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# VISUAL MEDIA IN PUBLIC ADVOCACY



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## **Visual Media in Public Advocacy**

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# VISUAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC ADVOCACY THROUGH IT

## Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding visual media
- ▶ Understanding public advocacy through visual media

## 1. WHAT IS VISUAL MEDIA

Visual media refers to any form of media that is primarily visual in nature, using images, graphics, videos, or animations to convey information, tell a story, or communicate a message. It encompasses various mediums such as television, film, photography, advertising, graphic design, digital art, and more.

Visual media relies on the visual elements, including color, composition, movement, and visual effects, to engage and captivate the audience. It leverages the power of visuals to evoke emotions, convey ideas, and create immersive experiences.



Visual media refers to any form of media that uses visual elements to communicate a message or tell a story.

With advancements in technology, visual media has become more accessible and widespread. It plays a significant role in entertainment, advertising, education, journalism, and various other fields. For example, television shows and movies entertain and engage audiences through compelling visuals and storytelling techniques, while advertising campaigns utilize visual media to promote products and services effectively.

Overall, visual media is a broad term that encompasses any form of media that relies primarily on visual elements to communicate and engage with the audience.

## 2. PUBLIC ADVOCACY THROUGH VISUAL MEDIA

Visual Media is a particularly effective tool for public advocacy because it can evoke emotions, capture attention, and convey complex message in a concise and engaging manner.

Public advocacy through visual media refers to the use of visual communication tools and techniques to promote and support a particular cause, raise awareness about social or political issues, and advocate for change. It involves leveraging the power of visual media to evoke emotions and engage the public in a meaningful way.

**IMPORTANCE**

Visual media has the ability to capture emotions and tell stories in a way that is difficult to replicate through text.

**Effective way to engage**  
with the audience.

**Impact has increased**  
due to the rise of social media.

**Visual media can -**

- Raise awareness
- Humanize complex debates
- Initiate dialogue
- Influence public opinion and policy
- Drive social change



As visual media has the ability to capture emotions and tell stories in a way that is difficult to replicate through text, It aims to create a visual impact that sparks conversations and drives action on an issues. It harnesses the persuasive and emotive power of visual communication to influence public opinion and policy, shape narratives, Humanize complex debates, and promote positive change in society.

Like any other tool of public advocacy visual media also has it's Pros and Cons. in other words along with the benefits, there are some challenges too in the use of visual media for public advocacy.



## Benefits of visual media in public advocacy

**Increased impact:** Visual media has the ability to evoke strong emotions and create a lasting impact on people’s minds. It can also convey complex ideas and information quickly and easily.

**Accessible to all:** Visual media is often more accessible to people who may have limited literacy or language skills. It can also be used to reach people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

**Versatility:** Visual media can take many different forms, from static images to animated videos, making it a versatile tool for public advocacy.

**Cost-effective:** Depending on the medium, visual media can be relatively inexpensive to produce and distribute, making it accessible to individuals and organizations with limited resources.

## CHALLENGES

**Requires careful planning,  
creativity, and attention**

### Limited attention span

Bombarding of visual information every day

### Visual literacy

Different skills of interpreting visual media

### Misinterpretation

Can be interpreted in different ways by different people

## Challenges associated with public advocacy through visual media

**Creative challenge:** Visual media requires careful planning, creativity, and attention to ensure that the message is clear, accessible, and effective.

**Limited attention span:** People are bombarded with visual information every day, making it difficult to capture their attention and hold it for an extended period.

**Visual literacy:** Not everyone is equally skilled at interpreting visual media, so advocates need to ensure that their message is clear and accessible to all.

**Misinterpretation:** Visual media can be interpreted in different ways by different people, so advocates need to be careful to ensure that their message is not misunderstood or misinterpreted.

## 3. TOOLS OF VISUAL MEDIA

public advocacy through visual media can involve a wide range of tools and techniques, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Choosing the right tool for the job depends on the audience, the message, and the desired outcome. Whatever tools are used, it's essential to ensure that the message is clear, accessible, and effectively communicates the advocate's goals and values. Here are some common tools of visual media -

## TOOLS OF VISUAL MEDIA

Public Advocacy through visual media can involve a variety of tools and techniques



**Photos:** Public advocacy through photos is a powerful way to tell a story and communicate an issue in a way that is visually compelling and emotionally engaging. Photos can capture the essence of an issue or event, evoke a strong emotional response, and inspire action.

