of time. Again, your goal should always be to create value when you create content of any kind.

- Seek criticism and helpful advice from other experienced show hosts, members of your team, and other unbiased people who can help and support you in improving your skills. We have a platform available to help you if you need it. In my case, my father is one of those people. Even though he doesn’t have an outdoor show, he has an eye for what looks good and things I can do better. Don’t be afraid of other’s suggestions. Embrace them. You don’t have to change everything you are doing but you will most likely gain experience and grow in new ways if you are open to having others judge your work. Many people’s biggest fear is the fear of rejection. Don’t take criticism that way. I welcome it as it makes me better. If you have trouble with this part of the process, get over it. You will have to do so if you want to get better. Develop a thick skin if you don’t have one already. This is no place for the weary kind. One of the biggest mistakes I have seen many new outdoor shows make is to showcase the first video they produce to a sponsor, especially a large outdoor industry sponsor, without getting any advice on how

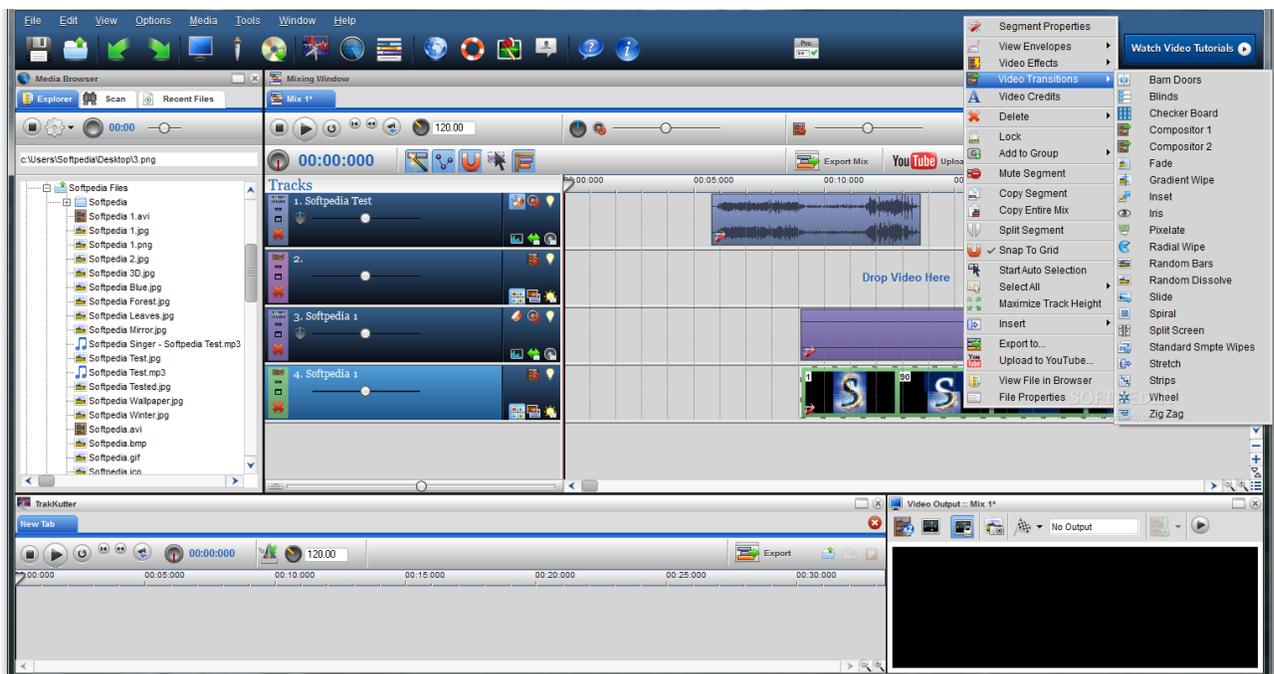
they can make that video, and future videos, better. You may never get a second chance if you blow your first chance with a prospective sponsor. Put your best foot forward and get people outside your circle of friends to grade your content and offer suggestions. No matter how good anyone in this business may become, there is almost always new and better ways to improve our craft.

For an outdoorsman, I am still pretty sensitive to criticism on my content as I produce most of my own work by myself. It is part of the growing process for all of us to get out of our comfort zone and get good feedback and suggestions. I don't want "Yes Men" to tell me everything I produce is golden. I need people who will help me improve. We all do. As I mentioned previously, one of my biggest fans and best critics is my own father. In some ways, he is harsher on my work than most people, and has mentioned things I could have done better where others had either missed it or didn't think to mention it to me. In one of my self-filmed bow hunts, he mentioned that I mixed up the entry and exit holes when I was showing these to the camera and showcasing one of my Pro-Staff sponsors (Grim Reaper Broadheads). Being an experienced hunter and killing numerous animals with archery equipment, this was an obvious mistake. I felt so embarrassed! The funny thing was that no one else ever even mentioned this to me before and when I asked my team members, no one ever even noticed! It is awesome to have people who will catch things you may miss and offer you guidance along the way. Needless to say, I am grateful for viewers and mentors like my father, who are not afraid to help me get better.

The Editing Room

- There are many different video and audio editors on the market and new ones coming out all the time. One of my favorite and low cost all-around editors for audio and video is TrakAxPC Pro (www.trakax.com). For only \$39 for the full Pro version and a 15 day free-trial, they are my main choice when recommending good, fairly easy to learn, software for editing video on a PC. The standard platform for many editors in the video editing realm is Adobe Premier and the other video editing programs from Adobe such as Adobe After Effects. The newer cloud-based version of the full Adobe Suite, which is available for a monthly fee (<http://www.adobe.com/products/creativecloud/buying-guide.html>), would be my choice for editors using this program platform since new versions of the software are available from time to time and this would give you access to the latest updates of everything they offer. Final Cut Pro (<http://www.apple.com/finalcutpro>) seems to be the preferred choice for the many video editors I know who edit on the Mac.

The Author's Main Choice for a PC Video/AudioEditing Program, TrackAx PC Pro



- Use caution with what you air. If something was done distastefully or not up to par, don't show it. An example of this comes from a recent show host who contacted me. He was planning to do

a penned hog hunt where youth hunters knife/stab their first hog in an enclosed area. While hog hunting is legal in many places and is an exhilarating hunt, it would not be in good taste to show one getting killed in a penned/captive situation, regardless of the age of the hunter. This is my view, of course, and your mileage may vary. Keep in mind though that you are representing the outdoor industry to others who may stumble upon your show as an anti-hunter or non-hunter. You never know who is watching.

- Use music that is original to you and your show or that is royalty-free and copyright legal. I have seen many shows use music that they do not own the rights too or even popular songs in karaoke versions, without the words of the song. In any of those cases, you can invite some unwanted trouble if are using music you do not have permission to use as part of your show. One of the best sources for music that is legal to use is www.videogearshop.com. That is where most of the music I use in my videos comes from and it covers the theme and mood I am trying to set in my videos. Another idea is to find local new musicians trying to gain some exposure in trade for airing their music in your show. We recently did this with our show.
- Use plenty of Pre-Roll, or footage taken before the main shot of your video segment, before you get to the action. For a hunting video, be sure to show plenty of footage of the animal you are pursuing, if possible, before the kill shot. For fishing or bowfishing, show some casts before the angler sets the hook or a few misses before the bowfisher connects with a fish, whichever the case may be in the context of the video. One note I must make here is to not use too much B-Roll or Pre-Roll before the action shot. It drives me crazy to watch a 30 minute hunting show where the hosts spend the whole show on making one kill shot. Unless you are editing for a 30 minute slot on a network TV platform, get to the meat and potatoes of the hunt and even showcase another hunt in one show if possible. Viewers usually do not like watching a show that drags on forever before getting to the focal point of a catch or kill scene. My wife laughs at me when I get aggravated at the TV, computer, or mobile device I am watching as many times she will hear me screaming, "Get to the point, already!" If you want to have a successful show, give the viewer more of what they want.

Building and Shaping a Team

- Most outdoor shows work as a team and for the good of the team. Even if you are by yourself, partnering with others who have the same vested interests as you is important. The way the show I work with came together is unique. I met the show hosts of the existing show through one of my Warncke Enterprises clients and started off at first as their website guy and then their marketing director. Geographically, I am 7 hours driving distance away from the other two show hosts. Therefore, for that show at least, I have no local camera crews or editing team. The challenge for me is to film, edit, and produce all of my own tech tip segments, hunting videos, and product sponsor videos and it is a challenge which I have embraced whole-heartedly. I would not recommend this for everyone. I am blessed with a skill set and driving ambition for the outdoor industry to work this way but a team is much better than an individual in the outdoor show realm. In my unique case, I depend on my team, through our modern day technology, to promote what I am doing in my area and they depend on me to support and promote them in return. Though I do the lion's share of the work on my own content, they promote my work and I promote their work. It is as mutually beneficial as any relationship with a sponsor or outfitter would be, in some ways, even more so, and it works well. The point here is that very few, if any, outdoor shows exist as a "one-man show".

If you are by yourself or maybe just starting out, post your intentions to start a show with some like minded individuals on your local outdoor forum and form a partnership. In my area, that would be a site like www.texasbowhunter.com or www.texashuntingforum.com. In the equation of a team, 1 + 1 equals 3 in many cases because the team itself becomes a sort of "mastermind group" of talent and skills. The sum of the group is far larger than its individual working parts. With our show, each of us has strengths and we rely on that team mentality to get things accomplished. A good book to read about mastermind groups, team mentalities, and more great concepts for success is Napoleon Hill's best-selling book, *Think and Grow Rich*.

- Have solid goals for what you plan to accomplish. I cannot stress this enough. You can cover many different types of outdoor adventures and any theme you wish in the context of your show and branding. That is one major reason many people get into this realm of having their own outdoor show in the first place. Be sure, however, that you begin by setting and maintaining goals of what you want to accomplish. Where do you plan to be in 5 years with your show? What good do you plan to do for the world? What do you want your audience to gain from trading their time and other resources for watching your show or consuming any of the other content you produce? Consider what ministries and non-profit organizations you can help

and how many young and new people to hunting and fishing that you can help through your message. Most people want to be a part of something bigger than themselves and this is one of many outlets you can use to make a difference. However, if you don't have clear goals of what you want, don't expect much in return.

- A good rule of thumb to remember is that you must be able to trust those on your team. Expectations, understanding, limitations, and overall strengths and weaknesses of the members of your team need to be disclosed and transparent to everyone involved. Especially in the world of sponsorship, your whole team and everything they do individually is a reflection on your team and outdoor show and vice versa. In other words, be on the same page of music together. Regular conference calls, webinars, mastermind groups, or whatever works best for your team in meeting is crucial. These partnerships must be built on trust and integrity, not to mention stability.

Our team is like a family. We know we can count on each other through thick and thin and, no matter what happens, we will come through for each other. If one of us needs help, the rest of the team is on the phone or even a car, bus, or plane to take care of their needs in whatever way we can. That is what you want. It breaks my heart when I hear of shows that have a team member who does something illegal or in poor taste and it sets off a negative chain reaction and a sense of unrest and distrust develops. Never forget what "Guilt by Association" means. Birds of a feather flock together. Don't scratch with the chickens when you can soar with the eagles. You represent your team and your team represents you to your viewers, sponsors, and anyone else who knows about you. If someone does or says something that is in poor taste or is not a proper representation of the team, it is time to have a frank conversation as a team about what is acceptable and what consequences exist if the action happens again. I urge you to take this very seriously. Your team has to be committed to the goals you have as a team for anything to be successful.

- Remember the 3 D's in business: Death, Disassociation, and Disability. Any TV show is a type of business partnership and these are the three most crucial factors which affect most businesses in today's world. It is important to have a game plan, even if it's only in the back of your mind, of what you will do if something unexpected happens. It is always wise to expect the unexpected and have a back-up plan if one of your team members loses interest, gets injured in some way, or anything else that might drastically change the course and direction of your game plan and goals.

Contacting Potential Sponsors

- Sponsors are an important part of your show and many shows cannot even produce their show, let alone air it anywhere, if they cannot get sponsorships of some kind. Approach the sponsors you want first and try to find the contact information for their marketing director, public relations director, or even social media director, depending on the size of the company. If you are able to see local businesses in person, stop by and introduce yourself. The saying many sales training seminars and books have is, “You can delete an e-mail, throw away a brochure, or tear up a media kit but it is HARD to get rid of a human body!” Be clear with what your goals are and keep in mind how and why a relationship with you will be beneficial to the potential sponsor.
- Seek to provide value in return for products or services you receive and approach these businesses, guide services, and outfitters with your “hat in hand”. Be humble at all costs. Everyone in this industry has an ego and is proud of what they have created. The outdoor industry is a hard industry to gain traction in sometimes and there is a lot of competition to get the same products and services available to shows today. As I talk about in various parts of this book, you have to stand out from the masses of other shows out there and having the right approach is the first step of this success model.
- When seeking contact information, try to get a direct line to the decision maker. A direct phone number or extension to the person you are trying to reach is always best so you can talk to someone in person, but is not always available. E-mail addresses are second best. If you e-mail someone who may not be the decision maker, make sure you include an invitation for them to send you the correct person’s contact information and possibly also forward your e-mail to them on your behalf.

