



Unique, Unexpected... Undeniably Necessary

Crews Control: Advice from the Field

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When asked what Top 5 items crews never leave home without when going on-location, Crews Control crews were more than ready to whip out their list of best kept secrets. From extra snacks to change for parking meters, our folks in the field have offered up some advice that supports the claim – they *are* the best crews in the business.

While some crews bring sand bags to a shoot to support the boom stand, Mike Braden of Mikaren Media, Inc. in Rochester, New York, always brings his Crews Control canvas bags –filled with extension cords – cleverly having access to both extension cords and use of the bag filled with them, when necessary.

For others, a top list of equipment necessities is the order of the day. Tom Brunstetter of Paradise Film & Video in Ft. Lauderdale never leaves home without warm cards, Duvateen, dimmers & chimeras and his favorite Gerber tool.

Oktai Ortabasi of The Dreaming Tree, in Los Angeles, concurs with Tom that Duvateen is a must-have on the Top 5 list. He also adds to that list extra BNC cable, ND .6 roll of gel and a cart.

If you're looking for extra drama, a theatrical ellipsoidal spotlight – with a wide assortment of background patterns and colored gels – will be on your list. Hal Rifken at HM Rifken Productions in New Jersey, said that clients “love the background patterns that can make a blank white wall look interesting.” Hal also brings a six-inch flat screen LCD for field shoots so the client can always see what he's shooting, a “high-hat” for low angle shots and something he throws in at no extra charge – a plywood platform with Dexter wheels on PVC tubing, which gives the shoot “Hollywood” production values.

From the Midwest, some basic, but essential tools for Andrés A. Parra at VenUS Directions, Inc. out of St. Paul, Minnesota include change for metered parking, a cassette recorder for on-the-spot transcripts, an audio person and a “good attitude” – the latter of which seemed to resonate among many of the crews who responded.

Gene Moffett of Gene Moffett Studios in Denver would never be caught without a second camera, extra batteries and his cell phone. Oh, and power bars!

Concurring with Gene's need for snacks is Mike Pellegatti, Wildvisions, Inc. out of Phoenix who brings trail mix and apples along for himself and the audio person, particularly when out-of-town California producers want to work through lunch! More importantly, the heat of Phoenix prompts Mike to bring a white cloth towel for covering his camera, or a

stationery umbrella, when shooting in the hot Arizona sun. This helps to keep the camera cool when shooting outdoors. A heavy rubber band also comes in handy for Mike who uses it to get some smooth pans and tilts by creating a fluid head – hold the rubber band in one hand and put the other end around the handle. Mike says it “smoothes out the pans and tilts quite nicely.”

Raleigh-Durham-based KPSR’s Glen Kantziper knows from experience that even if the client states they “won’t need it” – *take it any way*. This includes extra tape stock (also a suggestion from Gene Moffett), sound gear and a basic make-up kit.