**Videos:** Videos can be used to tell a story, explain a concept, or provide an overview of an issue. They can be produced in various formats, such as animated explainer videos, interviews, or short documentaries.

**Infographics:** Infographics are a popular way to present complex information in a visually appealing and easy-to-understand format. They can be used to highlight key statistics, convey a narrative, or explain a process.

**Social media graphics:** Graphics designed specifically for social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can help advocates quickly reach a wider audience. They can include eye-catching images, quotes, and hashtags that help spread the message and inspire engagement.

**Posters and flyers:** Traditional forms of visual media like posters and flyers can still be an effective tool for public advocacy. They can be used to promote events, rallies, or protests, or to spread awareness about an issue in a specific community.

**Public art:** Public art installations can be a powerful way to draw attention to an issue and spark public dialogue. Artistic interventions like murals, installations, or sculptures can help communicate a message in a visually compelling way.

# ADVOCACY THROUGH PHOTO & VIDEO

## Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding photo & videography as a advocacy tool
- ▶ Understanding Technical aspects of photo & videography

## 1. PHOTO AS AN ADVOCACY TOOL

There is a saying that ‘a picture is worth thousand words’, – but what does it mean? It is a well-known phrase in multiple languages meaning that complex and sometimes multiple ideas can be conveyed by a single still image. you’ll learn more from the photo in a matter of seconds than reading a few words describing it. A good photo can capture the essence of an issue or event, evoke a strong emotional response, and inspire action, so a photo can be a powerful way to tell a story and communicate an issue in a way that is visually compelling and emotionally engaging.

Here are some ways that public advocacy through photos can be used:

### PHOTOS

A picture is worth  
a thousand words

### SOME WAYS

Photojournalism  
Documentary Photography  
Social Media Story  
Exhibitions and Galleries  
Incorporation in Public Art



**Photojournalism:** Photojournalism is a type of visual storytelling that uses photographs to document events, people, and issues. Photojournalists can capture the reality of a situation and provide a powerful visual representation of what is happening.

**Documentary photography:** Documentary photography is a form of visual storytelling that aims to document and chronicle a particular subject or issue. Photographs can be used to create a visual narrative that helps viewers understand the issue in more depth.

**Social media story:** Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook have become important tools for public advocacy through photos. A post with an image captures more attention of the viewers and stuck in the memory for longer. Advocates can use photos to create awareness, generate engagement, and inspire action on a particular issue.

**Exhibitions and galleries:** Exhibitions and galleries provide a physical space to showcase photographs and create a platform for public engagement and discussion. This can be an effective way to raise awareness and inspire action around an issue.

**Incorporation in public art:** Public art installations that incorporate photographs can be a powerful way to draw attention to an issue and spark public dialogue. For example, a series of portraits of people affected by a particular issue can be displayed in a public space to help create awareness and inspire action.

## 2. A GOOD PHOTO

There are a few concepts that help guide photographers through every decision that goes into a single photograph. These basics of photography gives us an idea of what makes a good photo, technically. But a photograph can be technically accurate on all counts, with good composition, exposure, focus, light, and timing — and still be boring. As renowned photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson said, ‘It is an illusion that photos are made with the camera... They are made with the eye, heart and head’, a good photo communicates a fact that touches the heart and inspire to think about it.



communicates a fact,  
touches the heart

### BEFORE CLICK

Think of the message  
Know your audience  
Choose the right subject

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A public advocate should think about some important points before taking a photo. It is important to understand the message that you are trying to convey. Think about the key points that you want to communicate and the emotions that you want to evoke. Consider the audience that you are trying to reach and the context in which the photo will be seen. This will help you to choose the right subject, setting, and style for your photo. And most important the subject of your photo should be relevant to the message that you are trying to convey. Consider whether people or objects will be the most effective subject, and whether they should be in motion or still.

### 3. ADVOCACY THROUGH VIDEO

Public advocacy through video is an effective way to engage and educate a broad audience. Videos can be used to tell stories, explain complex issues, provide visual demonstrations, and inspire action. However, it is important to ensure that videos are engaging, informative, and accurate, and that they respect the dignity and rights of all individuals depicted. Advocates should also consider the audience and the intended outcome when creating videos for public advocacy purposes.

Here are some ways that public advocacy through video can be used:

## VIDEOS

Establish authority and a more personal feel to your message.

