**How to make a viral video:**

In today’s technology driven, social media infused world, tech is a great way to promote your business, program, or event. One fun and low-cost avenue is to make a short video in the hopes that is extensively viewed on YouTube and shared widely via social media and email, commonly known as going ‘viral’.

Eepybird Studios, a professional viral video add company, suggest nonprofits use viral videos as a mechanism to help spread their message. The company has a Viral Video Toolkit for nonprofits available online, which can be accessed through this link: <http://eepybirdstudios.com/toolkit/> .

Inspired by Eepybird Studios, The Cascade Alliance decided to try to make our own viral video to promote the SVdP book department so we could create a how-to for our partners. With this in mind, we tried to mimic viral videos of book dominos inspired by Rube Goldberg contraptions.

Please enjoy this step by step guide, informed by our first viral video attempt!

**Step by Step Overview of Cascade’s Attempt:**

* Step 1: Gather Books:
  + Quantity needed will vary depending on the complexity of the book domino you are attempting. We filled a small cart full of hardbacks of varying sizes, as well as a few small paperbacks.
* Step 2: Evaluate the space you are planning on using:
  + Determine what area will allow for adequate room for the domino, and highlight the department/section you want to promote with the video.
* Step 3: Decide on a narrative. Example: A shopper is reading a book from the shelf, the book falls, and the cascade begins.
  + We decided to re-shoot this scene, because the final shot did not work as envisioned. Our final product begins with the book cascade, rather than keeping the staff member in the shot.
* Step 4: Set up the books:
  + They will fall faster if they are closer together- a few inches worked best.
  + Heavier, hardback books are easier to prop up and fall faster.
* Step 5: Set up a tripod and camera at the end of the domino, or have a staff member there with a mobile device to capture the action. The other camera should be at the beginning of the book-line.
* Step 6: Begin the tumble! We used a hardback book, tossed by a staffer onto the first book at the beginning of the book line-up.
* Step 7: Video Editing
  + Upload video clips to iMovie or Adobe Premiere Pro (PP)
    - Premiere pro is better for creating special effects such as a split screen of two different videos or other animations
  + Adjust video clips (you can trim off the ends of the clip that you don’t need by clicking modify -> split clip -> select the clip you don’t want and click “delete” and organize them in the order you would like them
  + If you filmed by hand, apply the video stabilizer which you can find in the control panel of the video clip in iMovie. You can also adjust the lighting/contrast, video speed in this panel
  + If you choose to include background music, free audio files can be found in the [Youtube Audio Library.](https://www.youtube.com/audiolibrary/music)
  + Export video by clicking file -> share, and following the instructions when prompted. Export in 720p or 1080p for best screen quality

**Useful tips:**

* The last book to fall could be a ‘star attraction’: choose a popular author or newer title to really capitalize on the opportunity to promote your section. Prop it up backwards facing the vertical line of books, so when it falls the camera captures the title.
* Two cameras were sufficient to capture the action, set up at both ends of the domino. More may be needed if it were more complex/longer.

**Lessons Learned:**

* We tried a small softback to set off the domino initially, but did not successfully knock down the first book. Our second try with a hardback was fruitful.
* If something goes awry, no need to re-configure the entire setup. Instead, prop up a few of the books and edit the fix seamlessly into the final video.

**Tools Used:**

* Camera with video capacity, tripod, and a mobile device.

**Staff:** 2

**Time:** 45 minutes to plan, setup, and shoot the video.

1 hour to edit the video.