



**PBS**

**THE CREATIVE PROCESS**

---

**PRIMETIME PROGRAMS**

**SPONSORSHIP GROUP**  
**FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION**

# The PBS Creative Difference



**The audience's special relationship with PBS creates a unique messaging opportunity for sponsors**

**High regard for PBS transfers to PBS sponsors. Research shows:**

- Viewers prefer to do business with PBS sponsors because of their support of PBS
- PBS sponsorship leads to improved brand perception: innovation, quality, trust

**Creative that is compatible with the PBS environment is more effective**

**No need to fight for viewer's attention on PBS's uncluttered platform**

- **Linear TV:** Maximum :60 sponsor pod at the open and close of the program
  - :15 or :30 sponsor messages
  - Maximum 4 sponsors per show
  - Category exclusivity
  - Uninterrupted programming
- **Streaming video:** one pre-roll spot per video

**Viewers understand the necessity of, and appreciate, corporate support, so a low-key brand-focused message is well-received**

# Sponsor Spot Guidelines: The Basics



## **PBS has established guidelines to comply with FCC rules governing non-commercial media**

- These guidelines for sponsor video spots apply to all PBS platforms: linear TV, streaming video on PBS.org, PBS mobile apps and PBS apps on OTT/Connected TV
- Guidelines for display banners on PBS.org are similar to those for video

## **Sponsors can include in their spots:**

- Non-promotional, value-neutral descriptions of the organization and its products or services
- Mission language that identifies and does not promote
- Established taglines
- Length of time in business
- Phone number OR website address (not both)
- Product images
- People shown using the product, with neutral expressions
- Informational calls to action such as “learn more”

# Sponsor Spot Guidelines: The Basics



These elements **cannot be** used in a PBS sponsorship message:

- Calls to action that are not purely informational (“Contact us now...”)
- Pricing (“Tours beginning at \$1,500”)
- Offers or inducements to buy (“free upgrade”)
- Superlative or qualitative claims (“Our exciting tours....”)
- Depiction of “satisfied customers”, i.e. testimonials (“This company is the best I’ve ever worked with...”, smiling customer interacting with product)
- Comparative claims (“our brokers work harder....”)

# Paths to an Approved PBS Spot



Whether creating a new spot or using/adapting existing creative, we will partner with you to obtain an effective spot that meets PBS/FCC Guidelines.

For examples of sponsor spots, see [Sponsor Spots](#) on [SGPTV.org](#), or contact us for more examples.

1. Spots created specifically for PBS create the closest alignment with content and the audience
  - We will work with you to develop approved scripts, storyboards and video, providing feedback and approval throughout the process
  - We can partner with you or your advertising agency, or our internal production services team can create a spot for your brand
  - Spots can be created for a specific series or any PBS sponsorship



MINT MOBILE



LIBERTY MUTUAL



DRAPER

# Paths to an Approved PBS Spot



## 2. Spots that have been created for commercial media use can be modified to meet PBS Guidelines

- Edits required to meet guidelines can be executed by your resources or our production team



VIKING



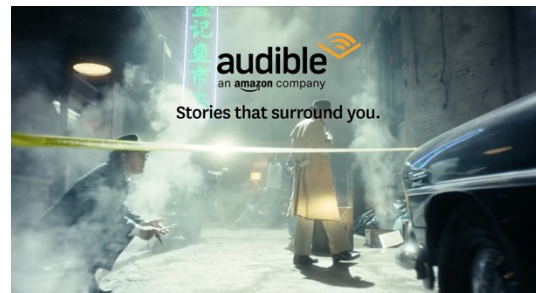
ANCESTRY.COM



CONSUMER CELLULAR

## 3. Spots that air on commercial TV can also be acceptable “as is” on PBS

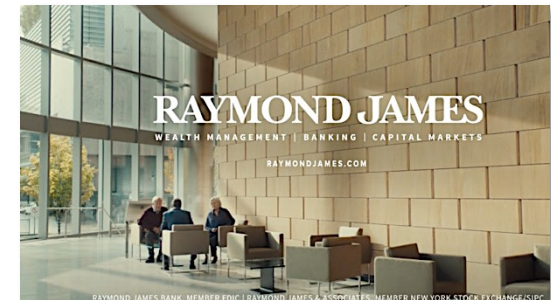
- Spots may require the addition of a logo bug to identify the sponsor



