

## PRE PRODUCTION CHECKLIST

### Office Set-up

- Organize the filing system; create files for each item. You can do some in advance; others are best created as you need them so you don't have a lot of unused empty files. Keep it in a file box with a lid that can be locked or at least closed securely and that can travel with you in a car.
- Purchase or borrow a computer; install software programs - Quicken, Excel, Word, (or equivalents) and EP Budgeting and Scenechronize
- Set up check request and petty cash request systems.
- Organize your personal production binder with labeled dividers.
- Prepare and gather production forms (SAG forms, contracts, stationery, fax sheets, check requests, petty cash envelopes, pc chits, etc). Make sure all paperwork includes the production logo.
- Create a production calendar and update it with important dates, pickups, and returns. Include weekly goals, such as crew hires.
- Coordinate the transportation of actors who must be brought to the set.
- Schedule the screening of dailies.
- Schedule and coordinate prelight/prerig days.
- Organize and plan any company move days.
- Compile a list of days on which a second unit crew will be used.
- Organize equipment pickup and return lists; notify those who are responsible for pickups and returns and review list.
- Update and distribute script changes (colored pages).
- Update and continue to compile the thank-you list.
- Arrange for an editing facility and equipment; discuss needs with the editor.
- Compile a post-production or timeline of screenings, picture lock dates, mix dates, ADR recording, titles, music meetings, festival deadlines, and so on.
- Compile crew, cast, and vendor packs.
- Compile production expendables list; place orders with vendors. (Include expendables for camera, grip and electric, makeup, prop/art department needs, wardrobe, craft service and catering.)
- Check in with the director regarding schedule and equipment needs.

- Check in with each department head regarding schedule and budget.
- Remember to eat and sleep.
- Thank the crew.

### **Legal, Financial, & Accounts**

- File the necessary paperwork to incorporate the production company.
- Set an accountant.
- Engage a lawyer.
- Set up a bank account; order checks, set up a computerized accounting system/check register (Quicken).
- Secure production insurance and certificates.
- Fill out and file SAG paperwork.
- Engage a payroll company.
- Arrange to always have petty cash on hand.
- Set up vendor accounts (as department heads are set.)
- Start a list of deposits paid that you'll need to recover from vendors.
- Make product placement inquiries and prepare letters.
- Have a research/title report done; clear the usages in script for legal purposes.

### **Set Up AD Kit (On Set file box)**

- Accident reports
- Blank SAG contracts (weekly and daily)
- Blank non-SAG actor contracts
- Call sheets
- Production packets – script, deal memo form, crew list, cast list, maps and call sheets, one liner schedule, vendor contact list – anything else that it would be helpful for crew and cast to have).
- Check request forms
- Copies of signed cast contracts
- Current shooting copy of the script
- Crew deal memo form blanks
- Exhibit G forms
- Extra keys to locations and vehicles
- Extra pens and pencils with erasers
- File labels
- First aid kit
- Flashlights

- Letter envelopes and large envelopes
- Location contracts and blanks
- Location contact list
- Location permits
- Maps
- P-Touch with spare tapes
- Paper clips
- Petty cash, pc chits and envelopes
- Post its
- Production report blanks
- Releases: personal, filming notices, extended hours, and neighbor
- SAG rulebook for student films
- Schedules, day-out-of-days sheets, and strip board
- Scotch tape
- Security guard and parking lot information
- Stapler
- Three hole punch

### **Locations**

- Have the location manager begin scouting and photographing locations.
- Compile a list of possible locations and assemble folders for location photos; show them to the director and the producer.
- Arrange and schedule location scouts with the director, DP and production designer.
- Secure permits as locations are locked, notify the film commission.
- Secure signed location contracts and releases as the locations are locked.
- Arrange to have insurance certificates sent to each secured location.
- Determine whether a generator will be necessary or whether you will tie in for power at each location. Discuss with Jon Bowen in the equipment room.
- Arrange through the film commission for police officers and fire officers as necessary.
- Arrange for security as needed.
- Prepare filming notices, personal and still releases, neighbor sign-off releases, and notice of filming; add to the AD kit.
- Determine the setup of each location; make necessary arrangements for truck and crew parking, bathrooms, dressing rooms, holding areas, production office, and craft service and catering areas.
- Arrange for the camera, grip and electric trucks to be parked as close to the set as possible.

