

Pic: Video shoot of Bal Raksha Bharat, HCL Grant Recipient, 2020, Education Category



SMILE, CAMERA & ACTION!

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Pic: Impact Video shoot of Bal Raksha Bharat, 2020 Recipient, Education category at Government Middle School Batapora, Charar-e-Sharief, Budgam district, Jammu & Kashmir

We all have something to say, something that matters to us, and something that we want to share with the rest of the world. It is said that there is a natural-born storyteller within each of us. We live in a web of stories about the past that we build in our heads to relive those times. Have you ever witnessed a bunch of pals laughing? It's very likely that they're savoring those mutually shared experiences and times of pure joy. The stories are endless journeys that bring people together. However, the question is whether or not we can utilize stories to empower and humanize people. Keeping an assertive approach to this subject, HCL Grant showcases stories of the impact created to transform rural India in a sustainable way through its partnership with NGOs spread across the country. Every year, the team travels to challenging terrains to reach the unreached and create a two-minute movie with a strong and clear vision of fulfilling the purpose and desire to get these organizations recognized for their work at grassroots level in the remotest locations. The goal is to bring rural India's loud and resonant voice to the rest of the country's population.

Like many others, I enjoy watching movies but had no idea how much effort and time went into them until this year, when I travelled with the team to the terrain of Jammu and Kashmir and Gujarat for the filming. Witnessing the entire procedure astounded me. If you believe that the process starts and ends with shooting the movie, you are mistaken. Believe me when I say that the process is not as simple and smooth as it appears in the video. It's beautiful, but it's far from simple. It all starts with discussions to comprehend and grasp the manner in which we want our videos to be presented.



Then coming up with a proper script that clearly communicates and pinpoints the video's goal, as well as ensuring that when the viewer skims through it, they receive a clear picture of the meaningful work that HCL Grant and partner NGOs have done. I was blown away by the camera crew's dedication to achieving precise styles for situations and sequences including lighting, shot sizes and widths, and camera angles. The final editing is the last but not least step.



Pic: Impact Video shoot of Under the Mango Tree Society, 2020 Recipient, Environment category, Gujarat

Making a video enjoyable to view is an art form for video creators. Not to ignore the hard work of those who are being videotaped. It was fascinating to observe how they overcame their fear and put their best foot forward to express their true feelings. It was admirable how they acted and conveyed about how far they've come in their life path despite numerous challenges and setbacks. These are the folks who live in the country's most distant areas. As someone who spends majority of my time on my phone, exposed to a plethora of reels, movies, and series, with OTT platforms gaining traction (being a millennial, you know!), I seriously doubt that I will ever be able to act as naturally as they do with the team's constant guidance and direction.



Every shot needs a great deal of thinking, ingenuity, and innovation. And if you believe a two-minute film will take less time, guess again. It's a challenge in and of itself to cover that huge chunk of information in such a short video.

Yes, our days were long and exhausting! There was never a dull moment, though. All thanks to the passionate and fun-loving people who surrounded me and who were completely enamoured with movies. The visit gave me the luxury of leaving all of my preconceptions and convictions at home and see everything I thought I knew in a fresh light and from a crooked angle.

The best trips, they say, never truly end. I guess it's probably true that they never do. Not in the case of this team. Because this team take Ralph Waldo Emerson's quote really seriously, which says:

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail"

And there are yet numerous less-traveled paths to explore. And we are absolutely ready for that!



Pic: HCL Grant Team and Day Dreamers Team in Gujarat during video shoot