Here is an example of an e-mail I use for a “cold call” situation. In other words this is the initial contact I am making with a sponsor with whom we have no previous relationship or who knows nothing about me or our show. The company I was e-mailing in this case was a small start-up company making a scope mounting system that required no drilling or tapping for the World War II era Mosin Nagant bolt action military surplus rifle. This gun is very popular in many parts of the shooting industry today due to the low cost and ample availability of this rifle. Add to that the fact that this gun was produced from 1891 to the late 1950’s and had origins from multiple

countries and you have a pretty cool weapon. Needless to say, this particular after-market product was something I had been on the search for in the surplus gun parts market for a long time:

Dear Jeff,

I own five Mosin Nagants and have done videos about them, the accessories available for them and have even filmed hunts with them. I work with a TV Show and my main Mosin video, which is 27 minutes long, has had over 35,000 views. A subscriber came to me and asked about your mount. I have been looking for this concept for a long time. I wanted to do a video about this mount but wanted to see if you would be willing to send me one of your mounts at dealer cost or sample cost, or perhaps, at no cost, if I pay for shipping. In trade I will produce a video segment dedicated to your mount for our show and for use on your website, social media, etc. Here are my videos on the Mosin Nagant, which are available on You Tube:

The Mosin Nagant Information Video

<http://youtu.be/T30zqmp3bBk>

Whitetail Deer Hunt with my Mosin

<http://youtu.be/M4519quTcEg>

I am also an avid outdoor writer and do articles on new products all the time. Please see:

<http://www.macandproowler.com/Articles.html>

I am sure you get asked for discounts or free product people promising the moon to you all the time but I will come through for you. Darrel from Darrel's Scout Mounts for the Mosin from years past even contacted me last month impressed with the work I did on my videos and how I showcased his products. I realize you are probably overwhelmed with orders right now and may not need the publicity. In any case, I am so excited someone finally came up with something I have been dreaming of and searching for over many years. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

--

**Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
(512) 497-7674**

In this email, I am direct about my interest in his product, my experience with the Mosin Nagant rifle, the captive audience I have built around previous videos I have done on the Mosin, and previous work I have done showcasing other products like this one. In other words, I am establishing credibility with him up front. I am in no way saying that I deserve anything I have not earned. I am simply making a request and wanting to start a relationship with the sponsor. This is a soft touch and a sort of prospector email, just seeing if building a partnership is possible. I wanted this mount and I wanted to offer him more exposure in return for sending it to me for free or at a discount.

How did this work out? He indeed was over-extended with orders at the time I sent this to him. He invited me to stay in touch and that was exactly what I did. I decided to buy the entire mount system from him at retail cost because I wanted it regardless of the price or relationship I would build with him. Other people had made videos on sites such as YouTube before but all of them looked unprofessional and homemade. I decided to do a video on his product anyway, expecting nothing in return. I wanted to do it for myself and others as part of our show line up. My videos on the Mosin Nagant are also some of our most popular we have on YouTube and I knew this would help our show increase viewership. I sent an e-mail back to Jeff asking him, if I did a video, what he might like me to cover as far as pointers and tech tips. You can see the video of me installing this mount from start to finish here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj-Nssi1MBA

I sent the video to him and here was his response:

**Hey Dustin, Happy 4th of July! What do I think of the video?
I think you did a fine job and covered all the pointers I recommended very well! I hope you get many views on YouTube, as you will stand out from the other installation videos.**

There is a saying, "The workman is worthy of his hire" (loosely quoted here), which is to say, pay the man for a job well done! That being said I have credited your PayPal account for the mount you purchased.

Perhaps our paths might cross again in the future as I have several other mount designs for the Mosin I am working on as well as a few mods for other firearms. So many ideas and so little time for R&D.

Thanks again,

Jeff

www.jmeckscopemounts.com

The feeling of receiving an e-mail like this is awesome. While my filming and production work cost far more than the \$79.00 mount plus shipping costs, I did this to keep building an audience and work on my branding. You certainly can weigh if it is feasible or worth your time to do something like this. It's just an idea. In my case, I really wanted a Jmeck scope mount system so I knew a good installation video and feature segment would be a good investment of my time as I had to install it anyway. All relationships may not work out like this one did but I made an impression on Jeff and we started a relationship together which continues to prosper in new ways today. I gave him more than he expected and promoted his product with a good representation of how to install and use it. This is a good example of how I have started relationships with sponsors for our show and my own personal branding in the outdoor industry and I have repeated this same process with many sponsors we currently have today.

- In any communication with potential sponsors, talk less about yourself and your show and more about what you can do for the sponsor with your show. Everyone listens to “WII-FM” or “What’s In It For Me?” There are plenty of shows who never make it off the ground because they lead the charge into talking with sponsors about how great their show is or will be and what kind of potential they will have. Most advertisers could care less about that. They are in business to stay in business and turn a profit so they can keep the doors open and the lights on in the future. Their whole livelihood depends on their product or service so how something is branded and promoted is always going to be something they are considering in the back of their minds. The question they are usually asking is “How can you help me grow my business?” or “What can I give you to get the most in return.” It is critical you understand what their motivations are before you approach them.
- Most sponsors fall into the categories of money sponsors or product sponsors. Some fall into both categories. As you might expect, the competition for money sponsors is in high demand and short supply. Start relationships with sponsors small at first, show them what you can do, and go from there. Developing videos for your product sponsors and showcasing them as part of the show is one way to show you are doing more for them than even the current shows they are spending money with, if any such relationships exist. The main focus should always be in creating value and strengthening the relationship between you and your show and the sponsor. Stay in touch with them often and show them what value you are providing them. I have a relationship with one of our sponsors where I have featured him in videos and articles every chance I get. He sends me every new product he launches and calls me often as he knows how much I like his company and what our show is capable of doing for him. I often say I am his biggest fan and, in return, he says that we are his favorite show. Those are the kind of relationships you want to build.

- Many times money sponsors do not get back what they put in and may be gun shy to work with new shows in money sponsorship for that reason. Recently, I heard a story of a start-up company spending over \$11,000 with a well known outdoor TV show for a season on network TV on The Outdoor Channel and they never saw one product sale from the sponsorship. Another sponsor sent a major outdoor show \$15,000 for money sponsorship and never saw a return on the investment so the show sent the money back. You cannot stay in business long or on the air on major outdoor networks for very long on either side of the equation in circumstances like these.

There is no free lunch. The relationship must be symbiotic and mutually beneficial, meaning both parties will gain value from the relationship. Many newer shows I encounter have these visions of sponsors spending obscene amounts of money with them because their show is the best one ever created. This is rarely the case. Unfortunately, as the old saying goes, “The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” That being the case, unless you know the sponsor well through a relationship you have built, it’s not a bad idea to get your agreement in writing, even if it is just for product from them in trade for promotion with you and your show.

- Marketing exposure is important to sponsors. Developing an audience and airing on the internet and local/regional networks on cable or even public access TV is the best place to start a show. As I will talk about later, the internet is fast becoming the most affordable place to get a message to an audience. I am connected with networks with incredible SEO (keyword search engine optimization) and built-in audiences which is a huge help to the start or future success of outdoor shows looking for sponsors. More on that later.
- Always remember to be grateful for what you receive from sponsors. They didn’t have to give you anything or partner with you at all. You will attract more friends than enemies if you express gratitude for what you have received from your sponsors, however large or small the value, and offer value in return. Be humble and grateful. This is something that is missing from many show hosts who seek to get what they can from one sponsor, burn the bridge, and move on to the next one.
- Some sponsors will never return your phone call or return your e-mail. Be polite but persistent. Our show and many others have gained sponsors from following up and staying in touch with current and prospective sponsors. Keep in mind that gaining sponsors is a sales and marketing job. **If you don’t get in the habit of following up with potential sponsors, don’t expect much in return.** This is a crucial point that most show hosts miss and something I cannot stress enough. Unless you are extremely well known, businesses are not going to beat a path to your door and try to get you to work with them. They have other things on their mind. I am in outside sales for

a living so this is second-nature to me but most people, even guides, outfitters, and business owners don't follow the principle of following up and staying in touch with the people with which they want to form relationships. A polite e-mail or phone call/voicemail can be a friendly light touch to keep you on their mind. Sometimes it just takes that one more contact attempt before you reach the decision maker or before they respond favorably to your request. Then, you're in!

- As we talked about with filming and editing your content, it is human nature to fear rejection but you have to have a tough skin in this industry. If you have been at this for a while, you know that well. Many things never come to fruition. There are more companies and outfitters that will turn your request down for sponsorship or partnership than those who will respond positively. Get used to the word "NO". It will come to your door often. You have to learn that rejection is part of the game. It's not personal. It's just the way things are. The more resilient you are when pushing through the hard times, the brighter the good times really become in the long run. I have seen many shows fall apart because they lose hope in what they can accomplish and simply quit trying.
- Share other product sponsor's videos you have made or segments you have made showcasing other sponsors. This is proof you know what you are doing and that you have the ability to provide value to others in the industry. Even if you only post these short clips on a video streaming site online and send a link to them, the chances of potential sponsors watching them are relatively high. What they are interested in is how you will represent them if they choose to work with you.
- Give more value than you expect to receive in return. In starting any relationship in the outdoor industry, you have to prove a sponsor can trust you before they can start a relationship with your show. Once again, you have to take the initiative to stand out from the rest of the outdoor shows and lead with a positive attitude. This has always been our view as an outdoor show. People remember politeness, gratitude, and kindness from the shows they sponsor or who seek their sponsorship. People will also remember show hosts who are rude, careless, and ungrateful for what they receive. Once again, if you use a sponsor's product or service in your hunt, send the video to them as soon as you have it edited. Stay in touch with them, even if you have nothing to report and are just touching bases. Most sponsors in the outdoor industry, much like most people in today's world, are overwhelmed and overextended with their own business and personal matters and sometimes will never reach back out to you unless you reach out to them first.
- Larger companies will usually set their company budgets at the first of the year. Be one of the

“first in line” of potential new relationships they make when they make their money or product sponsorship decisions for the year and get in contact with them early and often. Remember, polite but persistent. Professional but direct. Seek to build the relationship first and then proceed to working together on a partnership.

- Along with sponsors, consider seeking out some Pro-Staff positions. Building relationships with outfitters is an easy way to get your first Pro-Staff positions as Pro-Staff members serve as experts in the industry for the product or service they represent. Most Pro-Staff positions are paid in products or services and many times do not come with monetary compensation for the members. For instance, one of the archery industry Pro-Staff positions I hold yields me two packs of broadheads (a \$40 retail value each) and a product T-Shirt (a \$20 value) each year and offers very attractive dealer pricing on other products, including more broadheads if I need to order more. In trade for this, the individual who receives a Pro-Staff position holds an expert position in the company and is expected to represent and help market that company wherever they are around other outdoor industry consumers. In my case with Grim Reaper Broadheads, I wear my T-Shirts at 3D archery tournaments and other places where an opportunity presents itself. The company gets inexpensive promotion and the Pro-Staffer gets free or discounted products and a title of an expert in the industry. Since you don't want to be Pro-Staff for competing product or service companies, consider applying for Pro-Staff positions in a variety of fields in the outdoor industry or encourage new or smaller companies to start a Pro-Staff program and add you and your show on as recognized Pro-Staff members. Our entire team of show hosts holds numerous Pro-Staff positions as the more positions you hold in different segments of the industry, the more expertise you have to show prospective sponsors and other industry players.
- If you can afford it, take a trip to the SHOT Show or ATA show, which are the largest outdoor industry trade shows in the nation for the shooting sports and archery industries. These usually happen in the early part of the calendar year. NRA shows, gun shows, outdoor expos, and other industry events are also good places to find large and small companies to try to partner with and gain sponsorship consideration as well as other networking connections. Keep in mind, any one you represent as a sponsor will represent you and your show and vice versa. Our personal view as a TV show is that we only use sponsors who we believe in and can stand by their products and services. On the other side of the coin, they have to believe in us and trust that we will represent their products or services in the right manner. That is the kind of relationship you want with your sponsors. Don't lead the charge “Leeroy Jenkins” style (keyword search “Leeroy Jenkins”, or see the video here: <http://youtu.be/LkCNJRfsZBU> if that doesn't make sense and you will see what I mean. There is some colorful language but you will get the point!). When

you are visiting sponsors, approach professionally and always lead with the value you want to provide the sponsor, not what you desire in return.

