

# Telling Your Story with Video



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# Presented By

Stephen Diehl – News Director

Chris Spencer – Senior Digital Media Producer



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# Middlebury at a Glance

- ▶ 2,500 undergraduates
- ▶ Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey
- ▶ Bread Loaf School of English – Vermont, Santa Fe, Oxford
- ▶ Summer Language Schools – Vermont and Mills College, CA
- ▶ Middlebury Schools Abroad – 37 cities in 17 countries
- ▶ Bread Loaf Writers' Conference - Vermont



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# Today's Workshop

- ▶ Our approach to storytelling
- ▶ Production tips and distribution
- ▶ Equipment demo and interview setup



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# The Story of Middlebury's Cane Tradition



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# Cane Video Strategy

**Goal:** Create a timely story about an important tradition that would resonate with all of our audiences – both on campus and alumni.

**Budget:** Staff time only

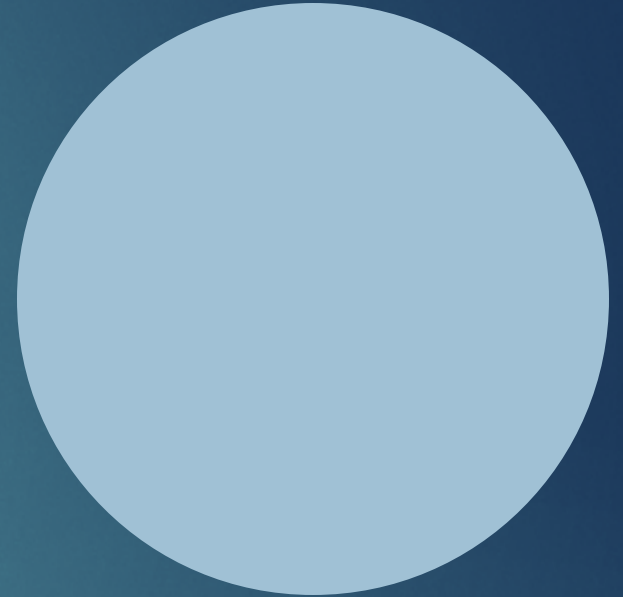
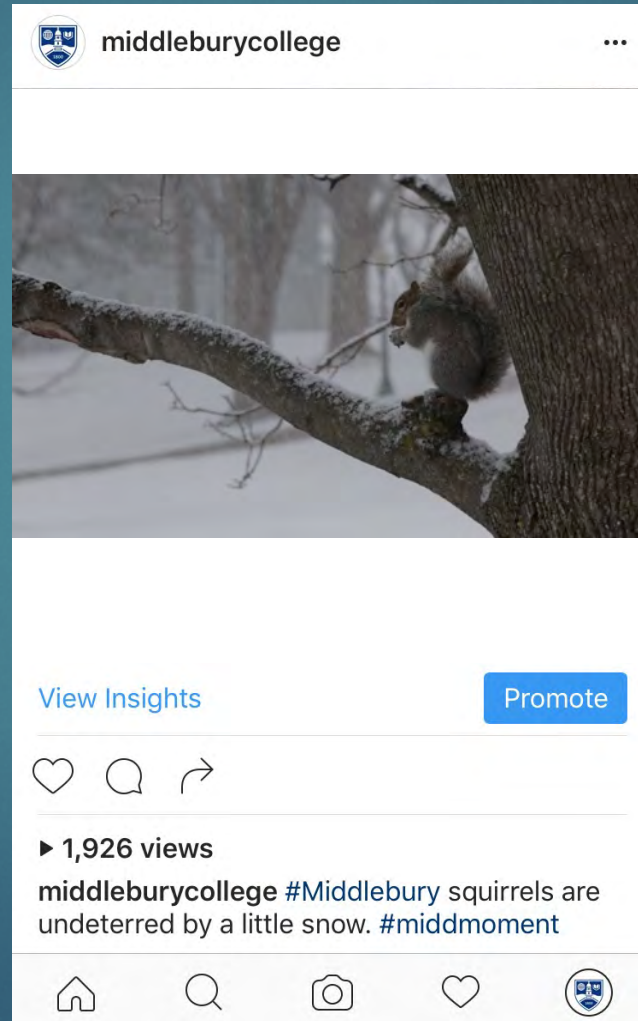
**Challenges:** Getting the history right, choppy interview (reshoot)

**Outcomes:** One of our most shared stories of the year on social media; a valuable tool for our advancement office to use at Alumni Reunion and other gatherings; great way to teach new and prospective students about a Middlebury tradition



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# Middlebury Squirrel



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# Why do we consider this a story?