- Compile a list of expendables needed for each location, and place other items on hold (layout board, cones, rope, bullhorn, chairs, tables, tents, and so on).
- Have extra keys made for locations (if necessary.)
- Draw a map to each location.
- Secure a stage if needed; organize strike, rig, and prelight days.
- Update the shooting schedule and strip board as locations are locked.
- Create a location contact list – start by listing all the sets from the script, then fill in as they are locked the locations for each set.
- Schedule a tech scout for each location for the director, assistant director, production designer, the key grip, and the gaffer.

### **Cast**

- Fill out and file SAG paperwork.
- Prepare for casting auditions.
- Secure a casting space; arrange for beverages and food; prepare sides; make copies of the sign-in sheet.
- Fill out cast contracts.
- Have cast members fill out contracts.
- “Station-12” cast members as they are set.
- Ensure that wardrobe fittings and makeup tests are scheduled.
- Compile the cast list as cast members are set.
- Secure rehearsal space; schedule rehearsal time with the actors and the director.
- Arrange for background actors; how many will be needed and when.
- Make travel arrangements for out-of-town actors and, if necessary, determine how they will be transported to and from the set.
- Ascertain special meal needs or dietary requirements of any actors.

### **Crew**

- Set a production manager or production coordinator.
- Set an office production assistant.
- Set a director of photography and members of the camera department.
- Set members of the locations department – scouts, location manager.
- Set an assistant director and other members of the AD department.
- Start scheduling and filling out paperwork as soon as locations are secured.
- Set crew for the art department – production designer, props.
- Set crew for the wardrobe department.

- Get cast sizes and set up fittings.
- Set other office and set production assistants.
- Set electricians and grips.
- Set members of the makeup and hair department.
- Schedule meetings with cast and makeup and hair artists.
- Set sound department crew.
- Set transportation department crew.
- Set editing department crew.
- Set a script supervisor.
- Secure crew deal memos as the crew is set.
- Have the heads of the prop/art, makeup, and wardrobe departments and the script supervisor start their continuity notebooks.
- Compile a list of extra crew members (day players) for large shoot days.
- Ascertain any special meal needs or dietary requirements of crew members.
- Schedule a preproduction meeting with all crew members the week before production; arrange for a place to hold the meeting, production packets, refreshments.
- Schedule meetings with key crew members and the director.
- Remember to eat and sleep.
- Thank the crew

#### **Camera**

- Talk to DP about what type of gear he/she wants and where to get it.
- Arrange to have an insurance certificate issued to provider of the camera package.
- Set monitors, video tap, special equipment, etc.
- Set a camera van.
- Compile a camera supply list.
- Schedule camera tests (2 weeks before production).
- Schedule camera prep day for the first assistant camera (week before production).

#### **Grip & Electric**

- Set a grip and electric package and a truck.
- Arrange to have an insurance certificate issued to provider of the grip and electric gear.
- Set a dolly and a crane, and set operators as needed.
- Purchase grip and electric expendables.
- Discuss with the gaffer which generator to rent and at which locations you may be able to tie in.

Discuss with Jon Bowen in UCF equipment room.

- Get UCF Equipment form signed and reserve gear needed from the UCF equipment room after Tech Scout.
- Schedule prelight/prerig days.
- Discuss and schedule special equipment needs.

#### **Sound**

- Secure the sound package, either from mixer or UCF equipment room.
- Set sound supplies: slate, walkies, microphones, batteries, DATs.
- Arrange for playback if needed.
- Arrange for bands, musicians, and live music if needed.

#### **Transportation**

- Set motor homes and honey wagons as needed.
- Set production and picture vehicles as needed.
- Have extra keys made for truck locks and for each production vehicle.
- Arrange for drivers of production vehicles; file copies of the drivers' licenses.

