

Titles, Credits and Graphics

Titles are edited into the beginning or early scenes of the tape, introducing the name of the show, primary creators, and/or sometimes the place or date. At the end of the tape, put the credits of the crew and participants. Try to remember everybody and to check for the correct spellings of names. Often in a very limited budget, the participants are paid very little, yet a credit at the end of a tape can mean a great deal.

A character generator is used to record print, titles, text, subtitles and credits to the video medium. Text also can be incorporated into the body of the piece. Names to identify people talking are superimposed at the bottom of the screen or, translations to another language are presented in subtitles (the best method because it keeps the real voice of the person rather than an audio dub). Some camcorders have the capability to add text, but otherwise you will need to get post-production support. If you do not have these capabilities, write the text and credits on a piece of paper and shoot your titles using the macro (extra close-up) lens in the camcorder.

A title and credits add a finished look to your videotape. Also, write the letter "c" with a circle around it — i.e. © — and the name of the independent producer or production unit, at the very end of the tape: this is the official copyright symbol, and it is used to protect your work from being used by others without your permission.

Although we tend to think of graphics as being the titles and credits that run before and after the film, some graphics are so well realized that they become as celebrated as the films themselves. Think of the James Bond credits. Some other opening credits sequences you might want to check out are: *Vertigo*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *Seven*, *Bad Education*, *Clockers* (taken from *Anatomy of a Murder*), *Napoleon Dynamite*, and *Delicatessen*.

Certain motifs or images come to encapsulate the film, its mood and its message. For the final packaging of the film, graphics can play an important role in capturing viewers' attention, in a way, branding the film. The businessman with the devil's tail and the halo that is the symbol for the film *The Corporation* (2003) serves in this manner — becoming an entity in itself — on buttons, t-shirts and stickers.