- ▶ Appeal to current students and alumni
- ▶ Deep roots as a fond memory of going to school at Middlebury
- ▶ Even brief moments in time can tell you a lot about an institution. In this case we can provide those that follow us on social media a simple pleasure.



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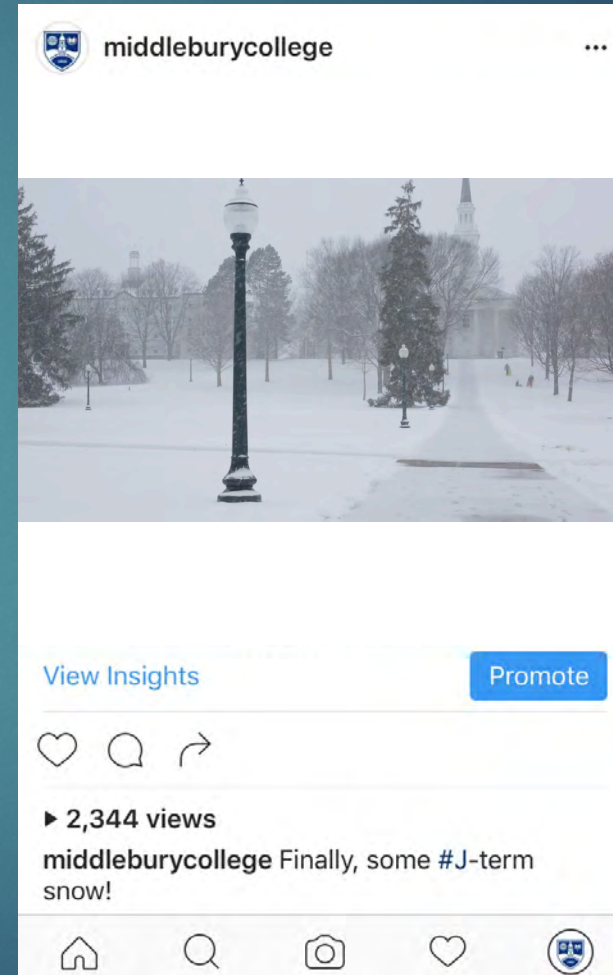
# Sledding on Mead Chapel Hill



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# Sledding on Mead Chapel Hill

- ▶ Strikes a chord with current, former, and prospective students
- ▶ Appeals to many facets of life at Middlebury; winter in Vermont, what students look like, what campus looks like, students having fun



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# J-term Scenes



J-term Gourmet



Adventure Writing



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# J-term Gourmet Video



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# J-Term Scenes: Adventure Writing



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# J-term Videos Strategy

**Goal:** Produce content that's short and manageable, that captured both the academic and experiential sides of J-term.

**Budget:** Staff time

**Challenges:** Winter shooting outside, scheduling, quick turnaround (weekly)

**Outcomes:** Posted weekly videos during J-term (because we kept it simple), created a series rather than one-off; Got extra mileage from video already being shot

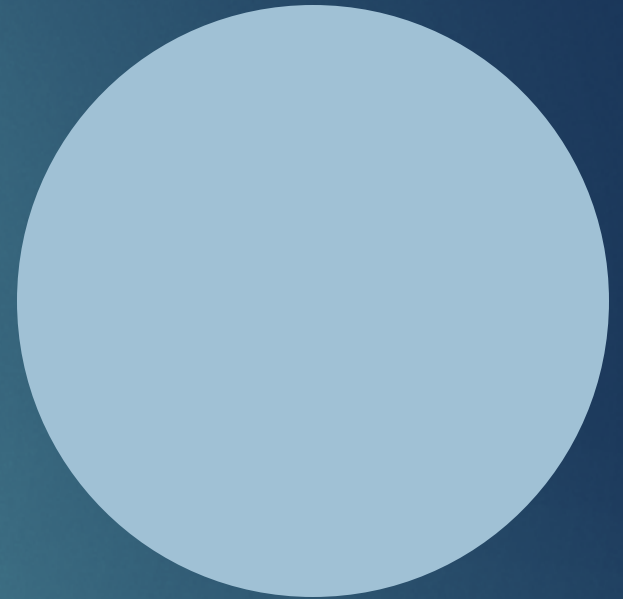


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# What makes a good video story?

