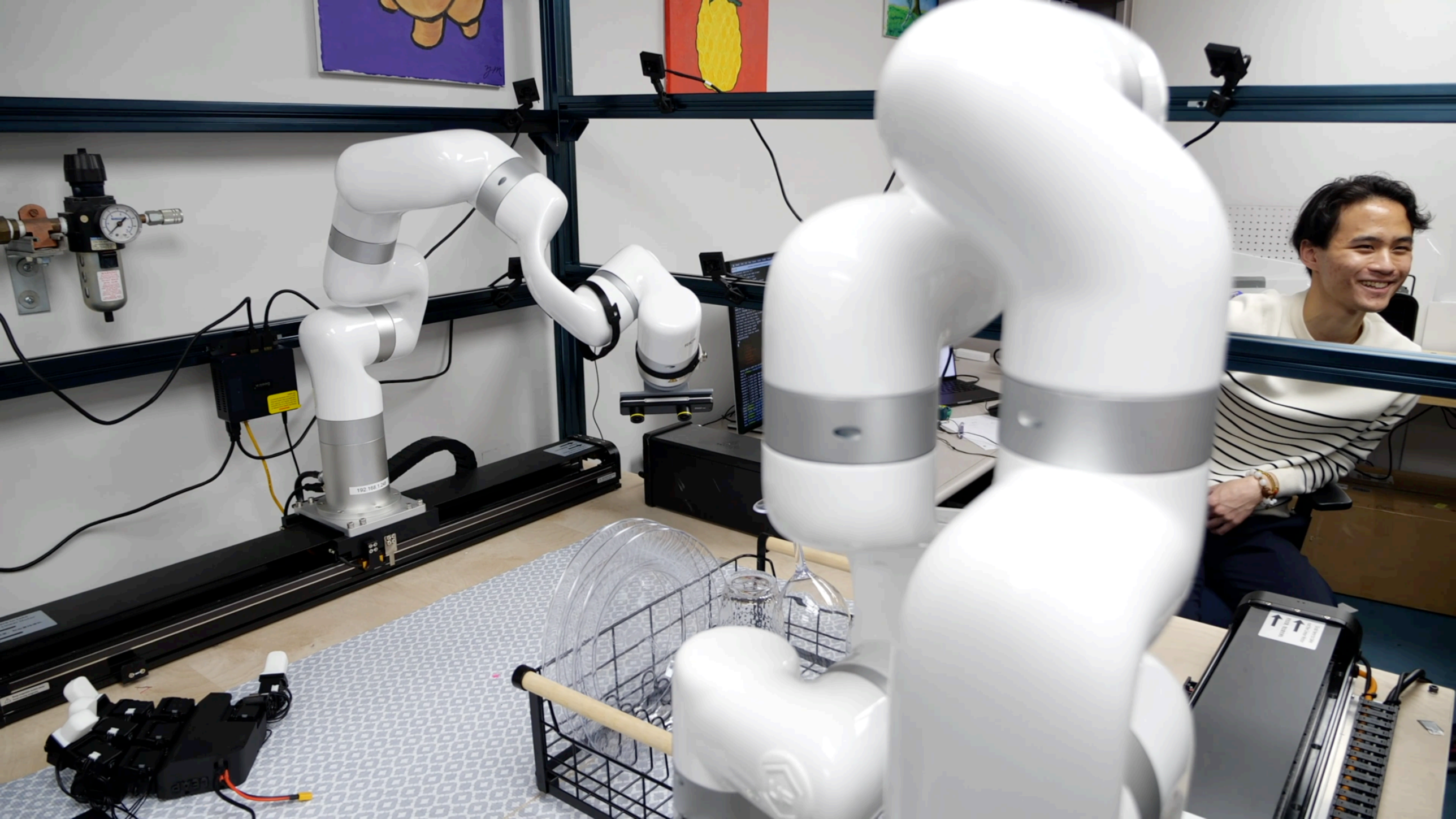
Pitch with Production Value:

Quality video with a small crew

Brian Staszel (he/him) | October 22, 2026



To make a 4-minute seed-stage pitch video stand out, students **must avoid** creating a glorified recording of someone reading a slideshow.

Early-stage investors prioritize:

- founder-market fit
- capital efficiency
- dynamic proof of execution

Investors watch a video *instead of reading your deck* to

evaluate you.

