How to Win the 52 Hour Raven Film Contest!

Tips for winning:

PLAN AHEAD!!

1. Gather a group full of people that are really good at what they do.

Usually the teams that are not successful are usually missing people with specific film making skills. The teams that are not successful are comprised of usually just one or two members and they try to act, film, edit the film all themselves and end up getting overloaded. On the flip side having too many people can be hard to manage so choose your film teams wisely. Finding people with the right skills (writers, actors, camera people, editors) and that are going to be dedicated to the 52 hours over the entire weekend is key for success. The people you choose to work with should all share a serious dedication to getting the film done.

   - Seek out someone who is an accomplished writer and have them join your group, especially one who has worked on a film in the past. Writers will help structure the storyline and create believable characters and dialogue.

   - Use or seek out friends/family who have an acting background. Using actors who have been on stage or film will be more believable and will be easier to work with.

   - Make sure all of your actors are 100% available for the times when you are filming. If they are questionable about their commitment don’t use them. You need people who will be there and be dedicated to the film even at 3 am on Saturday.

2. Write your script Friday Night, Shoot Saturday (edit/transfer/capture some if possible), finish filming Sunday morning and edit until it’s done.

   - This seems like the best use of time that I have seen (and allows for some sleep). Make sure you get all of your major shots done Saturday. If you need another shot you can always shoot it Sunday.

   - You can always edit as you go as well whatever works for you. If you have a good detailed script/shot list and follow it you can get away with waiting till the end to edit as long as you preview your footage.

   - Sleep on the script Friday night and look at it with a clear head Saturday morning. It is also good to break down your script into a shot list so that if you are using actors that are only going to be available part of the day you can make sure to get their shots out of the way before they have to leave.

3. Use Multiple Editors/Computers if possible.

   - Split the film up into sections and have editors work on separate scenes and the credits then combine the film. This makes editing go quickly.

4. Use Comedy.

   - People like comedy in their movies, even if your genre is drama. Don’t go overboard but some comedic moments are always helpful and shows versatility.

5. Secure Multiple Interesting Locations Beforehand
You can use your own house/property but having multiple locations that you can film at that are pre-scouted is important to creating a visually interesting film. Take your digital camera out and take photos of the locations you want to shoot. Take photos of power locations for lights etc. That way when you are writing your script you can match the locations you scouted with scenes in your film and you can get to work quicker.

6. Take advantage of your school and local resources

-Your home school’s AV department can help!! There is a lot of equipment available to students and the public that you can use. Don’t forget that many smartphones have HD quality…

7. If you have the means put yourself together a small film making kit.

-Having your own equipment and using it often is a great way to get better quickly. In this age of cheaper HDSLR’s that shoot video you can put yourself together a really high quality camera rig costing less than what it has in the past.

-Get some shop lights from Lowes or Home Depot. They will work to bring up the ambient light of a dark room. Bounce them off the walls for a soft look.