- ▶ Simple
- ▶ Highly Engaging
- ▶ Memorable
- ▶ Emotionally Powerful
- ▶ Brand Reinforcing
- ▶ Can Stand Alone
- ▶ Long Shelf Life
- ▶ Timely

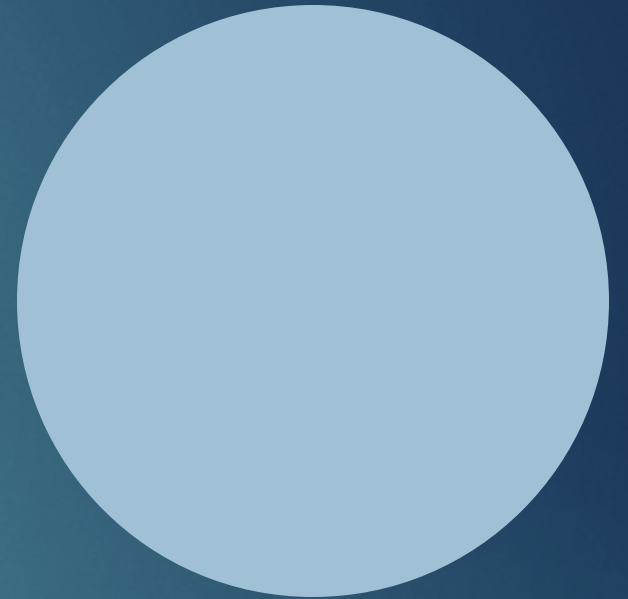


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# Production Tips

- ▶ Framing & Focus
- ▶ Lighting
- ▶ Sound
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Special Effects and Transitions
- ▶ Editing



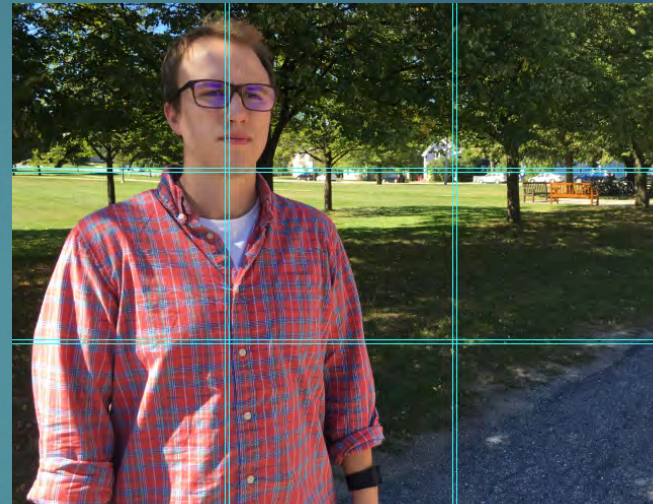
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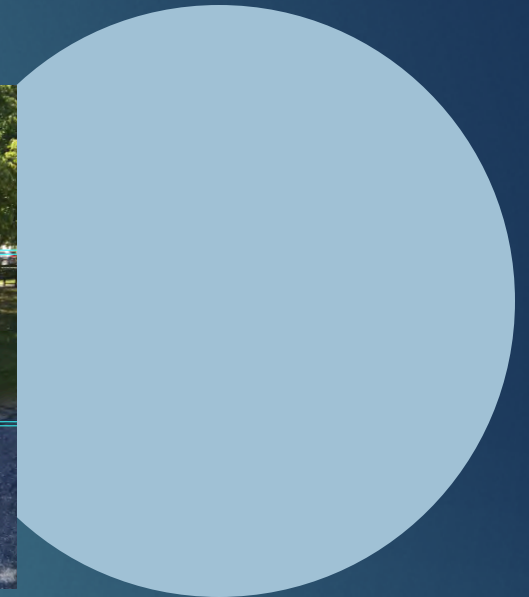
# Rule of Thirds



Almost



Perfect!



