DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT:  
USING DIY VIDEO TO CONNECT  
WITH PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS

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Cristi Trusler is a Board Certified Family Law Specialist, Masters level credentialed member of Collaborative Divorce Texas and is a trained mediator. Trusler Legal PLLC, her full service family law practice, is located in Austin, where she shares an office suite with a number of other family lawyers.

Cristi is an active member and serves on the board for Collaborative Divorce Austin. Cristi is a 2014 graduate of the Leadership Academy for the International Association of Collaborative Professionals (IACP). She is a member of the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists, IACP, the ABA, and other legal organizations. She is a frequent speaker on family law topics for both IACP and the State Bar and local bar associations.

When she is not practicing law, Cristi enjoys spending time with her husband, Graydon and their two children, Vivian (9) and Graydon (12). She enjoys spinning, running with the family's two huskies, Speed Racer and Trixie, skiing and traveling. Cristi grew up in Dallas and graduated from Texas Tech University in 1993 and The Georgetown University Law Center in 1996.

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Graydon Trusler is a Digital Marketing Consultant and has been helping local professionals improve and implement their online marketing strategies since 2001. He's been married to Cristi and actively involved in the marketing of her practice for even longer. That combination of experiences gives him a unique perspective on how family law attorneys attract, serve and communicate with their clients and potential clients. Graydon has been involved in the development and growth of several collaborative practice groups. He is currently working with Collaborative Divorce Austin to develop and execute strategies to increase awareness and demand for collaborative divorce.

Graydon grew up in West Texas and graduated from Texas A&M University with a degree in Business Analysis in 1991. Before going out on his own, Graydon worked as a Project Manager for Frito-Lay, Inc. While at Frito-Lay, Graydon's primary responsibility was to act as a liaison between their 15,000+ Route Sales Representatives and the corporate IT department to help ensure that the technology needs of the sales force were communicated effectively and accurately to and from the IT department.

When he's not working, he's doing one of his other jobs as the family chauffeur, tutor, handyman and question answerer for his wife Cristi, his daughter Vivian and his son Graydon.

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Amy Lambert is a partner with Friday Milner Lambert Turner, PLLC in Austin, Texas. She enjoys a diverse practice in family law with a focus in Collaborative Law, Mediation, Marital Property agreements, and Assisted Reproduction Agreements. Amy speaks and writes frequently on Collaborative Law and is a regular presenter at Collaborative Law continuing education and skills enhancement forums, including past SBOT Collaborative Law courses, Practitioners of Collaborative Family Law and the Collaborative Divorce Professionals Alliance Masters Classes. She was the Course Director of the State Bar of Texas 2019 Collaborative Course.

Amy is a member of the Board of Trustees of Collaborative Divorce Texas, co-chair of Collaborative Divorce Austin and member of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals. Amy is a former co-editor of and frequent contributor to the Collaborative Roadmap - the quarterly publication of the Collaborative Law Institute of Texas. Amy was featured in the August 30, 2010 issue of Texas Lawyer for her pro bono win before the Third Court of Appeals of Texas regarding custody of Clementine the Chihuahua.

Amy grew up in Plano, Texas. Before practicing law in Austin, she earned her B.A. in Zoology from The University of Texas at Austin and a J.D. from Texas Tech University School of Law. Amy is an alumna of the Foundation for Women's Leadership Power Pipeline program. Amy enjoys spending time with her husband, Dave, and daughter Birdie (5).

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DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT:  
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# You Need Video

Video is no longer optional in a marketing campaign or in your practice in general. It’s critical for connecting with prospective family law clients.

People love video because our brains are designed to retain visual content better than a page loaded with words. A video can make complex information (like legal issues) more digestible and easier to understand. Studies have shown that Viewers retain 95% of a message when they watch it in a video compared to 10% when reading it in text.   
  
There are also less quantifiable, but equally important benefits to using video in your practice. Cristi has prospective clients tell her all the time, “I feel like I already know you because I’ve watched your videos.” You can’t make that same type of connection with a page full of text.  
  
When you deal with divorce and family law matters all day long, it’s easy to forget how hard it is for someone to pick up the phone and make that first call to a lawyer. The same is true for a financial professional or a mental health professional. People are frequently intimidated, shut down and even ashamed of behaviors or where they are financially. Having to come into the office of a legal, financial or mental health professional in the context of divorce or family law is scary to many of our clients. Making people feel connected to you with video before they even walk in the door can go a long way toward making people feel more comfortable and reducing their anxiety level.   
  
If you don’t already understand how crucial video is, here are a few statistics to help convince you:

* The average user spends 88% more time on a website with video,
* One-third of online activity is spent watching video,
* 85% of the US internet audience watches videos online,
* 96% of business that include a video in their email receive a visit to their website,
* 59% of executives agree that if both text and video are available on the same topic, they are more likely to choose video,
* The average user spends 88% more time on a website with video.

Video also offers benefits to how your website shows up in the search engine results pages (SERPs).

* Video drives a 157% increase in organic traffic from SERPs,
* Having a video on a landing page makes it 53% more likely to show up on page 1 of the SERPs,
* When law firms use video content for marketing purposes, web traffic from search engines increases by 41% when compared with firms that don’t utilize video.