- Whenever meeting the owner or representative of a potential sponsorship business in person or even on the phone, be sure to lead with statements such as, “Our show is growing and we would like to build a relationship with you.” That is a statement that shows an intent to partner in a mutually beneficial way but is not a threat to anyone. At the end of your conversation, always leave the conversation with a statement such as “Thank you for your time today. I really hope to stay in touch with you in the future.” Another statement I frequently use is, “We love your product/service and hope to provide value for growing your business in the future.” So many show hosts, outfitters, and other people in general do not know how to approach a relationship like this and lead with how wonderful and different their show is from other outdoor shows.

Until a relationship is formed and they know you are serious about working with and providing value for them, talk less about you and more about them. Unless they ask, don’t bring your show or your accomplishments in the outdoor industry into the main stage spotlight. As the famous sales trainer and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar once said, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Sponsors will not build a relationship with you until they know they can trust you and your team.

One big mistake I see people make is to end e-mails, phone conversations, or even in-person visits with a statement such as, “I look forward to hearing back from you.” Don’t count on it. Most people will forget all about you and your show the minute you leave a meeting with them, or after they see an e-mail or hear a phone message from you. Expecting them to do otherwise is a futile effort. It’s just the way things are. You HAVE to stay in touch with them in the future and take the first steps towards building the relationship. If I didn’t have a sales background and knew what I was doing before I became a show host and marketing director, I would be in a far different place than I am now and would not have realized anywhere near the same level of success.

Make a list of all of your prospective sponsors and other outdoor industry connections in a spreadsheet and update it often. Every trip our TV show takes to the SHOT Show in January, I make a new list of who we saw each year, the key contact information for the decision makers, and notes about how the meeting or cold call went with each one. This can be your lifeline down the road. This is an easy way to stay organized and not have to keep up with stacks of business cards or notes written on cocktail napkins from the bar you and your team was at one night. Simplicity and organization will win you more battles and save you more trouble in the

long run.

- With the theme of staying in touch, consider sending e-mails individually but put some of your “form e-mails” into different categories in a word processing document so you copy and paste them individually, adding a personal touch to each one before you send it. This will save you hours of typing the same things over and over again. I do this all the time and it is a huge time-saver. This is a form of automation where you can get more done in less time.

Write in your own style and speak from the heart but don’t come off as “a guy off of the street”. Lead with professionalism. Anything less will be ignored. I have advised many clients on how to send a good e-mail that will lend to a high probability of success. One thing I have to get on some folks for is writing like you are talking to your neighbor or drinking a beer with a friend. There is a time and place for that kind of dialogue and it is not here, at least not at first. In this section, I will share some emails with you that I have used in the past with success:

Following up After a Phone Conversation

Dear Al,

It was great to talk with you on the phone today and I wish you safe travels in your business ventures. Below is the information I sent you back in February. I know you mentioned sending me Dan's info. We talked with him at the SHOT Show last year and he said he would send us some products for our show. This is a PERFECT product for what we do in predator hunting and we can't wait to showcase this product on our show. Thank you so much for staying in touch and sending me his info when you get a chance. Thanks you as well for your time and consideration in partnering with us in the future!

Warmest Regards,

**Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
(512) 497-7674
"Coyote Tales" TV Show
www.macandproowler.com**

Thanking an Existing Sponsor for Sending Product

Dear Amy,

Thank you again for taking a few minutes to talk with me this morning in regards

to the article I am writing for EoTech this week and agreeing to send me a test model of the HHS2 holographic sight or whatever you have available. We value EoTech as a product sponsor and hope to continue to work with you in the future. Attached is our Media Kit, which I revised recently with all of our TV and Web TV affiliates for your review. I am working on your article this week and it will appear at <http://macandproowler.com/Articles.html>

Please send that Demo/Tester EoTech Sight to:

Warncke Enterprises
Dustin Warncke
(My office address listed here)

Please let me know if you need anything else and thank you again so much for working with us!

Warmest Regards,

Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
(512) 497-7674
"Coyote Tales" TV Show
www.macandproowler.com

Following up with a Prospective Sponsor

Dear Connie,

I hope you are doing fantastic this week. I just wanted to stay in touch with you, per your request, on product sponsorship with our show. We are interested in your bowfishing and bowhunting products and will feature both of them as part of our show. Thank you again for your time and consideration!

Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
(512) 497-7674

Setting up a Meeting at the SHOT Show

Stephanie,

I just wanted to touch bases again with meeting you next week at SHOT. I am trying to put a schedule together for our team. Do you have your booth number assignment yet? We are going to be with Olympic Arms in booth 16727. We would love to talk with you about product sponsorship or see what other possibilities exist for the future. Please stay in touch and thanks again!

Warmest Regards,

Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
www.macandproowler.com
(512) 497-7674

Showing a Current Sponsor How I am Promoting Them

Dear Mr. Evans,

I just wanted to send you some links of videos where recently I featured your products. I also made your company one of my feature sponsors for the Accuracy and Hog Hunt videos I recently produced. Thanks again for staying in touch and partnering with us!

Dustin's Summer Hog Hunt at DB Hunting Ranch

<http://youtu.be/4AxkTBjDNlo>

(Featured as an end sponsor.)

Practical Accuracy Fundamentals for Rifles and Handguns - Mosin Nagant, Makarov, & ATI Stocks

<http://youtu.be/p6P5oLOXI1o>

(Featured as an end sponsor and throughout the video.)

ATI Gun Stocks Review - Mosin Nagant, Ruger 10/22 and more!

<http://youtu.be/p1XJNfoxZik>

(Featured your product on both guns)

Barnett Crossbows Product Review - C5 Wildcat & BCX Buck Commander Extreme

<http://youtu.be/eDecQnMgNfc>

(Featured your product on both Crossbows in the video.)

Thank you again for working with us!

Dustin Vaughn Warncke
Marketing Director
Mac & Prowler
(512) 497-7674

My main goal in including these e-mail examples is to show my basic outline for making a “light touch” with potential or existing sponsors. Most of these are short and to the point. Again, they are not boastful or trying to prove a huge point. The main purpose and goal is to build the relationship and continue to strengthen the relationship. The outdoor industry is full of people who have large egos and are proud of what they have accomplished. It is not an easy world to thrive in all of the time, especially if you do not approach contacting key people and forming relationships the appropriate way. I have seen far too many people in the realm of the outdoor industry who have a big hat, but no cattle. In other words, they represent themselves, their show or team, or even their business as something that is overinflated. As we have talked about and will continue to talk about, balance and moderation must be used in every part of what you do. You can be proud of and show your accomplishments but do not be “stuck on yourself.” In other words, don’t boast about how good you or your team really is at the end of the day. That is a major turn-off to most people in general but especially in this industry. That was another reason why I wanted to show the way I relate to those with which I am wishing to build a relationship or continue an existing one. If you want to “borrow” my sales and marketing ideas, you are welcome to do so, just please do not copy and paste them as your own. Come up with your own language but consider the theme I have presented here as a template.

- If you have a sponsor you really want to impress and develop a future relationship with, start by using their products on your show and promoting them without sponsorship. Then, send a link to the segment or show which features them and show them how you are promoting them on your show. If they don’t express any interest after attempts to reach out to them, move on. However, most companies, especially smaller companies, will take notice of what you are doing for them first without expecting anything in return and seek to build a relationship with you in return.
- One thing I started doing with sponsors where I had personally built a relationship and gained some experience or where I had gained a Pro-Staff position in the industry is to build an

“Outdoor Industry Resume”. I have this on my personal website at http://dustinsprojects.com/Dustin_Warncke_Outdoor_Resume.pdf and also on social media/networking platforms. This has worked to my benefit as I continue to build off of my accomplishments and, with a resume, have a way I can show prospective companies how I have helped other companies and why they should consider me or my show in whatever position or goal I am pursuing with them. Telling is not selling so having a tool like this in your arsenal is irrefutable proof that you know what you are talking about. It may take you some time to build a resume like this but it is something you can carry with you wherever you go in the future.

A good example of an accomplishment to celebrate in a platform like this is one of the companies I work with that started out very small and only had one prototype product for which I helped write a marketing proposal. I did consulting with the owner on product packaging and accessories that the product would include. As the product progressed towards the launching phase, I served as one of the prototype testers and advisors. This product is now one of the best selling products in its category in Cabela’s online and retail stores nationwide. Those are the kind of things you want to share with the world. They show that you know what you are talking about. This company owner and I became friends over this process and I still do consulting for him as he develops and tests new products. I do product videos for him and also edit videos that he sends me. Again, mutually beneficial, quid pro quo, whatever you want to call it, we take care of each other. When people ask how I did this or what set of skills I had in order to get something like this accomplished, I simply say that it was an open ended relationship with the owner and a knowledge of the market and pricing of his product compared to his competition. I was able to fit a need he had and we grew together from there. In this particular product category, the competition is fierce and cut-throat so we worked as a team to come up with better components, accessories, overall packaging, and pricing to what was on the market. At first, we just traded products and services back and forth with each other and moved up from there as he could afford to do more. The money or kick-backs were less important than the experiences and accomplishments. Outdoor industry companies take notice of people and teams who “move the needle” for other companies and grow overall sales and the spectrum of marketing exposure. They want to know how you did it and what you can possibly do for them if you possess these types of skills.

One of the most flattering things that recently happened to me was a referral from a friend of mine, also in the outdoor industry, from a large and rather well known national non-profit organization. They were looking for a regional director for the area I live in and actually came across my resume on their own. When I called the representative back who was interested in interviewing me, he couldn’t find my resume, at which time I reminded him, “I never sent it to

you, remember? You found me...” That felt good. I decided to turn down that position as the pay and schedule did not fit my future plans but it felt good to be noticed in that way. Non-profit organizations, product and service companies, even outfitters and guides, are many times naturally curious for what’s new and better and what can help them grow. If they find you, what impression will you make and will they see more value in you than someone else? You may only have one chance to make something happen.

Where to Air Your Show

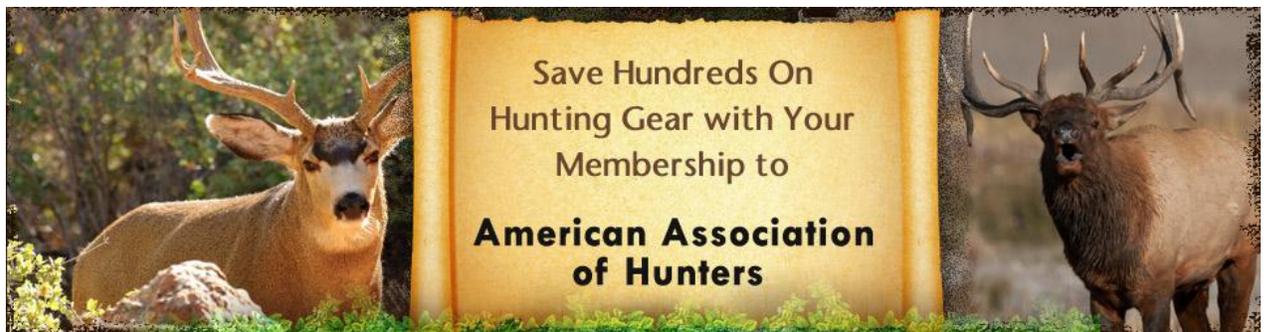
- It is no secret that technology is drastically changing the way we all consume various forms of media today. With the advent of Smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices as well as many advances in streaming media on the internet; the ways to consume video, audio, and written content are ever changing and progressing as we grow into the future. The most exciting development for the outdoor industry is online platforms for airing your TV show. Many of these have been around for a while but they continue to get better and many of them are able to stream video on almost any device. Add to that the advent of Smart TV's and streaming services, such the Roku streaming player. You can now watch streaming video from the internet in the comfort of your living room on the big screen. Many new TVs, Blu-Ray players, and DVD packages already come with streaming video services. Just add an internet connection via an Ethernet Cable or even through a Wi-Fi connection and you are in the action. This technology is awesome and encouraging to say the least, as it allows more viewers to access content in different ways and allows an avenue for TV shows trying to gain more viewers or just trying to break through and initially build an audience. The internet continues to be a good "entry level" platform for shows that want exposure but can't spend thousands of dollars in order for anyone to even know they exist. This all has its advantages and disadvantages, like most anything else in life.

Some up and coming outdoor TV shows now even aim to only air on a Web TV or online only platform and I encourage this. The startup costs are next to nothing if you can film, edit, and produce most of your content yourself and the exposure potential is incredible. That all being said, the main issue with airing on a streaming video website like YouTube or Vimeo, for instance, is that, though the exposure and potential viewer base is enormous, every Tom, Dick, and Harry out there with a video camera thinks what they film is worthy of sharing with the world. As we covered earlier, there is a difference in the quality and value of many outdoor industry related content on the internet today. I often look at it much like public transportation. If it is free or cheap and everyone can ride on the proverbial subway or bus, the standards are lowered and the landscape gets full of garbage pretty fast. The major social video streaming websites are good examples of both content with quality and value for the viewer as well as videos that should have never been uploaded in the first place. As I will reiterate here again, what this all boils down to is that your content has to stand head and shoulders above the other content on the market. If you want your show to be taken as a serious TV show even if you only air on Web TV, your content has to reflect

that same quality and production value as something you would expect to watch on the major outdoor specific network TV channels.

