

Self Reflection (1080 words)

I challenged myself from the very start with this project by taking on a live project funded by a small company. This first decision I made instantly capped the choices I could make but I believe this was good as it challenged me to think outside of the box to deliver a realistic, fully deliverable campaign. When planning out my ideas I had to consider the resources it would take to create each deliverable, the reach of my client and whether my ideas would send the correct message to the potential customers. In my opinion this section of the project was a success, as I did successfully meet all of the criteria above.

Throughout the duration of this project I prided myself in keeping a clear and consistent line of communication with my point of contact from X-Gamer. As I have worked with X-Gamer in the past as their videographer I was already in contact with them before the project started via Discord. I chose to continue to use Discord for this project as it was a familiar and already established line of communication allowing us to fully focus on the project. The communications started off as planned, we held a couple of initial meetings before the project was green lighted and then mostly preceded to use instant messaging from there. However, on the 11th of November things took an unexpected turn, with X-Gamer having to fight legal battles my project was left out to dry. I didn't and still haven't heard back from X-Gamer since November 11th. Unfortunately, at this point I had already committed to my ideas however, so instead of giving up I made sure to make the best of the situation.

Due to the live nature of the project falling through, whilst there were a lot of unfortunate consequences there was also a silver lining in that I had more time to work and develop my ideas. Whilst the time gained didn't make up for the loss in both resources and funding, it did help to balance the project a bit and allow me to make the best of the situation. The main thing I had to adapt to with this situation was going from a reasonable budget to absolutely none whatsoever. The budget was planned to be used for things such as expenses, studio hire, drone hire & web design help. Whilst I wasn't able to solve all of these issues I was able to find solutions which filled the holes as best as I could manage.

Good locations were crucial for my films to look cinematic & professional. I really liked the first location I used for all the outdoor shots. Whilst it wasn't perfect as it wasn't quite the right colour palette nor as rocky as I would have liked – it was still very good and I really liked the outcome of the shots taken there. I was less impressed with my second choice of location – a living room. In hindsight the choice of a living room location made the video feel too safe and not very exciting. I would have much preferred to shoot in a large empty room or dark studio space to create an infinity space feel in which the only subject that mattered was my actor. Although, even after thinking about this location further I still don't know where I would have been able to secure a location which meets these standards for absolutely zero budget. Another key element of my film was my choice of actor. The original plan was to include a pro player as the actor which would add extra depth to the campaign as well as draw attention to it. However, failing this it was planned to hire an actor with correct look; white male, 18 – 25, rugged facial hair, outdoorsy. Both of these plans fell through however due to the events previously described, so with no budget or no actor availability due to the need to shoot around winter time I was left with my last resort of using anyone I could find regardless of appearance or acting experience. Whilst the end result wasn't terrible, the actor I used was far too young for the role and would be the kind of character that would inspire younger potential customers to look up to him. He also lacked acting experience which didn't start off too badly, I actually think for no acting experience he did a good job. Towards the end of the main film, the last shot in particular it was noticeable that he wasn't an actor as the correct tone wasn't given off by the way he acted – and this was after several retakes of the shot.

Not all flaws in my film were down to funding however. I believe that my cinematography for the indoor scenes was very poor in hindsight, I could have lit the scene so much better in order to reduce the noise in the shot and to create a more interesting composition. One shot in particular which I strongly dislike is the final product shot. The lighting is so bad because it doesn't make the

drink look exciting and powerful but more flat and dull. I needed to change the lighting up more for this shot by adding a light that shines directly through the drink and by repositioning the key light so it didn't give a nasty glare to the shaker. This shot was arguably one of the most important shots in the film, as it shows off the actual product so I'm very disappointed with my execution and it's not something that can be blamed on lack of resources.

Despite not quite hitting the mark in all areas I do believe that overall I produced a reasonable campaign which would serve as a good model to build upon and finesse in the future if the right circumstances were to appear. I was most impressed by the way I created a very realistic campaign – it's much easier for a company such as Coke who have near infinite resources to create a creative campaign but it's much harder to think outside of the box on an extreme budget. Although I'm very disappointed that my project did not get to see the light of day, I'm confident enough to say that if the unfortunate circumstances hadn't have taken place then I would have been able to deliver a campaign that would have captivated the X-Gamer community through introducing and involving them to the brand ideologies.