The evidence is too strong to ignore. So stop making excuses and take advantage of this high value marketing and client education tool. It can not only help grow your practice, but can also be a way to streamline things internally, so that your practice is more efficient.

# Different Uses for Video in your Practice

The first (and often the only step) for most people is to put a video on the homepage of their website, but there are an endless number of ways you can use video in your practice.

**Dive Deeper** - Don’t stop at the welcome video on your homepage. Why not add videos that go into more detail about your different practice areas and services that you offer?

**Answer FAQ’s** - Instead of having a long list of frequently asked questions on your website, why not use a short video to answer each one? Better yet, include both video and text.

**Client Testimonials** - Not all clients are willing to get in front of a camera and talk about their experience, but when they are, a video testimonial is much more powerful than a written one.

**Tell Success Stories** - Create videos that discuss how the collaborative process helped your clients (anonymously).

**Educate** - Clients often have a lot of questions when they’re going through a family law matter. Create videos that help them better understand their situation, their options and maybe even answer the questions they don’t know to ask, but should.

**Introduce your Staff** - Clients often spend more time interacting with paralegals and other staff than the attorney or other professional. Give them an opportunity to introduce themselves to prospective clients.

**Interview Other Professionals or Experts** - Do you regularly work with other professionals in your practice? (MHPs, Child Specialists and FPs if you’re an attorney and vice versa if you are a Child Specialist, FP or MHP) You can video a discussion with them that highlights the value and expertise they bring. You can have them talk about their own individual roles in the collaborative process.

**Instruct Your Clients** – You can create a short video about what to expect in the first meeting for clients to watch. You can send them a link to watch it, prior to having the first joint meeting. You could also include links to certain handouts (i.e.: separation guidelines, the story of the orange, etc.) that they can access and review prior to the meeting or even the preparation meeting with you.

**Introduce Collaborative to the Opposing Client** - Video can be a very effective way to introduce the opposing client to the collaborative process.  We recorded a short “round table” video several years ago with 2 other board-certified family lawyers where we discussed the benefits of collaborative.

**Instruct Your Staff** - Don’t overlook the use of video inside your office. You can video yourself training new staff members or explaining how you want particular things done. The next time you have a new hire, let them watch the videos and follow up with questions.

# Tips for Creating Good Videos

We used the phrase “good videos” intentionally. Your video doesn’t have to be perfect, so don’t expect it to be. You won’t be showing it at Sundance. You can make dramatic improvements in the quality of your video by following a few simple guidelines.

**Use the equipment you already have.** Web video does not have to be super high resolution. If you own a smartphone that was produced in the last 5 years, you have a great video camera already.

**Keep it steady.** Drop the selfie stick and get a tripod. You don’t want to make your potential clients nauseous from all the movement.

**Don’t use the digital zoom.** Avoid using a digital zoom. It’s terrible for image quality and detail. If your smartphone happens to have an optical zoom, it’s fine to use. The image quality won’t change when you zoom in.

**Use the light.** If you can’t get good light inside, try going outside and take advantage of the natural light. If you need to shoot indoors, it’s easy to find inexpensive LED video lights that you can use to light your subject.

**Always shoot in landscape mode.** There are a few places online that support portrait video, but keep it in landscape to ensure that your video will work everywhere.

**Put your phone in Airplane mode.** You don’t want unexpected calls or text messages interrupting your filming.

**Watch your background.** Make sure you look at everything that’s going to be in your shot. You wouldn’t want potential clients to see a *Collaborative Law for Dummies* book on the shelf behind you.

**Pay attention to the audio.** When you’re shooting video, it’s easy to forget about the audio, but overlooking it can be a big mistake. Using the built-in microphone on your smartphone can often result in tinny, low quality sound. Try using a lapel (lav) mic or shotgun mic to get much better sound. Just make sure you use one that is designed to work with a smartphone.

**Practice**. It’s not difficult to create good video, but standing in front of a camera and talking is not as easy as it looks. Spend a few minutes practicing in front of a mirror to work out the jitters.

**Keep shooting and just use the good stuff.** It doesn’t cost you anything to do it again. If you make a mistake, keep the cameras rolling and do it again. You can edit out the parts you don’t want and use the best take for your final version.

# How to Shoot Your First Good Video

You’ll learn to shoot good video by shooting some bad video first and making adjustments. Follow the tips above and your videos will get better quickly.

Hopefully, you were able to attend our workshop and see how this works in practice. If you weren’t able to attend, you can find additional tips and resources by following this link:

[familylaw.link/](file:///Users/ctrusler/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail Downloads/4D9B8760-C58C-4C04-81D4-C4E21C8A8F39/familylaw.link/collabvideotips)[collabvideotips](file:///Users/ctrusler/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail Downloads/4D9B8760-C58C-4C04-81D4-C4E21C8A8F39/familylaw.link/collabvideotips)

Now go take action and start creating videos. Remember, “**Done is better than perfect!**”

## Any Questions?

We’ve discussed quite a number of steps in very few pages. We tried to provide supporting resources with more details, but it’s impossible to cover everything. When you run into an issue or if you have a follow up question, don’t hesitate to ask!

## Direct Contact Information

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