### SOME WAYS

- Documentary Videos
- Explainer Videos
- Social Media Videos
- Livestreams
- Video Campaigns
- Short films



**Documentary videos:** Documentary videos can be used to provide an in-depth exploration of a particular issue, from multiple perspectives. This type of video can be highly effective in raising awareness and promoting understanding of complex issues.

**Explainer videos:** Animated or other kind of explainer videos can be used to explain complex issues or processes in a clear, engaging way. This type of video can be highly effective in educating a broad audience.

**Social media videos:** Short, engaging videos are highly effective on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Social media videos can be used to quickly grab attention and inspire action on a particular issue.

**Livestreams:** Livestreams can be used to bring real-time coverage of events or protests to a broad audience. This type of video can be highly effective in creating a sense of community around an issue and inspiring action.

**Video campaigns:** Video campaigns can be used to create a sense of urgency around a particular issue and inspire action. For example, a video campaign might involve creating a series of videos that highlight different aspects of an issue and call on viewers to take action.

**Short films:** Through compelling storytelling, thought-provoking visuals, and authentic performances, short films shed light on various



topics such as human rights, environmental sustainability, gender equality, or mental health. They spark conversations, challenge societal norms, and ignite empathy, fostering a sense of collective responsibility. By combining artistry with activism, short films have the potential to mobilize communities, amplify marginalized voices, and create a lasting impact on audiences, fostering a more informed and compassionate society.

#### 4. A GOOD VIDEO

A good video is like a interesting way of storytelling. However, it is subjective and can vary based on personal preferences and the intended purpose of the video but there are certain qualities that often contribute to a video being considered “good” by a broader audience. Before you start shooting, make sure you know the message you want to convey. Consider your audience and what message will resonate with them. You may want to write a script or outline key points to help guide you. Choose the right location, light, background, and consider the sound quality during the shoot. The location and background should be relevant to the message. Good sound is as important as good visuals. Make sure you are in a quiet location or consider using a microphone to ensure clear sound.



A good video captures the viewer’s attention and maintains their interest throughout. It communicates ideas, emotions, or information in a clear



and concise manner, ensuring the audience understands the intended meaning, if you are making a short film then It understands the viewers' interests, preferences, and needs, delivering content that is relevant, relatable, and valuable to them.

Whether it is a short film or documentary or social media video most important part of a good video is editing, the process of selecting and arranging footage to create a final video. This involves cutting out unnecessary footage, adding transitions, and adjusting color and sound. When editing your video, be sure to choose the most compelling shots and arrange them in a way that tells a story. Add any necessary text or graphics to help illustrate your message. A thoughtfully edited video tells a perfect story, and storytelling techniques can help engage the viewer and create an emotional connection.

You can watch a short film titled 'Batti' for example.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-PXNnaatx4>

Make sure your video is accessible to everyone. Use captions or subtitles for the hearing-impaired. providing multilingual audio is a expensive job, but there are some free and low cost tools where you can generate subtitles in other languages, explore them if multilingual support is required or you can ask within you network if someone can translate the subtitle/caption in other languages.

# MUST KNOW THINGS FOR PHOTO & VIDEOGRAPHY

## Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding basic techniques of photo & videography

### 1. BASIC TECHNIQUES

Photography techniques refer to various methods and approaches that can be used to capture images and videos. By mastering these techniques, you can create visually appealing and technically sound images and videos. Here are some basic techniques to help you improve your skills -

#### RULE OF THIRDS

Dividing the frame into thirds, horizontally and vertically



**Rule of Thirds:** The rule of thirds is a basic principle in photography that involves dividing the frame into thirds both horizontally and vertically. This creates a grid of nine squares, with the main subject placed at one of the intersections. The rule of thirds can also be applied to videography. By dividing the frame into thirds, you can create a more balanced and visually interesting shot.



## COMPOSITION

Arrangement of elements in the frame

Subject  
Background  
Other

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**Composition:** Composition is the arrangement of elements in a photograph. It involves considering the placement of the subject, the background, and other elements to create a balanced and visually appealing image. Like in photography, shot composition is the arrangement of elements within the frame in videos. A well-composed shot can make a video more visually appealing and engaging.

**Exposure (Aperture, Shutter Speed and ISO):** Exposure in photography refers to the amount of light that reaches the camera sensor, and it is influenced by three key factors: shutter speed, ISO, and aperture.