- There are many Web TV platforms dedicated to streaming videos exclusive for the outdoor industry. These usually fall into two categories: **Free for the Consumer/ Advertising Driven** and **Membership-Driven**. Both of these formats have a price to pay but it doesn't always necessarily mean money is involved in the equation.
- The Hunting Channel Online (<http://www.thehuntingchannelonline.com>) is a good example of a **Member-Driven** website and serves as a resource for its members in many different ways other than just TV shows. From tech tips of the week to written articles and even radio interviews, the content is diverse and enriching on a membership like THC. Members pay a monthly, yearly, or even lifetime access fee for the content on this platform. I helped re-launch THC in the spring of 2013, as their affiliate marketing director, so it is a platform I understand well. While viewership is smaller since the viewers are all "members only" on a membership platform, the plus side of that coin is that you have a highly qualified and usually captive audience built in here. These members have already spoken with their own money that they spend money in the outdoor industry. Though the spectrum of exposure is a smaller audience, sponsors and other advertisers usually tend to like the appeal of a qualified audience seeing their product or service, not just the "tire kickers" of the industry who only watch free content and never buy anything as a result. I have done extensive research in Web TV programming that focuses exclusively on outdoor programming and have found both membership-Driven and Free/Advertiser-Driven Web TV Platforms charging anywhere from \$500-\$10,000 per year to air, depending on the exposure and reach of the outdoor show. Some of these Web TV platforms even trade for advertising of their website and Web TV membership platform for a lower price to air. The nice thing about The Hunting Channel Online is that it has traditionally been solely supported by membership fees and there is no cost to air as long as an outdoor show links back to them as an affiliate on their website, social media, or other platforms where they have exposure to an audience. This is a very cost-effective feature for an outdoor show. Furthermore, a show can also profit from any sales made with commissions earned from sales through the affiliate program, which is also free to join. See my website at <http://www.dustinsprojects.com/THC.html> for more details about this platform as well as tutorial videos I have produced and more.

Example of an Affiliate Banner for a Membership Outdoor Web-TV Platform



- **Free to Consumer/Advertiser-Driven** Web TV platforms are certainly more popular than Membership-Driven platforms and they also attract a larger audience as a result because they are more accessible. With a wider audience comes more exposure but also more “tire kickers” who may never buy from you or your sponsors. In many ways, it’s a trade off. These sites can range from huge platforms such as YouTube or Vimeo to smaller, industry specific sites which cater exclusively to the outdoor industry. Obviously, any platform that will attract an audience is what you want to strive for in your quest to spread the word about your show. What you are looking for most of all is to build a viewership of a qualified audience

that will follow your show and build statistics you can share with your current and potential sponsors.

One of my favorite Web-TV networks that falls into the **Free to Consumer/Advertiser-Driven** Web TV category is the DK Outdoor Adventures Network (www.dkoutdooradventures.com). With over 150 websites and well over 100,000 monthly unique visitors and growing, it is quickly becoming the leading network for dedicated outdoor Web-TV programming. The cost to air here is also free but, as with The Hunting Channel Online, there is no free lunch when it comes to airing on an industry specific platform like this. Keep in mind that everyone who runs a streaming video site has to pay for it some way. Bandwidth, domain names, and hosting space, not to mention ongoing maintenance fees, all cost the owners of these platforms money. Being an ad-driven network, sponsors are what keep a platform like this alive. That being the case, show hosts are required to bring on two paying sponsors who will pay to advertise on the network each year in order to air on the DK Outdoor Adventures Network at no cost. The trade-off though is a huge exposure for your show. The SEO (Search Engine Optimization) work that has gone into this platform and network is well over \$250,000 and covers many search phrases related to outdoor TV. What you have as an end result is a large qualified audience. Selling the sponsor packages for this network, especially to outfitters and others sponsors you have built relationships with, is not hard at all when they see the potential exposure in return for the low yearly cost. In fact, the cost for them breaks down to under \$75 a month and the value to both them and your show is incredible. You can learn more about this network and even consider joining my team with DK Outdoor Adventures at www.dustinsprojects.com/dkoutdoors.html where I set up an entire information page.



The DK Outdoor Adventures network and others like it operate off of something called “permission marketing” which is the concept of marketing to an audience that has given consent, requested, or searched for the marketing content and or message. In this case,

outdoor TV shows and other outdoor industry related content. Permission marketing increases sales for sponsors simply by increasing the exposure of their business to a target audience which is interested in the products or services related to what they are searching for, in this case, on the internet. In other words, if people are wanting to watch outdoor shows, they probably want to learn more about how they can use a sponsor's product or service to help them in their own future outdoor adventures and are more likely to purchase something that they have exposure to on a platform like this. So, marketing to a qualified and captive audience through a platform like this results in effective advertising. This increases the opportunity to boost sales for the sponsor's product and services. The DK marketing strategies have been well researched, tested, and proven extremely effective in delivering quality results and increasing sales for their sponsors. For these reasons and many more, the DK Outdoor Adventures network is one of the most exciting platforms in the outdoor industry today.

- The one thing to keep in mind when you are looking at any Web-TV network platform is to be sure that what you are airing does not become property of the network for a period of time, as some require contracts and exclusivity with them. If you do choose to sign a contract with the Web-TV platform to air your content, make sure you are getting exposure for your show in return for what you give them rights too, as you are locking in that content for a set amount of time and cannot offer it to your audience anywhere else. As you can probably figure out, I am not a fan of exclusive-contracts and agreements which prohibit you from airing content on other platforms. Instead, I encourage you to keep your options open when you are starting out and do what works best for you. While you might want to have some content designated as members-only exclusive content to drive viewers to a membership platform you are promoting, you certainly do not have to sign your rights away to content YOU OWN in trade for air time. I will not go into which Web TV platforms do exclusivity agreements. Just know that neither I, nor my TV show air on any platforms that operate with these restrictions.
- On larger video streaming platforms like YouTube, I discourage shows to enter a monetization agreement to sell ads as part of their channel line-up for two main reasons. First of all, most all of the ads are for large companies that are not related in any way, shape, or form to your show. The day may soon come where all users have no choice and have to subscribe to an ad server that plays a commercial before each one of their videos or have a pop up advertisement on their video as it plays. Sometimes, even now, pop up ads on large sites like these are unavoidable. However, I view shows that "drink the Kool-Aid" of ad server monetization permissibly and allow ad servers to run on their channel as sell outs. I

think many other viewers do as well. While ad servers are a common and many times necessary component of an Ad-Driven/Free to Consumer platform, the ad content is not specific to the show and these companies are not your sponsors. Many people, myself included, are annoyed by commercials like these and skip them as soon as they are able. I have a lowered opinion of shows that have opted-in for this mass commercialization of their channel on video streaming platforms like YouTube in trade for monetization. One show host I know who started out on YouTube and even went on to be a part of a major network TV show, which aired on the National Geographic Channel on traditional network TV. He had made less than \$100 in ad sales from this ad server but had a huge viewing audience. The reason for this is rather simple: People are not in the market to buy something they are not interested in and if the advertisements running on your channel have nothing to do with the content you are airing, you are wasting everyone's time. Don't sell your soul to the company store if you can help it. Instead, consider Ad-Driven/Free to Consumer platforms that will be directly of interest to your viewers, like what is available through platforms like DK Outdoors.

- Study and print off your viewer analytics if possible and share them with current and prospective sponsors. One nice thing about large platform streaming media sites is that most of them show your daily, weekly, and monthly analytics. These statistics show which of your videos are getting the most views. These figures are important to show to your sponsors to prove that they are receiving adequate exposure and this is also helpful in networking and building future relationships with sponsors. Here again, most everything in the business of the outdoor industry boils down to some type of sales and marketing efforts. Shows that do not realize this do not last very long.
- Many new show hosts ask me what the costs are to air on large traditional TV networks such as The Outdoor Channel, the Sportsman's Channel, and the Pursuit Channel, which are regarded as the most popular, well known, and dedicated outdoor TV cable networks on the market today. The price for airing on these networks range from \$10,000 per quarter (3 months) to \$250,000 or more a year. Secondary to these large TV networks are networks which are multifaceted but have some outdoor programming such as the NBC Sports channel or Versus channel. Airing on these TV networks, even though they are not exclusive to the outdoor industry audience, is about the same in terms of cost due to the exposure. Most cable and satellite carriers who carry one or more of the dedicated outdoor TV networks also carry these channels. Third in line in the cable network TV world are channels such as The Hunt Channel on Dish Network, which is dedicated to the outdoors but only airs intermittently during certain times of the day or year, or channels like The Walk TV, which is

a Christian-based cable network which airs outdoor TV programming all day on Saturdays. Cost for networks like these run from about \$500 a month to \$3,000 per quarter, which is far more affordable than the other options we just covered. Fourth on the list are smaller regional networks that are free for viewers who do not have cable or part of a cable or satellite carrier package. Local public access networks might also fall into this category. The reach and scope of the audience is obviously smaller but the cost is usually lower at \$50-\$100 per episode/week. Our show still airs on KTSS/Channel 50 which is based in Hope, Arkansas. For our TV show, this is a good audience since the cable and free-air range is fairly large and we have a large local following there. Many shows start out with small regional networks, like KTSS-50, and move to larger audiences as sponsorship, time, and money permits.

Many outdoor shows start with a presence on a local regional network, which was how our show also started, for the sole purpose of the marketing angle that their show is airing on “Cable TV”. My experience is that this can make a difference but not always. Some sponsors won’t even give you the time of day if you are not one of the “Big Three” major outdoor networks we talked about earlier. Some just want to get any kind of exposure they can in trade for giving products or services to your show. Some just care that you have a show of any kind that has quality content, regardless of where it airs. Most outdoor shows run in 30 minute time slots, subtracting time for the obligatory commercials that most people fast forward through. These commercials can be supplied from outdoor TV show’s sponsors or TV network sponsors, many times both. Those who can’t skip through commercials usually wish they had the ability to do so and many times treat them like half-time at the football game and go to the bathroom or refresh their drink until the show resumes. The point here is that most people don’t like commercials, regardless of who they promote or where they come from but they are part of the deal when you watch just about any kind of outdoor TV show.

My view on the “Big Three” networks is pretty anti-establishment but that is just the way I am wired, as I have gone to the beat of my own drum for most of my life. If your dream is to one day air your show on The Outdoor Channel that is great. I am not a fan of the multi-year exclusivity contracts they make shows sign. Much like some Web TV platforms, this restricts a show from airing their content anywhere else. For example, one of my favorite shows airs on The Outdoor Channel and many times I forget to record it on my DVR system. Due to this exclusivity term, I cannot access any of their shows online unless they air on a membership platform. Even then, they may not be on the membership platform where I am a member but another one that would require me to buy another membership. Though The Outdoor

Channel is the most widespread of the three networks, I do not like terms that prevent shows from airing on multiple platforms, as we covered before.

The problem with channels available on cable and satellite TV networks today is that there are too many variables. Let's take the other two networks from the "Big Three". If you have Dish Network or other satellite providers, you may never see a show, let alone even hear of a show on the Sportsman Channel, as these providers don't carry it. I personally get AT&T Uverse in my house, and I have the highest package they offer, thanks to my wife. I get The Outdoor Channel and the Sportsman Channel but not the Pursuit Channel. Ruh-Roh! If you had a show on there, I may never hear about it as I switched from Dish Network to Uverse a few years ago. Whatever move you make with "The Big Three" you either shell out the most money and are locked into a contract prohibiting you from airing anywhere else or your show doesn't get picked up by some of the major cable or satellite networks, depending on the service provider/carrier you are using.

If you raise enough money to get on the Pursuit Channel, your show may end up with a 2am morning time slot. I wonder how many insomniacs or Dads with newborn infants are up at that hour on a regular basis. Now of course if you have a DVR, Tivo, or other digital video recording system to record a show, you can watch it on demand, which many people do these days. My personal viewing habits with cable TV these days revolve almost solely on watching recorded content and not live TV. With the busy world we live in today and so many channels and content available, millions of other people watch TV this way as well. A plus for DVR systems, as we talked about before, is that you can also skip through commercials and get to the meat and potatoes of what you really want to watch. Do you see my point?

I am not suggesting that airing on one of the major networks shouldn't be a goal of yours, but keep in mind that you will still not reach your full potential here. A show host who also serves as my mentor once had a show on The Outdoor Channel as he had a partner who financed it along with some money sponsors. There was no Holy Grail or pot of gold at the end of that rainbow. No sponsors beat down his door and threw money at him in hopes of featuring their product or service on his show.

Although, I bring up all these points, my goal is still not to discourage ambitious show hosts and their teams from airing their show on one of the big networks. I am just making the point that the ways that people are consuming media are changing and there is no network on cable or satellite TV that has the golden ticket in the chocolate factory. I am also not saying that traditional TV is going away. It might indeed morph into something different that

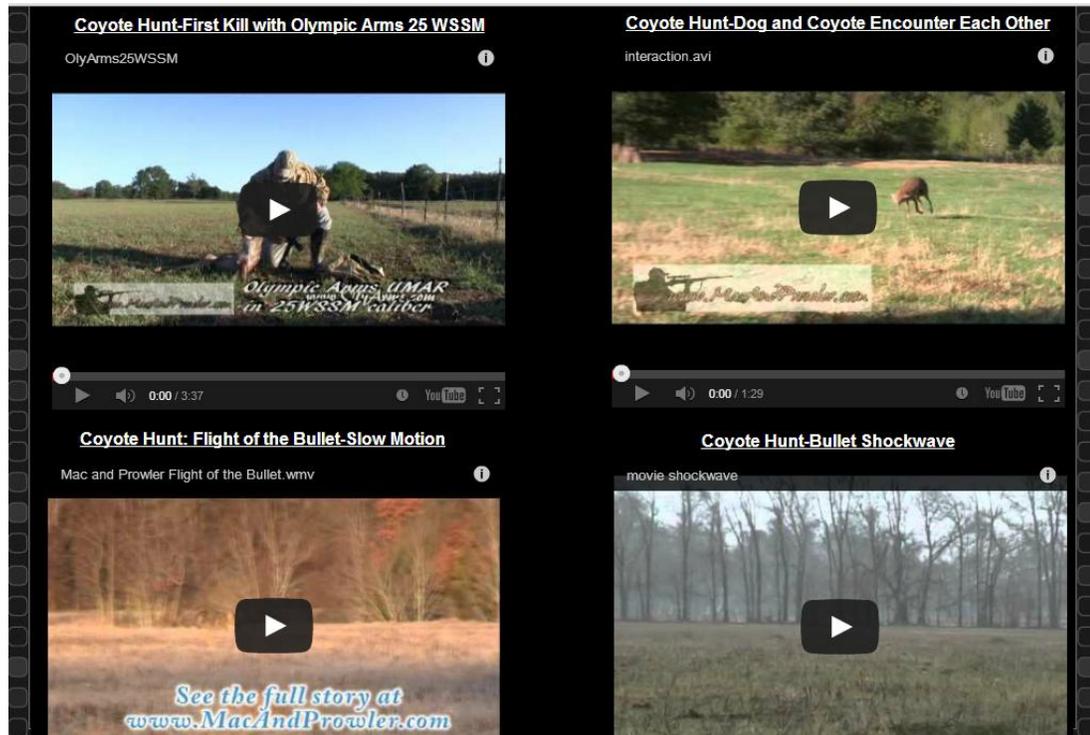
what it is today in the future. And I am sure that the other large networks on TV today and their subsidiaries will keep pumping money into the machine to keep the traditional platform we know as network TV alive.

I recently came across an outdoor TV show on a large outdoor cable network that was over \$60,000 in the hole to their network for advertising and airing cost obligations. When you sign up for a year or more commitment with one of these big networks, you are committing to them your talents, time, and resources and sometimes you may be trading off more than you had planned on in the deal. I have seen far too many shows chase the dream of making it big and go broke in the process. You and your team don't need that kind of stress along with everything else you have going on with your life. Stay on a budget and don't take on more than you can handle.

Along with that all being said, keep in mind that there are also thousands of consumers who are dumping their cable or satellite providers every month, many of which are outdoorsmen. This can be due to many factors such as finances, loss of interest in the multitude of channels they never have time to watch, or other factors. Where do they go to watch TV after that? You guessed it! I hope I wasn't unclear on any of my points in this section.

- I am a strong believer that the internet is the wave of the future and the main way most Americans and folks in many other industrialized nations will consume media in the future. This is already the case for millions of people in our country alone. The term for this movement is "second screen viewing". Most major national broadcast networks make many of their previous broadcasts available on-demand and optimize videos for easy access from computers and mobile devices and several even have live streaming of their network available. With the advent of streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, as well as Smart TV's and add-on systems like the Roku, the trend is moving to the internet at a high rate of speed. As the saying goes, "He who lives by the crystal ball, eats glass". I am no expert on the future of media but we can certainly be sure that the way we are consuming media is changing. In any case, the internet is "The Great Equalizer" in many ways as it levels the playing field for 24/7 on-demand access on multiple platforms.

Examples of Videos on the Mac & Prowler TV Show Website



- For Web TV platforms, I am not a believer in outdoor shows uploading the traditional full 30 minute episodes as they are airing or have aired on traditional TV. When you are dealing with a different platform, you have to keep in mind that your audience will have different preferences and viewing habits. That may be one very good reason that they are on the internet watching Web TV in the first place. Many shows I have worked with stay with the traditional 30 minute run time but our show has had far more views on our shorter segments that have a run time of 15 minutes. Keep in mind that the average attention span of the average viewer is nowhere near 30 minutes long. Although the most popular video I have on YouTube right now has a run time of over 27 minutes, the Mosin Nagant has a built-in audience on YouTube and the demand was and still is high for a video which is that comprehensive to that part of the shooting sports industry. The more research I do, the more I find viewers of outdoor videos desiring “single hunt videos.” My goal in video editing for Web TV is to format my video so it will fit into a 10-12 minute time frame. I have even done double hunts (killing two animals in one video) for deer and wild hogs in this time frame and have had a good response in viewership. The outdoor shows that wear me out are the 30 minute hunt to shoot one animal. On the Web TV platform, if you can get the job done in 10-15 minutes, why do you need to stretch it out further than that? Web TV is

formless and you can do anything you desire. Just be aware of the four main elements of a good outdoor show and keep time and a viewer's attention span into consideration.

- Some shows finance the expenses related to producing and airing an outdoor show by selling products they are given for free or at a wholesale or dealer discount by their sponsors. We have operated like this in the past with a few sponsors. The best example is a firearm sponsor who, depending on the year, might send us a few guns for free that we can quickly flip for a "new in box" retail condition price. The money that is earned here is then put in a separate bank account and used for monthly TV network airing costs and other expenses related to the show. In trade for a relationship like this, the sponsor usually expects to become a "Title Sponsor" of one or more of your shows or even a season of the show, and rightly so. You have probably seen a show airing the message, "Brought to you by... (Insert sponsor name here)". This is what is known as a "Billboard Ad" and is a common trading tool in the industry. Most shows you will watch with a title sponsor or billboard ad will only have one or two of them per show. If your load up the front of your show with too many of these, it gets crowded quickly and does not have good taste. Most sponsors trading or buying title sponsorship or billboard ads are in it to win it and they want to be the main focal point of the viewer as the main sponsor of the show. Keep that in mind when editing and producing a show where you are trying to give a sponsor their money's worth of exposure.
- DVD's are also an option for making a "product" out of your show and brand, but streaming video platforms have largely changed how consumers in the outdoor industry watch content, as we talked about before. I speak from personal experience here as we have sold only a small number of our own DVD's on our TV show's website. We don't promote our DVD's all the time but they are always on our website and available for purchase.

I once had a guy wanting to start a bowfishing show contact me through our show, wanting to learn the ropes of the industry and how best to get started. His plan was to start out making a DVD and grow his brand from there. He made all the points for why it would work and how many followers he had as well as how many pro-staff positions he held. He sold the idea to me as if people were beating his door down wanting his content available for purchase on a DVD. That was all great but I advised him to begin with the end in mind when approaching any goal. His plan was to produce 1,000 DVD's and drop ship them to customers after launching a large marketing campaign. I asked how much storage space he would be comfortable with sparing for a little while as he might need it. I am not saying that a DVD is not a good idea but I think you are putting the apple cart before the horse if that is

how you start out. If I was to advise a show to do a DVD or even a series of them, it would be a comprehensive part of the branding and product development process down the road, after they had developed an audience and following. An investment like this requires considerations for production, replication, and packaging, not to mention fulfillment to the end consumer. Doing this too soon, before you have a solid team and dedicated audience base, may result in a garage full of DVDs that collect dust.

Promoting Your Show

- The ways to market your show are endless. Working as both an outdoor show host and marketing director as well as doing sales, marketing, and consulting for businesses in the outdoor industry has given me a depth of experience in this realm from many angles of the equation. The best advice I can give people new to the industry or trying to promote any kind of outdoor business or outdoor show is to do something every day towards the promotion of your goal. For me, “every day,” includes weekends and holidays. That does not have to be the case for you, but remember; only the strong survive in the outdoor industry. This is no place for the weary kind.
- Seek to “build a brand” around your show and your team. Branding is what people remember. Your show name may be more recognizable than your name or the name of anyone on your team but that is part of the plan. Branding is the sum total of the many parts of the marketing and promotion package which make up what your show is all about. What is your show’s mission statement? If you don’t have one, create one as soon as you can. It should be a team effort. It doesn’t have to be longer than a couple of sentences to a paragraph but it should summarize what your show is about, what your purpose in the outdoor industry is in the long run, and what means you are using and plan to use to get there. If you woke me up in the middle of the night and asked me our show’s mission statement, I would be able to tell you in an instant. I know it that well.
- Websites are a crucial element to your marketing and promotion plan. I have been building websites for myself and other people and businesses since the late 1990’s when you had to use HTML code to do anything. Now we have website builders and other services that allow people of nearly any experience level to build professional websites in a short amount of time. I did most of the design and building of our show’s website (www.macandproowler.com) using a basic template from Homestead Site Builder (www.homestead.com) and their site-hosted website editing program. This is very easy-to-use service and one which allows just about anyone with any level of experience to make a good looking website and, operating on a small monthly fee, helps plug SEO (Search Engine Optimization) by indexing keywords in the text of the pages of the website into major search engines. The main rule in building websites is to have a simple, easy to navigate platform for viewers.

A secondary option for a hosted website builder is WordPress (www.wordpress.com or the open source/self-hosted platform at www.wordpress.org). There is a small learning curve with both of these options but they are fairly easy to use. Another option is to “roll your own” and build your webpage from scratch. Programs such as Adobe Dreamweaver (<http://www.adobe.com/products/dreamweaver.html>) can build a site in multiple different coding languages starting from scratch or a base template you can purchase or design yourself. Even more basic is a program that is what I use for most all of my basic HTML websites, including my own website at www.dustinsprojects.com. This program is called the Sea Monkey Composer (www.seamonkeyproject.org) and it is part of the Mozilla Firefox platform. This program is a simple and basic HTML composer but it is free to download and to be used for life. It is more basic but will build a good looking HTML website for the lowest cost possible. If you choose one of these self-hosted options, you will need to source your own domain name and website hosting services. To most newcomers to the wild world of websites, I explain in this way: The domain name is your street address and the hosting service is your real estate. You have to have a street address for people to find you and a house to keep your content inside so they have something to see when they get there. The service I use for both website domains and hosting is Total Choice Hosting (www.totalchoicehosting.com). A basic domain name should run about \$12-\$13 and hosting should run between \$44-\$60 per year, depending on the service you use and package you choose. Another option is to hire a company like mine or a person like me who loves the wonderful world of websites and can build one for you. If you need some help here, once again, contact me through my website and I can get you on the right track.

Examples of Video Categories on the Mac & Prowler TV Show Website



Check out New Videos in BOW TALES, HOG TALES, GUN TALES, Products Recommended by M&P, and Dustin's MAD MINUTE!

COYOTE TALES

Coyote Tales - Coyote Hunting Videos

BOW TALES

Bow Tales - Bow Hunting Videos
(Page One) (Page Two)

GUN TALES

Gun Tales - Rifle, Shotgun, and Handgun Videos

BOBCAT TALES

Bobcat Tales - Bobcat Hunting Videos

- In building a website, assume the visitor knows nothing about who you are or what your show is about as many visitors will be first-timers when you are just starting out or building your brand to reach a larger audience. Your website should cover the introduction to what your show is about, your mission statement and goals for your show, video segments (embedded in your site from websites such as YouTube) or even full shows, sponsor logos, where you are broadcasting, social media information, and your show's contact information. I believe these are all components. Make it easy for people to follow you and like your show as well as contact you. In the research I have done many shows I come across have contact forums and no e-mail address or phone number. I personally think this is a mistake as it can make a show seem unapproachable. I am not suggesting that contact forms are not a professional way to have people communicate with you but if that is the ONLY way people are able to communicate with you, you might be turning some prospective sponsors or other potential opportunities away from you and leaving money on the table. Leave a phone number and at least one e-mail address on your website in place of, or in addition to, having a contact forum.
- As I advise with many of my clients with Warncke Enterprises, your website is your ever present business card. It can be updated with your most current content at any time and it is a resource and tool for viewers to learn more about what you are offering any time of the day or night. This is all done without you having to spend additional time making a positive first impression on potential sponsors, viewers, or anyone else who comes across your path.

