

Hamlett Films

Telling important stories, helping people learn

Hamlett Films

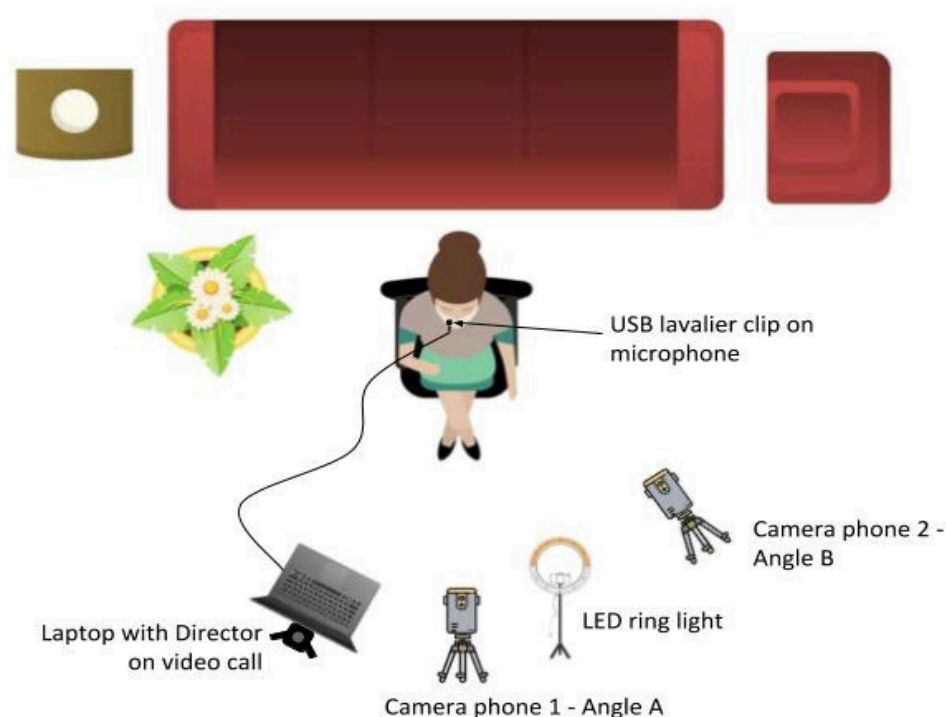
Shooting Remotely During the Covid-19 Pandemic

With the uncertainty that the pandemic has brought upon capturing live filmed assets, Hamlett Films has researched leading technologies and approaches to deliver remote captured or "Self shot" content. This enhances their AV offering without the risk of crew working on location.

This approach works brilliantly for interviews. It achieves consistent results with a simple but effective approach to direct remote interviews with contributors.

This document breaks down the technical and practical aspects of our approach. It shows examples of how contributors can easily adapt their home video calling setup into a visually cleaner and consistent solution.

The simplest approach is to use equipment the contributor already has such as an iPhone, iPad or similar. We start by working directly with our contributors to get the best out of their mobile by checking through settings and specifications to enable 4k video capture. We then send out easy to set up stands and lights suitable for capturing the content we're looking for and support our contributor to set up the perfect backdrop and lighting for their interview. We also provide them with a USB attached lavalier microphone to enhance audio quality. A lavalier microphone is a small, discreet microphone that clips onto the contributors clothing to provide broadcast quality audio.



Example image of proposed setup

We use a laptop with video conferencing to direct the interview. If the contributor does not have suitable devices then these are hired and couriered to them. Along every step of the way, our production mentor, director of photography and director are on hand to advise on exactly how to set things up effectively with no stress to the contributor.

We are mindful that not everyone may have the perfect backdrop for filming in their home space. With this in mind, we advise and supply a suitable colourama backdrop. The colour and design of this is agreed ahead of time to match the tone and branding of the material. We have achieved excellent results with this approach on previous shoots.



Example from our TUC "Real change" videos: <https://vimeo.com/247287284>

We are sensitive that not every contributor will have had experience in delivering responses directly to camera in this way. With this in mind we spend some time ahead of the shoot mentoring and preparing our interviewees how best to approach this.

Our excellent trainers have worked with the likes of the BBC academy and Creative Skillset and have a wealth of experience in getting people confident and camera ready ahead of filming. Once the interview is complete, we advise the contributor on uploading their captured footage to our secure online server. The footage is then backed up and our editors can begin to review and organise the material. Using motion graphics, cutting between cameras or manipulating the footage creatively, giving us a polished final product.

With careful curation of this setup, we can achieve excellent results such as the example below, recently filmed by our DOP and editor for Ivy House:



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KH8Q8YGS1_k&feature=youtu.be

Of course, this method of video capture is a fantastic way of ensuring the best possible results with the limitations of self made content. However it does not compare to a professional videographer with a cinema grade camera, lighting package and a pro sound recordist. Hamlett Films stays up to date with and follows government regulations and guidelines to approach live productions safely during the pandemic and our production manager is fully trained in COVID compliant filming and best practice.

We recently completed a shoot for the Open University for the Welsh Government's PGCE training course which was handled within current guidelines and was very successful. We filmed in the exterior of a Welsh primary school, interviewing teachers with a minimal crew while social distancing. If it is possible for us safely to achieve your AV brief within guidelines then we are prepared to risk assess and manage that aspect of production if necessary.