AUDIBLE



FARMERS INSURANCE



RAYMOND JAMES

# Spot Clearance Process and Timelines



**The SGPTV team will work with you every step of the way to ensure a smooth process!**

- We will provide guidance, and act as the liaison and your advocate with PBS

**The key to success: frequent and ongoing communication**

- Submit scripts and storyboards for feedback as they are developed
- We will provide feedback, and if revisions are necessary, provide suggested approved language
- Sponsor must execute final spots per approved scripts and video
  - Any changes will require another submission to PBS for approval

**For spots produced specifically for PBS, allow a minimum of 4 – 6 weeks for production**

- Assume **2 business days for each PBS approval**
- Assume **2 rounds of approval for storyboard and script approval**
- Assume **2 rounds of approval on each rough cut**



# Spot Integration and Specs



## LINEAR TV DEADLINES

- Broadcast-ready, fully-approved spot: **15 business days** prior to air date
- Traffic instructions/rotation information deadline: **17 business days** prior to airdate

## DIGITAL VIDEO DEADLINES

- Final creative and traffic instructions: **5 business days** prior to start date

## VIDEO SPECS

- Video technical specs can be found [here](#)



# Spot Editing and Custom Spot Development



**Our Creative Services team can assist with creative revisions required by PBS/FCC guidelines, or development of a new custom spot**

- **Revisions:** Audio or video edits, edits for length (:60 to a :30, :30 to a :15)
- **New Spot:** Creation of a custom spot for PBS, using sponsor assets

## **Timeline**

- **Revisions:** Edits can usually be completed in **5 business days**
- **Custom spots:** Depends on the complexity of the spot and approvals  
**Allow minimum 4 weeks**

## **Revisions to existing creative**

- Video should be provided as an HD QuickTime movie file (1920x1080) or on HDCam videotape
- On most occasions, **audio must be provided as split-tracks** (dialogue, music, effects), though it is occasionally possible to work with a full audio mix. Most high-quality audio formats are acceptable, e.g.: wav, aiff, etc. at 48khz.

# Spot Editing and Custom Spot Development



## Creating a custom spot for PBS, using client assets

- **Script:** We can execute an approved script or can work with you to develop a PBS-approved script. Client to provide messaging strategy, brand guidelines and key copy points.
- **Video:** Client to provide high-resolution HD footage (1920x1080) that is rights-cleared for PBS television and PBS online usage, for the timescale required. Footage should normally be clean of graphics and in-vision captioning. We can also source stock footage, as necessary.
- **Audio:** Must normally be split-tracks (dialogue, music and effects). If music is supplied, must be cleared for usage. Or, we can source or even compose music.
- **Voice-over:** SGPTV can source talent or we can work with a pre-selected talent that is preferred by the sponsor. Any voice-over artist must be a member of the AFTRA union.
- **Branding:** Client to supply all necessary branding elements, such as logos, color swatches, typographic styles. Logos should be as Adobe Illustrator eps files. Images should be supplied as jpeg or tiff files, at a high resolution not less than 300dpi. Low-resolution images from the web are generally not acceptable.



# PBS

## Questions?

---

For more information on The PBS Creative Process,  
please contact the Sponsorship Group for Public Television

[SGPTV.org](http://SGPTV.org) | 800.886.9364 | [SGPTV@wgbh.org](mailto:SGPTV@wgbh.org)

**SPONSORSHIP GROUP**  
**FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION**