



Tips for Success in Creating the Video Component of Your Distinguished Junior Member Application

The video component of the Distinguished Junior Member (DJM) application provides applicants with a unique opportunity to showcase their personalities and help their stories come to life. Portions of the videos from the twelve semifinalists will also be used during the Junior Awards Luncheon at the National Holstein Convention, so it is important to put your best foot forward.

We realize that not all applicants will have previously worked with video, so we are providing several tips and guidance to help you get started. As a reminder – applicants may seek advice on composing and editing their videos, but professional video editing services may not be used. All videos must be the original work of the applicant. An assistant to help you record your video (i.e. holding the video camera while you speak) is permissible.

Each applicant is required to submit three individual video files with their entry portfolio:

1. Self-Introduction (one-minute time limit)

Tip: Use this time to candidly tell and show a little bit about yourself, your family, your farm, and/or favorite activities. Let your unique personality show through and be creative! What are your favorite things around the farm? What made you fall in love with Holsteins and the dairy industry? What are your future goals and plans? Think of a way to incorporate and show your audience that.

2. Answers to two Personal Views questions, as specified in the application (two-minute time limit each)

Tip: Think about how you can use video to your best advantage when answering each question. What can you express visually that you might not be able to if it were just a written answer? Get creative! This portion is a great place to show your advocacy skills; answer the questions as if you were talking to consumers, or preparing to upload a positive video about the dairy industry to YouTube.

In the end, it is about having fun and letting your personality and passion for dairy cattle and the Holstein breed shine through. Don't be discouraged if you feel like your video is not absolutely "perfect" – you are not being judged on your technical editing skills - it's the content (what you say) that matters most.

Styles of Videos

There are at least two “styles” of video DJM applicants can use, which are different, but both successful.

1. Video slideshow of still pictures, with a voiceover

This is the more basic of the two styles, but can be great, particularly if you do not have easy access to various video resources that you would need for a more traditional live-action video. This style involves creating a video slideshow (in a software program) with a narrated voiceover. The slideshow must play on its own, not requiring someone to flip through slides while viewing it. Required equipment would be a digital camera and/or scanner to get images onto your computer, a microphone to record the voiceover, and some audio editing software would be helpful as well.

2. Live-action video

The live-action video is what most people think of with a video – you talking live on camera. Required equipment is some sort of camcorder, video editing software, and likely an assistant to do the actual video recording.

Camera/Audio Equipment

If doing a live action video, you will need to use some sort of video camera to do the recording. This does not necessarily mean you need to go out and purchase your own camcorder. Taking video is becoming very commonplace, so there is a good chance that someone you know already owns a video camera. If your immediate family does not own one, ask around to relatives and friends to see if they have a simple handheld camcorder you might be able to borrow. Additionally, your high school or college technology or media department may have video equipment available which you could borrow or rent.

If you do not have free access to a video camera or are looking to invest in your own camcorder, major retailers such as Best Buy or Wal-Mart have a large selection of video cameras at many price points, starting around \$100. It can be helpful to read consumer reviews (either by Googling your camera of choice or searching for it on Amazon) before purchasing to ensure you are getting the quality of camera you expect.

On a final note about video equipment, many digital cameras and cell phones have built-in video capabilities. While it may seem convenient, using these is not recommended for your DJM videos, as it will be hard to get high quality video from these cameras.

Regardless of the equipment you use, we recommend doing a test recording and watching your test video on a computer or TV screen before recording your entire video, to be sure the quality is what you expect. There is a lot that can show up when watching a video on a larger screen that will not be seen on a camera’s small LCD screen. This will also give you an idea of how sensitive the camera’s microphone is.

If doing a voiceover with your slideshow or video, you will need a microphone to get audio into your computer. Many laptops come with built-in microphones, or a basic computer microphone can be purchased in the electronics section at most major retailers. If using a built-in microphone, again be sure to do a test run to ensure the audio quality will be sufficient.

Video/Audio Editing Software

After your video is filmed, or while you're putting together your narrated slideshow, you will need to use some sort of software program to put it all together. Again, this does not mean you will have to spend a large amount of money on special software.

Whether you are working on a PC or Mac, your computer likely comes with some free, basic video editing software pre-installed which could work fine for this project. If you are on a PC, look for *Windows Movie Maker*, and on a Mac, look for *iMovie*.

Again, checking with your high school or college technology or media lab, you can likely gain access to school computers which have video and/or audio editing software you could use free of charge.

If you are looking to invest in your own editing software, an online retailer such as Amazon will likely turn up the largest selection with the best prices. A quick search will turn up many good options which can be purchased for less than \$100. Before purchasing, be sure to check through your college technology store to see if any student discounts are available on software you are looking to invest in.

- For most video editing at the Holstein Association USA offices, we currently use *Sony Vegas Movie Studio HD 11*, which is a full-featured program at a value price (currently listed for less than \$60 on Amazon); depending on the project, we also use the free *iMovie* program occasionally.