The Mac & Prowler TV Show Website Front Page, Designed by the Author

Mac & Prowler present  *www.MacAndProwler.com*

Phone: (903) 244-3906
E-mail: prowler@macandprowler.com

Home Videos Articles Partners About Us Contact Us Backwoods Archery Photos Products Marketing

Home of the Coyote Tales TV Show

Welcome to Mac & Prowler
Saving Game, One Predator at a time...

We bring "real life" hunting action to our viewers as well as teach how and why we hunt the way we do to help our viewers become better hunters. From our various hunting adventures, tech tips, product showcases, or other videos, we bring it to you as it happens. While our main focus is predator hunting with our TV Show, *Coyote Tales*, we feature many other hunts for Deer, Wild Hogs, and more! Thanks for stopping by and please come back often as we have more videos, articles, and product features than just about any other hunting show out there!

Also, please check out our [Partners page](#) and see all of our Sponsors. We only do business with the best. If M&P has a sponsor, you can be sure they are one of the premier companies in the outdoor industry. Many companies contact us for sponsorship/advertising opportunities but we are very selective on who we choose to represent. We have tested every product that we use on the show and believe that these products will stand the test of time and our hunting environment.

Check out **New Videos** in **BOW TALES, HOG TALES, GUN TALES,** Products Recommended by M&P, and **Dustin's MAD MINUTE** as well as our **New Articles!**

YouTube

Facebook Find us on Facebook

New "Interviews with the Masters" featured on The Hunting Channel!

"Randy "Mac" McMillian and Dustin cover Predator Hunting: [LISTEN Here](#)

- Consider starting a blog on your website or linking to a blog on another blog-specific website and connecting your website with it. If you choose to blog, write often. Another idea is to write articles, which can be as short or as long as you desire, just don't bore the reader. Also, many times your audience will turn their nose up at old content if it looks or reads as being dated and is never refreshed with new content. If you blog, keep it fresh and updated with new content. I have seen this trend on many TV shows' websites and it is a telling sign that either things are not going well for them or that they do not care enough to reach out to their audience. I do not cover current events or trending issues in my articles very often. I want the content to always look fresh and be useful. If you are a blogger or want to start a blog and want to write a paragraph or two of content at a time, pledge to contribute to it on a weekly or even daily basis.

Plug your sponsor's products and services or even potential sponsors you want to impress and build a relationship with in the future. Send them the links when they are mentioned in your post. I do this often in any article where it fits and you can see how I do this in the articles I write on our show's page at <http://www.macandproowler.com/Articles.html>. My articles tend to be longer than most you might read in an outdoor magazine, although I also contribute to one of those as well. As you have probably figured out, I like to write. The joy of the internet is that there are few restrictions on what you can produce. It is a formless canvas. I make it a point to embed pictures and video into my articles so as to add to the content and value. If a viewer is spending their time reading my content, I want to make it worth their while and give them everything I can.

Like video, you obviously want to make sure that whatever you write is made with quality and of value to the reader and also be sure to recruit someone else who is good at writing or editing to review and edit your work before you post it. Our written articles have given our show's website more exposure as search engines now have many more words to index, all of them relating to the subject matter we are covering. As an example, at the time I wrote this book, one of the phrases that brings our website up on a first page result is "Hunting on a Budget", which is also the title of one of my articles. Who doesn't want to save money on hunting? It can be an expensive sport. How many people have found our show's website from typing in this key word phrase? More than a few. This happened almost by accident but it worked. Google and other sites index text content like blogs and articles so the more keywords you can include that are relevant to your content, the better. This brings more qualified viewers and potential followers into our website from multiple entry points. If they enter from a keyword indexed in an article on our website or linked to our website, chances are high they will stay around to watch a video or come back again to learn more about our show. The point is to have fresh content and keep adding to it to keep viewers coming back to your website often.

If no one on your team is good at writing, consider searching for an outdoor writer who is trying to build his or her own branding and name in the outdoor industry. This can be done on social media with a couple of “feeler” posts just seeing if anyone out there is interested in contributing to your website or blog and be a part of your show’s team. If you add one or more writers to your network, they get another outlet for promoting their work and your show will get added value and content for your website. Again, a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship is formed.

Example of Mac & Prowler’s Main Article Page

Articles & Product Reviews from the Mac & Prowler Team
Articles by Dustin Vaughn Warncke, M&P Pro Staff

Newest!: "Are You Gonna Eat That?" Eating Wild Game: Three Part Series
[Part One](#) [Part Two](#) [Part Three](#)

New: QMaxx Q20 Family of Lubricants Product Review

New: AIRFORCE Air Rifles - TalonP Air Pistol Product Review

What are We Teaching the Next Generation?

Scopecoat, Binobib, and Barrel Boot Product Review

Hog Hunting: Packin' for Pork Chops!

**Positive Thinking in the Outdoors:
Staying Upbeat When the Unexpected Happens**

Bowhunting and Broadheads: Watch Em' Drop!

Accuracy and Hunting: What Really Counts in the End?

- Another media form growing in popularity is podcasting. Many streaming radio websites and mobile device apps are solely built around podcasts. I hardly listen to local or national terrestrial radio as a result of this trend. And I enjoy having some of my favorite content downloaded or streaming on my Smartphone that is on-demand whenever I want to listen to it. Recently, I started joining this trend with hosting a few “radio interviews” with a Smartphone app which records an entire conversation on an external server and then allows you to download, e-mail, or text it to yourself or someone else after the call is over. There

are numerous apps like this on the market today and they are very affordable. Some of these even have built in editing features. The particular app I use is **Tape-A-Call** (www.tapeacall.com). The cost is only \$10 for the Full Pro Version of the app, allowing unlimited length to your recording and a really easy way to access your content when you are done. The way this app works is it makes a three-way call to a local area phone number, which records your entire conversation. Audio is usually easier to edit than video and you can easily make an intro and ending to your “podcast show” to use for all of your episodes, much like you would for a TV show. Personally, I love this kind of media because producing audio/radio interviews are as easy as recording a phone call with this app or any other way you choose, doing some light editing, and posting it. Another idea is to use a conference call recording service to host your call. If you listen to most podcasts available today, you will notice much of the format is pretty flexible and length can be as long or as short as you desire. Again, I love the formless canvas of technology. There are few restrictions, no “hard breaks,” commercials, or newscasts interrupting the flow of what you are trying to accomplish when you use a format like podcasting. I try to keep interviews under an hour or so and the content as casual, creative, and fun as a normal conversation with the person I am interviewing. The main point to keep in mind is that you want to be educational and somewhat entertaining at the same time. I adapt the four successful rules of a good outdoor show to this same platform, just converted to audio instead of video. The plus side of this platform is that people can listen to your content without having to watch anything so they can consume your show “on the fly” while they are driving, exercising, or doing a number of other activities that allow for listening to audio.

A good way to get started with this platform is to record interviews with guides, outfitters, product or service sponsors, or other people in the industry. This helps you both in promoting your brand as well as helping the audience access valuable information to help them in the field on their next outdoor adventure. In my interviews, I try to cover general and specific topics related to the main topic of the “show” and invite the person I am interviewing to plug their own products and services. I also obviously take the opportunity to do some branding of my own and feature some of the sponsors I am working with, especially if there is a fit for that product or service within the context of our topic.

In an interview I did on predator hunting with one of our show hosts, I plugged one of our sponsors, www.varmintlights.com, and talked about how I thought this company’s hunting lights were a crucial tool to night hunting for hogs, varmints, and predators. We also plugged Winchester Ammunition as we recommended the #4 Buckshot for coyote hunting with a shotgun and Mossberg firearms as one of our gun sponsors. On a bowfishing interview I did

with Marty McIntyre from Garquest Bowfishing Adventures (www.garquest.com), I mentioned Innerloc H2O Bowfishing and their line of bowfishing products as a sponsor as well as the VRL-X bow light for bowfishing at night, also from www.varmintlights.com. These fit well within the topics we covered.

While you don't want to make your podcast a giant commercial, most listeners expect that you have to have some sponsorship to keep your platform going and expect you to plug sponsors. Just keep in mind how the products or services you feature fit in with the topic of your show and how you can help the audience through the use of these products and services. In using this approach in audio and video, as well as written content, your plug for your sponsor looks more like a helpful tip instead of a commercial/advertisement. This is a form of permission marketing, as we visited about earlier. I would really love to see podcasting in the outdoor industry grow. There is a solid market for this among outdoorsmen but I have not seen as many show hosts doing this in the outdoor industry. Need someone to interview? E-mail me!

- Remember, the more value you provide, the more the audience will follow you. Like sponsors, viewers cannot like you unless they can trust you and your advice. Your goal in the products you sponsor, videos you record, or written articles you produce for your audience is to establish that trust as quickly as possible. If you are representing a product or service that turns out to be junk, don't expect a long life for your show. Bad reputations have ruined many shows. This is why integrity and trust in the people on your team and those you associate with and represent in the industry is so vitally important. As I have taught in sales and personal relationship training, add more "life giving" people and situations to your life and eliminate the "life sucking" people and situations, or at least distance yourself from them, whenever and wherever possible. Life is simpler when you can do this. Remember, people operate out of their own perceptions, not yours.
- Persistence pays off but it has to be coupled with clear goals and mission. No weapon can be formed against you, unless it's your own limitations, if you are on a mission to accomplish a goal and work at it every day. Zig Ziglar once said "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." Direction is more important than speed. Nothing has come easy for me personally or our show in this industry. As the old adage goes, "If you fail to plan, plan to fail".
- Social media platforms are an important part of the marketing process in today's world. While what platform is most popular or in-style may change like the weather, the message of reaching a large number of potential viewers who are plugged in and looking for new content to watch, read, or listen to is still the same. Invite people to like, join, or subscribe to

your social media platform, whatever that is, and be sure to leave a link to these in your website.

- In the quest to stay in touch and keep things fresh for your current audience and the desire to grow your audience, many shows even do a newsletter. Along with the writing elements we talked about earlier, you have to balance what you give your audience with a platform like this and also offer consumers to your platform a way to subscribe and unsubscribe from this service. The plus of this platform is that it is also a permission marketing tool that only allows people who want to be a part of the readership to join and allows them to leave at any time. I recommend most newsletters be short and to the point. Again, care must be taken, as in any other form of communication, to balance the four elements of a successful outdoor show and also promote the sponsors you are working with, without cramming a sales pitch in the mix. This is another relationship where you have to build trust with people you may never meet but who will follow your show and support your sponsors if you treat them right. Presentation is everything.
- Use technology where you can, especially in person. I carry my iPhone, laptop (full-size or mini/net book), and tablet (iPad or Driod tablet) with me for all in-person meetings, especially at trade shows like the SHOT Show. I also carry one or two large 32GB flash drives. I was able to upload one of our sponsor videos onto a prospective sponsor's laptop at SHOT this year and show videos of our shows immediately upon introducing myself to this new potential sponsor. For streaming the same videos on all of these devices, I use Dropbox on my computer and sync it to my app on my mobile devices. Showing your content using technology like this is important, especially if you have a Web-TV based show or any kind of streaming media platform like YouTube. If you are trying to make the point that mobile technology is the wave of the future in watching outdoor TV shows, you better be showing your content using that kind of technology.

In outside sales, one of the ways to gain someone's attention is to "break their pre-occupation" from what they were doing before you showed up and get them interested on why you are there to see them. Sometimes the window to make this happen is rather short so you have to lead to impress. One of my favorite sales stories comes from many years ago when the technology of shatter-proof glass came on the market. When the top salesperson of one of the companies producing this product was asked what he did to make so many sales, he said that he simply asked for a small square sample of the glass product and went to a hardware store and purchased a small hammer. Remember, telling is not selling. He walked into a business, introduced himself and his product, and demonstrated striking the

hammer against the glass shortly after. As soon as the people in the office he was visiting had uncovered their faces from what was sure to be a catastrophe, he had their full attention. The glass obviously didn't break and he proceeded to close the sale right there. The next year, he was a top seller in the company again, even after all of the other sales reps received small squares of glass samples and hammers from the company. This time it was because he allowed the prospective customers to try to break the glass for themselves. While this might be a rather extreme example of breaking the pre-occupation, the point is to gain the full attention of the sponsor and keep them captivated until you leave. You have to make a strong first impression that you mean business and you and your team are serious players in the game of earning a sponsor's favor. Technology will help you but you have to have it and be able to use it well before you can impress anyone with it.