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# Horizon Line



Slightly Off



Perfect!



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# Head Room



Not Enough



Too Much



Perfect!



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# Lead Room



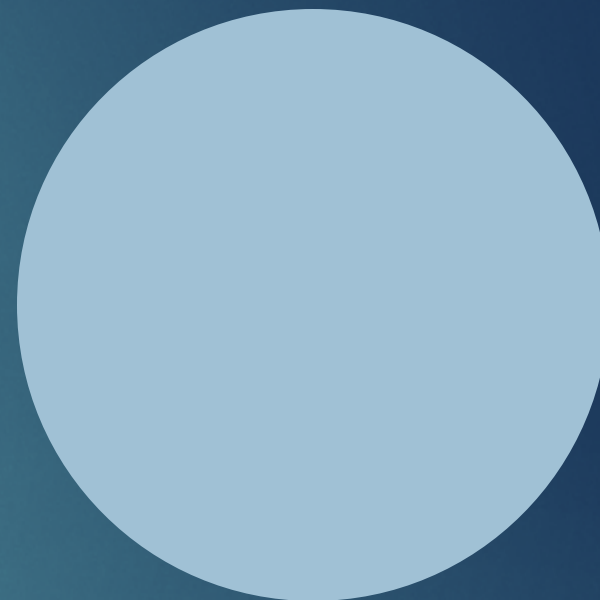
Not Enough



Too Much



Perfect!



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# Focus



Out of Focus



In Focus



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# Proper Exposure



Under Exposed



Properly Exposed



Over Exposed



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# White Balance



Blue Cast



Orange Cast



Perfect!



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# Internal vs. External Mics



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# Music

- ▶ Use caution: Most powerful emotional element
- ▶ Use sparingly
- ▶ Convey the right emotion
- ▶ Don't use as a crutch
- ▶ Avoid popular songs and lyrics unless a part of the story
- ▶ Be sure the music does not overpower the story



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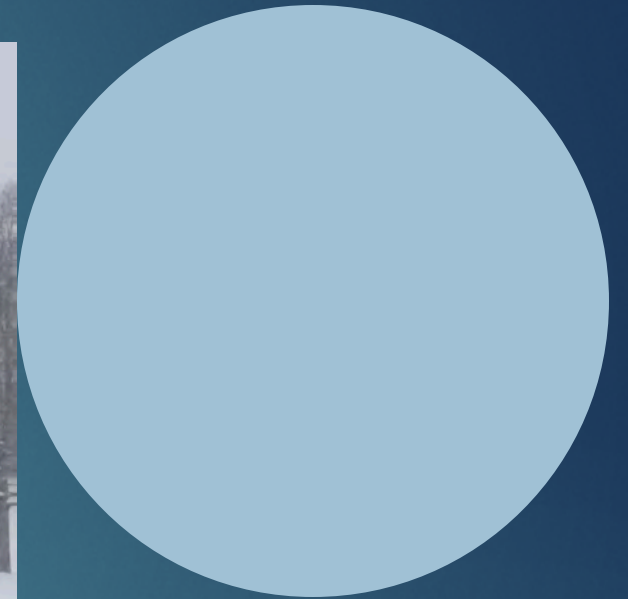


# The Impact of Music



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# Version 1



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# Version 2



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# Version 3



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# Version 4



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# Special Effects and Transitions

- ▶ Use with purpose
- ▶ Limit to avoid being a distraction
- ▶ Keep them simple (cross dissolve, dip to white, hard cut)
- ▶ Don't bite off more than you can chew
- ▶ Remember that story comes first!