## EXPOSURE

Amount of light

## SHUTTER SPEED

Time to capture the light

## ISO

Sensitivity to light

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Shutter speed determines the duration of time that the camera's shutter remains open, affecting the amount of light captured and motion blur in the image. Adjusting shutter speed is important for capturing fast-moving subjects or creating a sense of motion in a still image.

ISO measures the sensor's sensitivity to light, with higher ISO values amplifying sensor's sensitivity to light can be amplified but it also introduce noise in the image. Adjusting ISO is important for shooting in low-light conditions or to create a specific mood or effect.

Aperture controls the size of the lens opening, affecting the amount of light entering the camera.

Balancing these three settings is crucial for achieving proper exposure. Adjusting one parameter may require compensating changes in the others to maintain the desired exposure levels and achieve the desired creative effect.



**White balance:** White balance is the process of adjusting the colors in an image to appear natural under different lighting conditions.

**Depth of field:** Depth of field is the distance between the nearest and furthest objects in a photograph that appear sharp. Controlling depth of field is an important technique for creating a focused and visually

interesting image.

**Lighting:** Lighting is a crucial factor in photography, and it can make or break an image. Consider the direction and quality of light, and use techniques such as backlighting or natural light to create a mood or atmosphere. Proper lighting is essential for creating a high-quality video.

**Audio quality:** Audio quality is just as important as visual quality in videography. Use a quality microphone and consider the acoustics of the location to ensure clear and crisp sound.

**Camera movement:** Camera movement can add interest and energy to a video. Techniques such as panning, tilting, and tracking can help create a sense of motion and keep the viewer engaged.

**B-roll footage:** B-roll footage refers to additional footage used to supplement the main footage. This can include close-up shots, establishing shots, and other footage used to add context and interest.

## 2. TIPS FOR MOBILE PHOTOGRAPHY

Photo & Videography is getting better n better thesedays and everyone can be creative with just a mobile in hand. Ofcourse there limitations in mobile photography, such as not everyone can afford a high-end mobile phone suitable for photography, and low & mid range mobile phones can't produce the results compared to an DSLR. but here is 10 basic steps which can improve the quality of your image or video shot by the camera of your existing mobile phone -



**Clean the lens:** Use a soft, dry cloth to clean the lens of your mobile device. This will help ensure that your photos are clear and sharp.

**Choose the right mode:** Most mobile devices have different camera modes, such as portrait mode, night mode, and panorama mode. Choose the appropriate mode for your shot to get the best results. You can use Pro/Manual mode to adjust the scene as per your choice.

**Use natural light:** Natural light is usually the best source of light for photography. Position your subject near a window or outside in the shade. Avoid using the flash as it can cause harsh shadows and wash out the image.

**Compose your shot:** Use the gridlines in your camera settings to help you compose your shot using the rule of thirds. Position your subject off-center for a more interesting and dynamic shot.

**Focus on your subject and Adjust the exposure:** Most mobile cameras have an exposure control that allows you to adjust the brightness of your photos. Use this feature to get the perfect exposure for your shots. Tap on your subject on the screen to focus on it and set the exposure. This will help ensure that your subject is in focus and the image is sharp.

**Hold the camera steady:** Use both hands to hold your mobile device steady while taking photos. Alternatively, use a tripod or a stabilizer to keep the camera steady.

**Take Multiple Shots:** It will be helpful to choose a perfect image if you take multiple shots of the same scenario.

**Use external microphone:** If possible, use an external microphone for better audio quality. This can be especially important if you are filming in a noisy environment.

**Edit the Shot:** Whether it is a image or a video, edit thoughtfully before sharing it. Consider the narrative structure and use visuals and sound to support the story. There are several free apps for mobile where you can remove the unnecessary elements from the shot, edit and combine multiple shots, adjust colour and audio, add filters & transitions etc.

### 3. REMEMBER THE ETHICS



Advocates should also consider the audience and the intended outcome when selecting and using photographs for public advocacy purposes. It is important to ensure that the photographs are used ethically and with respect for the subjects depicted. When you are taking photos of an individual, it is important to consider the issues of privacy and consent. Ensure that you have permission to take and use the photo and respect the dignity and privacy of the individuals depicted.



# OTHER FORMS OF VISUAL MEDIA

## Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding infographics, social media graphics, posters, flyers, and public art and their common factors.

Beyond photo and video, Infographics, social media and motion graphics, posters, flyers, and public art are all visual communication tools that can be used for public advocacy. Here are some key features of each:

## 1. INFOGRAPHICS

Infographics are a visual representation of data or information. They typically include charts, graphs, icons, and text to convey complex information in a simple and engaging way.