- Have a good Media Kit. I built our show's first media kit from scratch and add to it on a regular basis. We have recently made some changes to the format of our media kit but the basic version of the one I built is at:

<http://www.dustinsprojects.com/Media Kit 2013 Revised.pdf>

There are not many shows that put their media kits online for sponsors or other people to view. I think it should be part of your marketing package everywhere you go. Some media kits are even as simple as a webpage with basic info. The main point of this tool is to be a resource to your current or potential sponsors and show where you have exposure and what kind of audience you have. This is a good place to put your website and social media analytics and all of the places you have a presence. For our show, which is hosted with Homestead, I am able to even pull bar graphs and pie charts to show what pages our viewers are entering in on, what pages are most viewed, how many unique visitors we have visiting our website in a week or month, and more. Some sponsors will be interested in these more than others. I have one sponsor who continually asks for our show's "demographics". What he is really asking is how much of a qualified audience do we have in return for the amount of money he is willing to spend with us. Keep in mind; businesses are in business to stay in business. They are interested in what works and how they can get the best value for their money from their relationship with you. Remember, business IS business at the end of the day.

Sample Page of Mac & Prowler TV Show Media Kit

**Mac & Prowler Network/Regional Television
and Web TV Media Kit**



In most cases sponsors aren't interested in how many "fans" you have of your show, so don't start building a relationship there. They want to know how many qualified viewers you have that will consider buying their product or service. They do not make money and stay in business from casual viewers and "tire kickers". They want paying customers and plenty of them. Your media kit does not have to be fancy. Consider using some graphics, like the logos of the platforms where you are airing your show. If you want a more comprehensive media kit, dedicate a page to each platform you are airing on and cover the statistics of that platform on that page. Be creative. There is not one set way to build a media kit. You want it to impress the sponsor and be something you could print out and take with you to in-person meetings, like at the ATA Show or the SHOT Show where competition is fierce. Don't be afraid to publish your media kit on your website as you never know who will see it. You could even dedicate a page of your website to "Marketing" and

share it there. The statement we have on our show's marketing page, in an effort to attract new sponsors, is this:

“Many companies contact us for sponsorship/advertising opportunities and our standards for quality and integrity are high. We have both product and monetary sponsorship levels available and invite and welcome you to contact us at any time if you would like to partner with us in some way with your product or service.”

Since what we present in our content, in whatever form, is the largest part of creating someone's first impression of us, it is good to create the impression that your show is popular, or in other words, in high demand and short supply. While you don't want to appear elitist or “above it all” like so many popular outdoor shows are doing today, you still want to look like you know what you are doing and that you are effective and efficient at accomplishing your goals. Now I am not trying to sound like companies are banging down our door trying to get us to partner with them, it usually is the other way around, as is the case for most outdoor shows. What I am trying to establish with this statement is that our show and our brand is recognized for featuring “only the best in quality and service” and our standards are high. This is not marketing fluff, they really are. Viewers can trust all of our sponsors. In other words, we, the outdoor show, are in-demand by the viewer.

Indeed, I may only have a handful of companies contact me over a year looking to partner with us while I am proverbially beating the pavement, calling on 100 different potential sponsors. But I want everyone who reads that statement to realize that we paid a price to get where we are at in this industry. You have or will soon pay a price for your success in this industry as well. Regardless of where you are in the process of your show, this should be the same lead you take as well. You are creating your own personal brand and your show's brand by everything you choose to say and do on and off-camera. Choose wisely.

Final Scene

- To set yourself apart from the pack, you have to have content as good, if not better, as what has been done by other shows in the past. If you have a Web TV only show, make sure what you produce looks as good, if not better, than what airs on traditional TV. One of the greatest compliments I have ever received was when a co-worker and friend of mine who lives in the Midwest saw me at a regional meeting and said to some other folks who were gathered around us, “Man, its either watch a hunting show on TV or watch one of Dustin’s hunting videos. The quality is the same!” That meant the world to me that he thought that highly of my work and told others about it. Always seek to improve in every way possible. Whether it is filming video, writing, editing, or any number of other things we do in the outdoor industry, there is always room for improvement.
- As the old saying goes, “If you’re green, you’re growing, if you’re ripe, you rot.” I have seen more than a few businesses, shows, and other players in the industry crash and burn because they thought they had it made in the shade and that they “had arrived.” The learning and growing process should never stop. The world is changing too quickly and I have seen some tragic cases of what happens when people, teams, and businesses don’t embrace that change and adapt to new circumstances. If you are still breathing air, there is still time to make a difference in this world. You were put here for a purpose. What is your message in this life and goal for your show? Never forget that.
- Treat your sponsors, team, and other networking connections in the industry well and they will take care of you. Communicate with these people often and send them clips or episodes they were featured in or articles or blog posts promoting them. Chances are that you will earn their favor by simply staying in touch. Make yourself memorable. Far too many shows have a “Take the Money and Run” attitude with sponsors and other potential sources of help and usually get buried in the dust and wonder what happened since there “show was so good.” Remember, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.
- Have an attitude of gratitude. Consider practicing principals around the Law of Attraction. Books on the market today such as *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne and *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale didn’t get to be best-sellers by accident. While I do not encourage people to go sit in a field and imagine what they want, believing it will come to them without doing any of the hard work to make it happen, I do believe in staying positive and being grateful at all

times. One of the affirmations I have talked about on camera as well as in my written articles is the statement, “I am thankful for all that I have had, for all that I have, and for all that I shall have.” This is something I learned from *The Power of Positive Thinking*. It is a very powerful statement. I am a very blessed person, you probably are too. The issue is that too many people never take notice of what they have and how blessed they really are to be where they are and have what they have, compared to the rest of the world. The truth is that about 80% of our world will never use a cell phone and around one billion people in our world live on \$1 a day and sleep on a dirt floor at night. If you don’t believe me, look up those statistics sometime for yourself. We don’t have it that bad compared to most folks in this world who have really hard problems and circumstances. Audiences today also appreciate your humility and gratefulness. There are too many show hosts who have “made it big” and are pompous jerks on camera about how wonderful they are and all the good they do for the world. That is a major turn off in my opinion. If you practice gratitude daily, regardless of your belief system or belief of a higher power, you will see your life and circumstances change. I know I have.

- Don’t quit your day job. There are show hosts and teams that do an outdoor show for a full-time career. The rest of us, myself included, are part of an outdoor show as a side project. Keep working hard, providing for your family and your daily needs, and do a little every day to promote your show. You may want to work in an outdoor industry career full-time. That is good as well. Build a brand around what you do and create value for yourself by learning new skills and networking with new people. In the long run, you will create value for yourself and potentially be sought after by others who need your help.
- Keep in mind that, for a few years at least, you can take tax deductions for trips, meetings, conventions, and other expenses related to your outdoor show as a business. At some point, the IRS will put a stop on the tax savings if you do not turn a profit and show an income, but regardless, take the savings in what you pay Uncle Sam where you can and while you can. I personally operate on a pretty small budget but I have learned to produce high quality work using technology and creativity.
- Learn something new. As adults, this is a hard thing to do sometimes but one of the best ways to create value for yourself is to create value for others. Zig Ziglar once said, “If you help enough people get what they want, you will get what you want.” This is a philosophy I live by every day. Don’t give up on learning something that might help you or be of value to others in the future. If you know nothing about building websites, designing brochures, public speaking, or a number of other things, seek out the resources to learn these things. In our society today, more so than any other time in history, knowledge is power. The more you know, the more you can be of

value to your team, to the other people around you, and ultimately, to yourself. I consider myself of great value because I know how to do many things that can help many people and I am in high demand for that reason. I am not afraid of a challenge and most of what I know in the realm of technology, I have taught myself. I have a college education but my major was music and education, not business or marketing. Most of what I learned about the outdoor industry came from experience and the mentors I have surrounded myself with to guide me along the way. Out of that experience and ability, I have built my business; focusing on people in the outdoor industry needing these services or needing to learn more about these services for themselves.

You can easily get stuck in a rut if you don't branch out. Many people get comfortable with who they already know and what they have accomplished and stay there. I try to stay out of my comfort zone as much as possible and keep things fresh and new. You never know what will happen if you keep moving, learning, and developing with new people in the industry on a regular basis.

- Don't go broke producing or marketing your show. Remember why you started this adventure in the first place. Keep your costs concentrated on filming and producing quality content first and then focus on places to gain exposure next. Don't try to do too much at one time. You can easily burn yourself out or spread yourself thin if you don't prioritize. If you learn to be creative, you don't have to spend much of your own money upfront. I always use the opportunity and value of what I do for my sponsors and other people in the industry lead the way. I will give an example of what I do next.

It amazes folks when I tell them how little I spend on my hunting and fishing trips because of what I do for people in barter and trade alone. For instance, I work with a taxidermist, hunting ranch, meat processor, and several outdoor product companies. Out-of-Pocket cost for a hunting trip for me these days is equivalent to gas money, a hunting license, and maybe a pit stop on the way to get a snack or a drink. Everything else is done on barter and trade, completely cashless. Not everything in life has to operate on money after all. You can do this as well by finding people who want to do this with you. The deciding factor is if you can provide enough value in return for what you receive with this old world system. Most trades I do come out even more favorably for me and the other party than if I used cash. Most big companies will not be interested in doing business like this but small businesses and start-up companies will consider it if you can make it work for both of you.

You don't need to finance a full camera crew or buy thousands of dollars worth of camera equipment to start out. Use what you have and grow from there. Start from where you are and

do the best and be the best you can using what you have around you. I carry a principle with me that I learned from a leadership class I took many years ago: See what you have, Use what you can, and Do what matters the most.

- One of the main reasons I am able to get so much done in such a short amount of time is with the use of technology and automation. The way I like to look at many of my business relationships in the outdoor industry is that I am the “ghost in the machine.” I let technology work for me in every way possible without sacrificing the “human touch” where it is appropriately needed. Websites and 24/7 streaming video are good examples of this. If I can create a resource that can work for me or my clients without me having to be there in person all the time, I can reach a larger audience and help more people at once than I ever could without these tools. This also allows me to spend more time with my family and outdoors filming new content. A recent comment I received on one of my videos I have on YouTube is a good example of this:

Comment on: [Compound Bow and Crossbow Shooting Fundamentals Video](#)

"Dustin, I think you just sold me on the crossbow. I suffered a stroke during heart surgery and I am unable to cock the bow of a compound, BUT the Crossbow will allow me to play.

I greatly appreciate your time and effort in making this video - - well done.

My 13 year old grandson is happy, because gramps will be able to shoot with him.

I live in Washington State, but you have given me yet one more reason to love Texas.

Goin' shoppin', then shootin'..."

That comment really made my day. I did the math on the time that this guy watched my video and at that exact time I was driving home and picking up my son from school. You never know who you will impact in the world in what you do and what you produce. Seek to make a difference. I was using the Barnett Wildcat C5 crossbow from Barnett Crossbows in this video as they are a sponsor of our show. Guess what I did next? That’s right. I e-mailed our friends over there:

Mr. Barnett,

I just wanted to share this comment from one of my viewers from my YouTube Channel as it really touched me. This was a long video I did covering fundamentals of shooting a compound and crossbow. I was exclusively (of course!) using my Barnett C5 Wildcat during the Crossbow segment. Here is the comment:

(Comment above was pasted here)

That really made my day. Here is the link to the video if you hadn't seen it before. This one I did last summer before the last one I sent you on the BCX and Wildcat C5 I sent you earlier:

<http://youtu.be/gICY8WoeWP4>

For archery hunting this year, my plan is to switch to the new BCX Carbonlite that you were gracious enough to send me this summer. Thanks again for working with us!

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Warmest Regards,

Dustin Vaughn Warncke

Marketing Director

Mac & Prowler

(512) 497-7674

These again are light touches and sponsors enjoy seeing what people are saying about what you are doing with their product. This sponsor replied favorably and told me he shared this with his whole team. This is a way to build and strengthen relationships. Notice again, I wasn't "showy" in my message. I simply relayed the comment from the viewer, added some gratefulness for what they recently sent me, and thanked them for working with us.

- Along those same lines. Don't forget to share positive comments from your viewers on your website. Here are a few I have included on my personal website. These were posted on my YouTube channel for videos I have made for our show over the years:

Comment on: Dustin's Urban Deer Hunt - Two Bucks in One Day

"Just found your channel, really like what you're doing. Getting into crossbow for the first time. Got a Barnett Jackal coming and was looking for broadheads but you solved that problem. Keep up the good videos."

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Comment on: After the Shot - Wounded Wild Game Recovery - Blood Tracking

"Always great to learn more about the sport, especially when it comes to ways to do things smarter and/or safer. I appreciate you sharing your experiences and tips. Thanks!"

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Comment on: Buying a Used Rifle - Do's and Don'ts

"Thanks for the tips! I'm purchasing my first gun soon and this was very helpful."

These kind of unsolicited comments add credibility for what you are doing and are something you can easily share with your sponsors and general audience.