If you are doing a video slideshow with voiceover, you will want to use some sort of audio editing software to work with the narration you record before merging it with your pictures. Luckily there are some great free options available. *Audacity* is a free, open-source audio editing program that can be downloaded from the web (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/>). Of course, there are several programs that can be purchased if you want to go that route; some video editing software even comes packaged with audio editing software. Again, Amazon is a great place to purchase software online as their prices are usually very competitive, with a large selection and helpful user reviews.

Saving and Burning Your Files to DVD

After all your work putting your videos together, it is important to save them in a format which we will be able to work with and share.

When you click “Save” in your video editing software, the software will likely save the file in a proprietary format – one that can only be opened in that program. It is important to save your file in a format that can be opened by a standard video playing program (*Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, QuickTime, etc.*). **Submitted videos should be saved in one of these formats: .mp4, .mov, .avi or .mpg.** To save your video in one of those formats, you will likely have to select a “Render As...” or “Make Movie” option in your video editing software, then select the appropriate file type. Again, each segment (your introduction and answers to two personal views questions) should be saved as an individual file, for a total of three files.

Once your videos are saved in one of the preferred formats, it is a good idea to play the files one more time (in a program such as *Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, or QuickTime* - all free downloads and pre-installed on many computers) to be sure you are happy with the way they look, sound and flow, before burning them to DVD.

The final step is burning your work to a DVD and submitting it with your entry portfolio. The majority of computers equipped with a DVD burner (built into the CD drive – standard on many newer laptops and desktop computers today) will come with a pre-installed software program (such as *Roxio*) that allows you to create DVDs. It is important that you save your files as a “data DVD” rather than a “movie DVD” with title menus. We need to work with the files individually, and are unable to do that easily if it is burned as a movie DVD with a title screen (such as what would play in a traditional DVD player).

Once your DVD is successfully burned, remove the disc from the burner, and either re-insert it, or take it to another computer and ensure you can open each of the files in a program such as *Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, or QuickTime*, indicating a successful burn.

If you don’t have access to a DVD burner either at home or school, files may be saved (in one of the preferred formats) to a thumb drive and submitted with your entry portfolio, or they may be shared with an online file sharing program such as *Dropbox*. If you’re interested in using *Dropbox* to submit your video files, please contact Kelli Dunklee at KDunklee@holstein.com, or 800.952.5200, ext. 4124.

Tips to Remember when Recording and Editing Video

You will likely spend a fair amount of time and effort putting together your videos, and the following are some tips to keep in mind so that a small mistake does not negatively affect your video quality.

Technical Tips

- Film in an area with good lighting.
- Be very aware of wind noise. While you may not hear it while you're filming, most video cameras are very sensitive to picking up wind noise, and it can completely ruin your video. The safest bet is to find an area where there is very little or no breeze, film inside, or film on a very calm day. Almost nothing can be done in the editing process to effectively remove wind noise without severely compromising the audio quality of your video.
- Be very aware of background noise – vehicles, farm equipment, chirping birds, noisy livestock or dogs, loud running milk pumps, etc. Avoid filming near roadways, in barnyards, during chore time, or other areas where there is likely to be a lot of background noise that you don't have control over. Remember, it will be hard for the judges to score your video if they cannot hear or understand what you're saying.
- If you are recording a voiceover, the same theory about background noise applies. Make sure the room you are recording in is quiet (even a running fan or air conditioner can be picked up as unpleasant background noise), and doesn't echo. A room with a carpeted floor is preferable.
- Consider using a tripod when filming (if practical) rather than having someone hand-hold the camera. This will reduce shake and other unintended camera movement.
- If you incorporate music into your video, be sure it is not too loud and doesn't overpower your voice. It is a good idea to avoid using mainstream music in your video as it can be considered a violation of copyright laws. There are web sites that offer royalty-free music tracks that can be downloaded and used as background music, without violating copyright.

Personal Tips

- Spend some time thinking about what you will say and do during your video before you start filming. That said, avoid memorizing or reading from a script if possible – you will sound much more natural, and knowledgeable about your subject, if you can just speak from the heart.
- Speak loud and clear so the camera picks up your voice well and viewers will not have to strain to listen. Remember, your voice competes with any background noise that may be present.
- It cannot be re-stated enough – have fun and be creative. This video is part of a culmination of several years of your work with your Holstein project. Use the video as an opportunity to showcase your personality and allow viewers to get to know you and what you're passionate about. This is the only "personal" contact judges will have with you in the semifinalist selection process, so make the most of it.

Visit www.youtube.com/HolsteinUSA to view examples of videos from past DJM semifinalists.

Disclaimer: This advice is provided to assist DJM applicants in composing their required video for submission with their entry portfolio. Holstein Association USA will not be held liable for anything associated with using any of the aforementioned software or equipment. Individuals should always use discretion when purchasing, downloading and/or installing new software or equipment. Holstein Association USA staff does not provide technical support for any of the aforementioned equipment or software.