Visual representation of data or information

### FEATURES

- Clear and concise message
- Effective use of data and statistics
- Use of colour, typography and icons
- Easy to read layout and design
- A clear CTA



Key features of infographics include:



- ▶ A clear and concise message
- ▶ Effective use of data and statistics
- ▶ Use of color, typography, and icons to enhance visual appeal
- ▶ Easy-to-read layout and design
- ▶ A clear call to action (CTA) to encourage further engagement

## 2. SOCIAL MEDIA AND MOTION GRAPHICS

Social media graphics are visual content designed specifically for social media platforms. They can include images, videos, GIFs, and animations to engage viewers and communicate a message.



Key features of social media graphics include:

- ▶ Eye-catching visuals that stand out in a busy social media feed
- ▶ A clear and concise message that can be understood quickly
- ▶ Effective use of hashtags and social media handles to reach a wider audience
- ▶ Use of a consistent brand identity to reinforce brand recognition
- ▶ A clear CTA to encourage further engagement and action

*Example: Human Rights Explained In A Beautiful Two Minute Animation*  
[youtube.com/watch?v=pRGhrYmUjU4](https://youtube.com/watch?v=pRGhrYmUjU4)

### 3. POSTERS & FLYERS

Posters & Flyers are printed visual communications designed to be displayed in public spaces. They can be used to raise awareness about a cause, promote an event, or convey a message. As posters can be displayed in public spaces, flyers can be distributed directly to the people or through direct mail.

**POSTERS & FLYERS**

Designed to display in public space  
Used to promote an event, convey a message, raise awareness

**FEATURES**

- Eye-catching design
- Clear and concise message
- Use of colour, typography, and imagery
- Use of negative space
- A clear CTA



Key features of posters & Flyers include:

- ▶ A clear and concise message that can be understood quickly
- ▶ Effective use of color, typography, and imagery to attract attention
- ▶ Use of negative space to create a clear and easy-to-read layout
- ▶ Eye-catching design that stands out in public spaces
- ▶ A clear CTA to encourage further engagement and action

### 4. PUBLIC ART:

Public art refers to any artwork that is displayed in public spaces, such as streets, parks, and buildings etc. Public art can take many forms, including sculptures, murals, mosaics, installations, live painting, and performances. The purpose of public art is to engage and inspire communities, promote

social and cultural values, and contribute to the aesthetic and social experience of public spaces. Public art can also serve as a tool for civic engagement and dialogue, addressing important issues and concerns of the community. Public art is often funded by government agencies, private organizations, or through public-private partnerships. Many cities and towns have public art programs that commission and manage public art projects. Many cultural organizations and social activists are also doing the same with the support of public funding.



## PUBLIC ART

Any artwork that is displayed in public place

Sculpture | Mural | Mosaic |  
Installation | Exhibition | Performance

### PURPOSE

awareness  
Civic engagement & dialogue  
Promoting values and change  
Addressing important issues and concerns

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Key features of public art:

- ▶ A clear purpose of civic engagement and dialogue
- ▶ A clear notion of promoting values and change
- ▶ Creating a sense of place
- ▶ Creating a space for collaboration and togetherness.

## 5. COMMON FACTORS

every form of visual media has its own key benefits and differs from each other on the ground of presentation, but have some common factors too. all of them requires some skills. As photo & video requires basic techniques to shoot a good photo or video, printable visual media like Infographics,

poster, or flyer requires basic knowledge of graphic designing which includes understanding of white/breathing space, typography, colours, image formats, margins & marks, designing softwares etc.

a clear message with crisp information, call to action, relevant imagery are the key ingredients of any printable visual media.

beyond that technical aspect all types of visual media can't be created without creativity and concern. creativity is the key to attract people and push them towards the issue to think about it and initiate dialogue. if a designer is aware about the issue and feels connected, He/She can bring some new ideas in the presentation of the message.

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Public Advocacy Initiatives for Rights and Values in India (PAIRVI) is a capacity building and advocacy support organization working at the intersections of rights, development and sustainability. It works with small grassroots organizations and community based groups to enhance their understanding on development discourse and capacity to respond appropriately.

PAIRVI also works with a pan Indian coalition on climate and environmental justice, MAUSAM (Movement for Advancing Understanding on Sustainability and Mutuality), previously Beyond Copenhagen.

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