- Play the game to win. While this might sound like a trivial statement, it is one part of my personal mission statement. In whatever I set my mind and attention to, I'm not playing the game to lose. You should live with that same resolve. Don't let this industry or anything else in life eat you alive. I have seen a negative attitude and outlook on the future ruin many outdoor shows, businesses, and even individual people inside and outside of the industry.
- Put forward your best effort in the quality of your work. Whether you are writing, filming, editing, podcasting, or any number of things, put your heart into it and work efficiently and effectively with what you have. One individual I work with in the outdoor industry gets so busy that he ends up doing sloppy work sometimes. There are typos on his website and his media kit has needed attention for some time. Many of his e-mails are also carelessly thrown together without any thought to formatting and proper punctuation. Sloppy and careless work is not acceptable in my opinion. Again, there is no room for it in this industry. I am a perfectionist in some forms of the definition, but I care about the end result of what I am producing for my audience more than anything. You will never have a second chance to make a first impression.
- Remember, we live in the Golden Age of our time. You can pick the world apart with politics, economics, or a number of other factors but the truth is, this a good time to be alive and a part of the outdoor industry. Think about it. Even 100 years ago, many of the things we enjoy every day didn't exist. Competitive markets in the outdoor industry and just about any part of our culture have eliminated most of the garbage products. We now have access to rifles and scopes

which can make 1,000 plus yard shots as easy as locking in on a target and pulling a trigger. You can look up a topographical map of a lake in a few taps on a Smartphone and even sync it with your GPS in less than a minute. We have crossbows that fire over 400 feet per second, the best in broadheads, ammunition, and other accessories. It is easy to take this for granted and many times we do. I am very grateful every day for all of this. The products and equipment I use in the field now are innovations that even my grandparents never dreamed of and they are here. No matter what your experiences in life might be, it is hard to argue that the conveniences and technological advancements we have make living in today's world pretty awesome.

- Get a mentor. As you build your brand and network, find a mentor who can help you. An ideal mentor for you has been or is currently where you want to be and will share their experiences and advise you as you progress in your ventures. As you gain experience, offer a hand up to someone who is just getting started in return. The main goal here is to reach for a hand up for help as well as reach a hand down to someone who needs a hand up from you. The catch is that you have to be able to provide value in both relationships for them to prosper. A good mentor is not afraid to tell you that you are wrong about something or offer suggestions where they are needed. In any case, you don't want a "yes man." My personal mentor and I are both extremely valuable to each other and critical of each other's work. We are not threatened by each other's suggestions and advice and we have a special bond. Most of all the successful people I know in life, especially in the outdoor industry, can name one or more mentors who have helped them along the way.
- Don't get frustrated. There will be plenty of times you proverbially stub your toe or a door gets slammed in your face. So what? Grow a thick skin if you don't have one already. You need it in this game. Remember that you are dealing with an industry that is over-run with huge outdoor industry companies who only care about large and well-known outdoor shows. Who cares? That is certainly not all that exists in the industry. I am better able to grow in the industry and help the industry grow as a whole if I start working with small businesses and start-up companies who are blazing new trails. That is certainly not all I am interested in working with as I work with many big business as well, but it is where I started and continue to work. Few people start an outdoor show or build a team of people with the sole idea of becoming rich and famous. Remember why you are in this game. If you don't have a good enough reason, find one. I have lost count of how many reasons I have to be working in this industry and why I do what I do on camera, in my writing, in my radio interviews, and more. I am alive with passion and fire for what I do and I consider myself blessed and highly favored. Even if things aren't going well, you still count for something at the end of the day if you are growing your brand and providing quality and value to those around you.

- Have outlets and platforms that allow you to be the “ghost in the machine” and be in front of people without actually being there in person. Websites, streaming video, and media kits are good examples of these kinds of platforms. If I wanted to or needed to step away from my outdoor business, our TV show, or any other roles I serve in the outdoor industry, most things would keep running on their own with very little need for attention. This allows me more flexibility and a more simple life while at the same time giving my branding and platform the level of exposure needed for future success. Creating a system like this takes time but it can be done. One of the best books on building self-sustaining systems, businesses, and other platforms is *The 4 Hour Work Week* by Tim Ferris. While I may not agree with everything in his book, his concepts have changed my life and the ways I work dramatically for the better.
- It is said that sales and marketing is a lot like the game of tennis. Those who serve well win. Serve well all of the time. Don’t express your frustrations to anyone but those close to you. Most people don’t care about your problems anyway as they are too consumed with their own issues. Be professional all of the time, regardless of what you are dealing with at home or elsewhere in your life. I make it a point to never let my clients or anyone else I work around “see me sweat” or catch me in bad mood. I present the image of success and winning, even during times when I might be struggling with something. Your polite persistence will win many races in the long run. If you tell the truth and show up on time, you are doing better than most people in this world and you will rise head and shoulders above the crowd after a while. Again, good intentions alone are not enough to get the job done in a highly competitive industry. Only the best survive.
- Never forget to “Ask, Thank, and Tell.” I learned this concept from a leadership workshop I attended when I was a council board leader for my church. The three parts are easy to remember and I have adapted them to our purposes today:

ASK for sponsorship from prospective sponsors and support from sponsors you already have. Ask for help in developing areas you or your team needs to grow in and learn about. Ask for mentors and others who have made it where you want to be to help and guide you.

THANK those around you who have helped you be who you are and get where you are, even if that is not very far at first. This includes your sponsors, regardless of how much they have given you in return for what you have done for them. Thank your audience. Thank God. Always have gratitude for who you are and what you do. Great blessings and opportunities follow a grateful heart. Don’t miss out on these things.

TELL others your story and seek to build networks with new people. Tell sponsors what you

have done and what you are doing for them now as well as what you plan to do with their products and services in the future. You will stand out from the rest of the people they sponsor most likely.

- Be enthusiastic. No matter what kind of personality traits you possess, you can always put energy and enthusiasm into who you are and express passion for what you do. Now you don't want to go over the top here and come off as "faking it" but you want to put your best foot forward. Many people I meet in this industry are pretty bland and very often not very interesting. It is an industry where, unless you are a show host or in a sales market, you don't have to be on your A-Game when you are meeting new people or forming new relationships.

One of my best stories in the industry goes back to the first SHOT Show I attended. I had set up a meeting with a major knife sponsor and the rest of my team, who was there earlier than me, stopped by to confirm their booth location and who we would be meeting with. The first question she asked them upon first meeting the guys was, "Which one of you is Dustin?" When they told her that I was on the way, she commented, "Man, that guy is tenacious!" Why yes, I am. She meant this as a compliment; I bring enthusiasm, energy, and persistence into everything I do in this industry. I stand out from other people who do what I do for those reasons and many more. People enjoy people who are interested in them and what they do. They also enjoy an attitude of gratitude and people who are transparent and not hard to figure out. Personally, I have nothing to hide. I want them to see that. I want to make the best impression on them as possible and be memorable the next time they think of me in future communications. This attitude alone will win you far more victories with meeting new people and networking to help you grow in the future.

- You are "in-demand". Try to avoid saying that you are busy. I learned many years ago, that is about the lamest cop-out excuse there is and it is so over-used in our culture. You can be busy doing nothing and call yourself busy. We all have the same amount of time in a given day. What you choose to do with the hours and minutes boil down to a personal choice. There are plenty of people in this world who would rather sit on the couch, eat a bag of chips, and drink a six-pack of tall boys all day long and still say they are busy. I assume if you are reading this, you have more ambition than that and I do too. I'm not busy, I'm in-demand. This is the phrase I most often use, especially when I get a bit overwhelmed. Be of value and be in-demand. In doing this, you become the "Go-To Guy" people need and desire to help them. My great-grandmother's words often run across my mind, "The world is run by hard work and dedication." Truer words have not been spoken. To that point, it is true that most people in our

culture today are overwhelmed and overextended. Don't get frustrated if you don't hear back from someone right away or if a relationship or plan does not come to fruition as quickly as you would like, if at all.

As I "ride off into the sunset" with this project, I have included my technology resources from a recent webinar I hosted for a company I work with. This two page list of programs I use was very helpful to the attendees of the webinar. With so many changes in technology, this should be a good place to at least get started with a base platform of programs that will help you.

I can't reiterate enough that I think that part of a successful person or platform in any industry is to live each day with a positive attitude, even when things look like they are turning for the worse. They sometimes will. It's not what happens to you, it what you do with what happens to you. Be proactive, not reactive with whatever you deal with in life. It is better to handle the issues that can come up in life on your toes (offensive) rather than on your heels and this is especially true in the realm of the competitive world of the outdoor industry. I consider myself blessed and highly favored and I thank God every day for what I have been blessed with and how I can continually bless in new ways every day.

Thank you again for your time, consideration, and support. Please send me an e-mail or contact me another way if you gained some insight from this resource. I welcome your feedback. My company, Warncke Enterprises, is also here to help with video production, marketing, and other services to help you along the way. Many blessings to you, your team, and your future endeavors.

WARNCKE ENTERPRISES

About the Author

Dustin Vaughn Warncke is an avid outdoorsman and expert in sales and marketing with a specialization in the outdoor industry. Warncke has served as a motivational speaker and master teacher, conducted custom seminars and breakout sessions for national companies, and worked with numerous small businesses in sales, marketing, website development, and business consulting.

Dustin is an expert writer, speaker, web designer, marketer, and small business consultant. He has an unbridled drive for working with start-up outdoor industry products, small businesses, and large companies.

In addition, Dustin also serves as marketing director and co-host for Mac & Prowler's Coyote Tales TV Show and has filmed and been featured in several TV shows featuring hunting-related products as well as rifle, shotgun, and archery "tech tip" segments. He also films, edits, and produces his own outdoor adventures. Many of his video productions have been featured on regional and national television networks in the US.

Dustin is also an avid outdoor writer and book author and is a regular contributor to www.macandprowler.com and www.thehuntingchannelonline.com as well as other websites and blogs. He also serves as a contributor for Texas Fish & Game Magazine, which is currently the largest independently owned outdoor magazine in the nation and the largest and most popular outdoor publication in the state of Texas with circulation of around 100,000 paid subscribers.



Video/Technology Notes

Links to Programs Dustin Uses & Recommends

Video Editing Software: TRAK AX PC PRO

www.trakax.com / YouTube Tutorials: Keyword “TrakAxPC”

Cost: Free Trail 15-Day Trail / Pro Version: \$39

Note on Using TrakAx PC Pro: Be sure to have a permanent folder for your “raw” video and audio you are editing/mixing in the TrakAx program. When and if you move any of the files from the folders or drives TrakAx has indexed to load them, you will have to relocate them again to make edits to your mix. My advice is to have a dedicated folder for all of your files.

Converting Audio/Video Formats: WinFF

www.winff.org / Cost: 100% FREE

HTML Website Editor/Builder: Mozilla’s SEA MONKEY PROJECT “COMPOSER”

www.seamonkey-project.org / Cost: 100% FREE

Dustin uses the Sea Monkey Composer program for making most of his HTML websites like www.dustinsprojects.com

File Syncing/Mobile Cloud Storage: Dropbox

www.dropbox.com / Cost: Free or Pay for More Space

Note: This program keeps all your current files synced and with you ALL THE TIME on your desktop, laptop and with the app on your Smartphone, tablet, or other mobile device. Syncing occurs

automatically when an internet or data connection is present so you can carry your most up-to-date videos and other files with you everywhere you go and show them through this app.

Remote File Backup Service: Carbonite Online Backup

www.carbonite.com / Cost: \$59 - \$99 per year

DVD Authoring Software: DVD FLICK

www.dvdflick.net / Cost: FREE

Make your own DVD's from your video files easily.

Download Video from YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, etc.:

YTD Video Downloader

www.ytddownloader.com

Cost: Basic=Free & Pro=\$29.90 per year

FTP Program for Transferring Large Files: Core FTP LE

www.coreftp.com Cost: LE "Lite" Version=Free

Royalty -Free Music: Video Gear Shop

<http://www.videogearshop.com/Royalty-Free-Music.html>

Audio Recording App for Smartphones: Tape-A-Call

www.tapeacall.com

Recommended Authors for Sales, Marketing and Successful Living

I have been inspired and motivated by many people I know and some I will never meet. We must never forget that the successes we experience in life are a journey. While there are countless sales, marketing, and life success books on the market today, I would like to share some of the authors who have inspired me over the years. Many of these authors who are still living and active today have podcasts, audio books, video content, and other formats aside from traditional books that you can plug into any time to help you build your business and generally live a more successful life. I am a fan of plugging into success and motivational content whenever and wherever possible as it helps me grow and learn and become better at what I do every day. Each author listed below has several books and other content so the list would be long if I went into all of them. I recommend simply keyword searching their names at your local bookstore or on the internet and find some resources that best fit your needs and goals.

- **Brian Tracy**
- **Jeffrey Gitomer**
- **Zig Ziglar**
- **Dale Carnegie**
- **Napoleon Hill**
- **Earl Nightingale**
- **Jim Rohn**
- **Seth Godin**
- **John G. Miller**
- **Dave Ramsey**
- **Robert J. Ringer**