# Special Effects and Transitions



Bad use



Good Use



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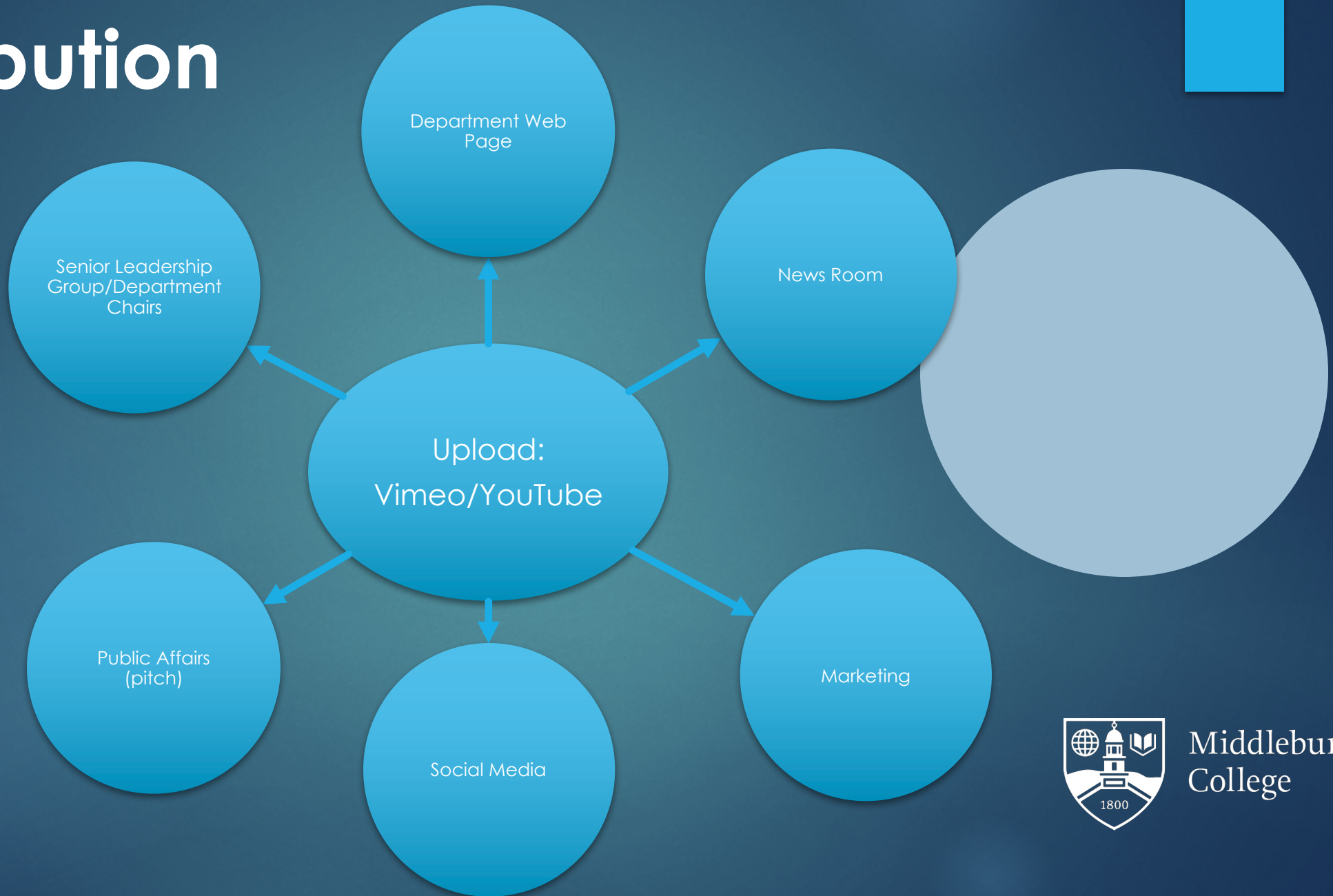
# Editing

- ▶ Where the story comes to life
- ▶ Pacing is everything
- ▶ Work with the action of the camera or activity in the scene and don't linger
- ▶ Keep the overall content short



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# Distribution



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# Our Top Production Tips

- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ If it's not helping you it's hurting you
- ▶ Production is the art of grabbing attention and minimizing distractions



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# Equipment Demo

- ▶ Equipment Petting Zoo
- ▶ Interview Setup
- ▶ Q&A



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# For More Info:

Stephen Diehl: [scdiehl@middlebury.edu](mailto:scdiehl@middlebury.edu)

Chris Spencer: [chriss@middlebury.edu](mailto:chriss@middlebury.edu)

Production Tips Guide: [go.middlebury.edu/productiontips](http://go.middlebury.edu/productiontips)

Production Resources Guide:  
[go.middlebury.edu/productionresources](http://go.middlebury.edu/productionresources)

Today's Presentation:  
[bit.ly/ucdastoryworkshop](http://bit.ly/ucdastoryworkshop)



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