#### **Craft Service & Catering**

- Set a craft service person and prepare food and expendables lists.
- Have craft service approach local cafes and restaurants regarding donations.
- Identify the eating areas at each location.
- Secure a caterer (a catering company, restaurants, and so on); sort out the menu so that there is a variety.
- Compile a list of local restaurants near each location that might be able to provide second meals or extra food on larger set days.
- Have petty cash available daily for second meals or extra meal needs.
- Arrange for special meal needs if necessary.
- Arrange for catering and craft service at distant locations.
- Make sure there are tables and chairs for the crew to sit at while eating lunch.

#### **Daily Office Responsibilities**

- Check the weather forecast and sunrise/sunset for the next filming day; have the AD note the forecast on the call sheet.
- Organize equipment pickup and return lists needed for the next filming day; notify those who are responsible for pickups and returns and review list.
- Make sure that the next day's call sheet is distributed either at lunch or at the end of the day; file copies in the production files.

- Coordinate the transportation of actors who must be brought to the set.
- Collect and file any paperwork regarding vendor pickups and returns at end of each day.
- Collect completed petty cash envelopes from the crew, and actualize the cash flow in whichever line item this may be possible.
- Review To-Do list and delegate.
- Issue checks per check requests.
- Check in with the director and the assistant director. Get the set update, check that the day is on schedule, and resolve any problems.
- Check in with department heads: ask if they need anything, ensure that they are on schedule, and collect petty cash envelopes.
- Check that meals are served on time.
- Check in with the cast to see if anyone needs anything.
- See that call sheets are distributed to everyone both on set and off, via email, fax, webpage, etc.; file copies in the production files.
- Remember to eat and sleep.
- Thank the crew.

### **Company Moves**

- Load the equipment into the production trucks bearing in mind what will have to be unloaded off the truck first at the new location; this should be coordinated in advance.
- Make sure everything in the truck is tied down and secured for travel.
- Make sure that all cast and crew members have directions, a map, and transportation to the new location.
- If possible, send a production assistant ahead to post parking and bathroom signs, to familiarize him- or herself with the space, and to determine where to unload equipment and set up tables, chairs, and other items.
- If possible, have the craft service person leave a small cooler at the old location with drinks and snacks, and send him or her to set up at the new locale before the rest of the company arrives so that there are coffee, cold drinks, and snacks awaiting them.
- The AD and the location manager should be sent to the new location as soon as possible, the 2<sup>nd</sup> AD stays behind and ensures that every last bit of equipment, paperwork, and supplies has been loaded into the trucks.
- Make sure that the location is left in proper order; refer to the End-of-Day Checklist.
- Whenever possible, have the company move to a location where you will do more than one day of shooting to avoid having to wrap out the second location that same day (too tiring).

- If you have equipment that the vendor must deliver and pick up, inform the vendor in advance that you will need the equipment moved. (This is often the case with cranes, generators, and other heavy equipment.)
- Provide any cast and crew members who were not needed at the previous location with a call sheet for the new location.
- Determine in advance to which location the caterer will report on the company move day.
- Indicate clearly on the call sheet that there are two locations for that day; include maps and directions to both locations.
- Keep in touch with all people off set as to the estimated time of the move and delays in arriving at the second location (caterer, equipment, extras, etc).

### **End-of-Day**

- Review shooting schedule for the next shoot day; make sure all arrangements have been made.
- Confirm arrangements for the next day's location with the location manager.
- Confirm catering arrangements with the craft service person or the caterer.
- Total the number of people to be fed the next day.
- Check with the AD to make sure that the cast and additional crew needed for the next day's shoot have been notified of their call times and have a map or directions.
- Distribute the next day's call sheet if it wasn't done at lunch.
- Check in with the department heads - are they clear on expectations for the next day?
- Return or pick up equipment or materials if necessary.
- Properly store perishable craft service and catering items.
- Load vehicles with equipment, bearing in mind the order required for unloading.
- Make sure everything in the truck is tied down and secured for travel.
- Police the location - have PAs walk the set and pick up all trash, cigarette butts, craft service garbage, etc. - have the trash removed and taken to a dumpster.
- Lock production vehicles after the equipment has been loaded; park all vehicles safely overnight.
- Collect copies of the camera and sound reports.
- Collect and copy script notes.
- After the production report has been completed, file script notes, sound reports, and camera reports in the production files, along with call sheets, Exhibit G forms, production reports, and other paperwork.
- Collect any completed petty cash envelopes from the crew.
- Collect camera and sound data on whatever format you are using and keep in a secure, cool place.
- Actualize the cash flow form for prepro costs when quotes for equipment, vehicles, locations,

lab, food, etc., come in.

- Replenish forms needed in the office or the AD kit.
- Review the to-do list with the office staff.
- Collect sound and camera reports and the script supervisor's notes for the editor at the end of each day.
- Screen the dailies if not screened during the lunch break.
- Every Night During Production a completed call sheet must be emailed to the MFA student's thesis adviser and committee members.
- Once every five days of an MFA film production, provide the Film department email list (as above) a weekly cost report beginning with the first week of pre-production using the form for L. Cook's website.
- Provide dailies on DVD (or link through Vimeo/YouTube, etc. where dailies can be viewed) of selected shooting from each day's shooting on an MFA thesis film after every five days of shooting. There should be a header card at the front of the dvd that identifies which film dailies are being viewed. If using DVDs, label clearly.
- Remember to eat and sleep.
- Thank the crew.

#### **Final Shoot Wrap-Out**

- Coordinate and organize pickup days and second-unit filming.
- Compile return lists for equipment, vehicles, and expendables.
- Return equipment, expendables, and materials.
- Return all production trucks, rental cars, and picture vehicles, clean and with all accessories intact.
- Return rented or borrowed office equipment and furniture.
- Store any purchased equipment, props, and materials in a secure place for possible pick-ups.
- Get deposits back from vendors, close out vendor accounts and secure final cost numbers.
- Collect, close out and code petty cash envelopes;
- Check the festival deadlines; make dubs of the film for festival pre-screenings.
- Make sure there is a copy for the files, and then give the script supervisor's notes and continuity notebook to editor.
- Select still photos for festival usage and publicity.
- Collect the continuity notebooks from the various departments for the production files.
- Finalize SAG paperwork that must be completed at the end of the show and send it to SAG, keep a copy for the files.
- Actualize the cash flow through the production period.
- Complete the crew credit list; make sure all crew members have signed off.

- Organize the wrap party.
- Send thank-you notes and gifts.
- Remember to eat and sleep.
- Thank the crew.

#### **Miscellaneous Needs**

- Animals and an animal trainer/ wrangler
- Licensed weaponry person
- On set mechanical effects – rain, bullet hits, smoke, explosions, etc.
- Special effects, computer-generated images (CGI)
- Stunts and a stunt coordinator
- Welfare worker/children's tutor

#### **Distant Locations**

- Make or finalize arrangements for out-of-town filming (travel, accommodations, parking, food for cast and crew).
- Contact info for local film commission and permitting offices.
- Permits.
- Parking arrangements for crew vehicles and production trucks.
- Catering and craft service.
- Transportation of crew, materials, and equipment to the location
- Equipment storage.
- Office space and setup
- Insurance if you are filming in a different state
- Equipment rental if additional equipment is needed
- Location for screening dailies.

#### **Post-Production – Start thinking about these things immediately!**

##### **Don't wait until wrap!**

- Compile the credit list showing how the credits will run; add cast, vendors, crew members, Special Thanks, etc.
- Acquire UCF logo slug for end of credits spot.
- Start compiling a thank-you list; write thank-you notes or buy gifts.
- Create a tentative post-production schedule with preliminary deadlines (editor's assembly, director's cut, sound mix, music meetings, color timing, festival deadlines, ADR, foley, titles and opticals, and screenings).

- Set the music supervisor.
- Draft a marketing and publicity plan and schedule.
- Arrange for titles and opticals.
- Assemble press kits (should include still photos, synopsis, bios, and so on).
- Join Without A Box and map out festival deadlines.