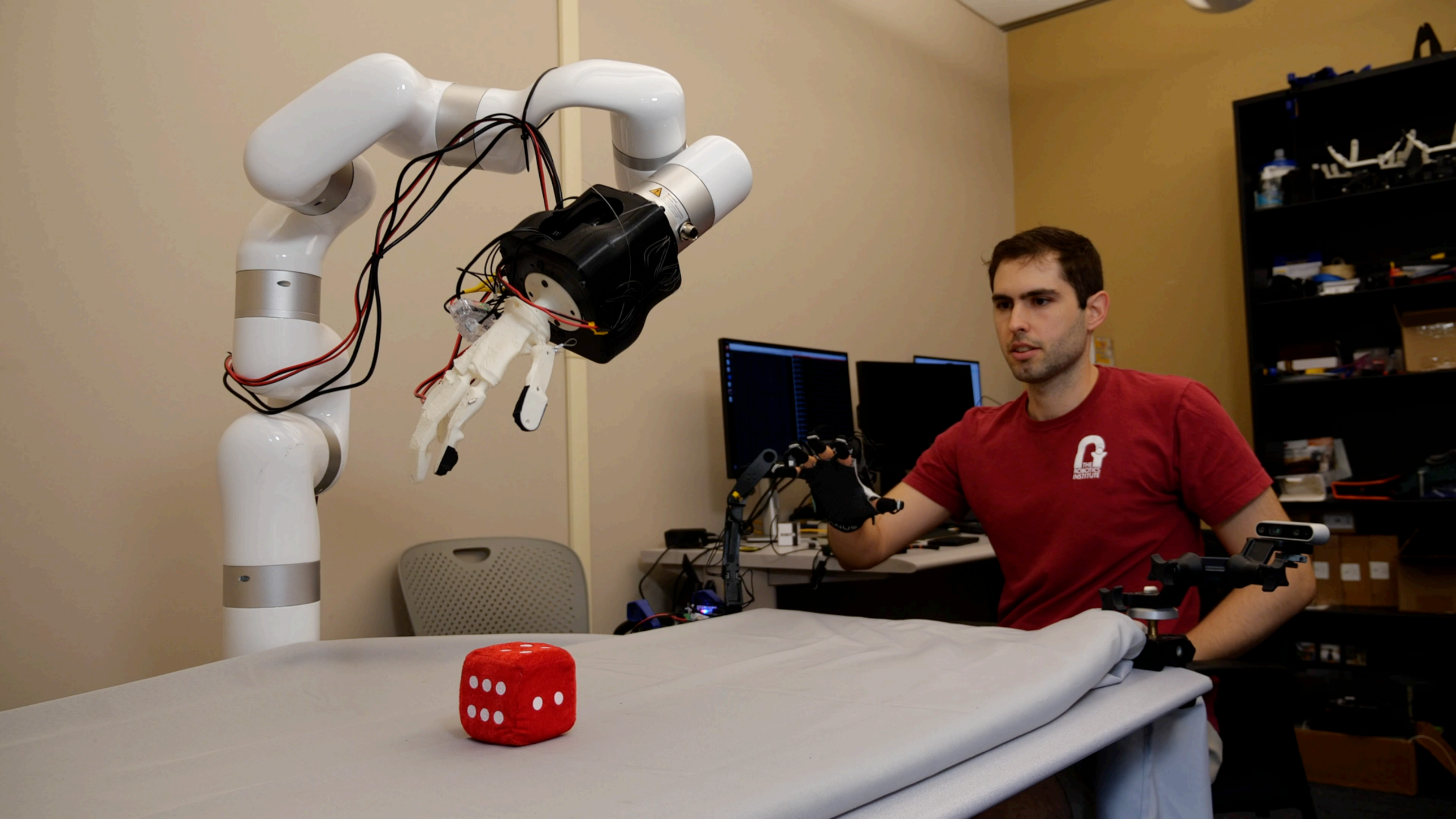
They want to see:

- Focused, confident founder
- Demo or prototype in action
- Authentic enthusiasm from the team

Focus on "Founder-Market Fit" Over Corporate Speak

Investors invest in **people** at the seed stage.

- **Avoid** over-rehearsed, robotic presentations with buzzword-heavy jargon.
- **Project** raw, authentic enthusiasm.
- **Speak naturally** about solving a problem you personally care about and deeply understand.



Bio-inspired robotic hand

Soft

Strong

All-over sensing



https://youtu.be/SGgP1TtcJz8

Ideal 4-Minute Pacing & Structure

0:00 - 0:30	The Hook & “Why Now?” From the founder(s)
0:30 - 1:30	Interactive prototype, live demo
1:30 - 2:15	Capital efficiency, testimonials, waitlist data
2:15 - 3:30	“Why are we uniquely equipped?
3:30 - 3:45	What this seed funding will enable? Call to action.

Questions to answer

- **Why** is your solution compelling?
- What is the **driving need** for your solution?
- When you succeed, what is the **benefit**, and for whom?
- Don’t be shy—make your argument **confidently**

3 column script + storyboard

Script

Title: Project Title
Client: Client name(s)

Time	Visual	Audio
0:00 0:02 0:05	Descriptions of imagery, image/camera movement, style of animated of type over time. Includes type that is seen, but not spoken.	**Narrator:** **Music:** **SoundFX:**
0:10		
0:20		
0:30		

TITLE.....
DATE.....
PAGE.....OF.....

Visuals and audio over time in text

Sketches: Shot size, visual details

Be Prepared

- **Practice** before getting in front of cameras.
- Record those practices to accurately assess program length, storyline and **performance**.
- Hearing how it flows will guide where to make word changes and avoid unnecessary phrases.



Talking to the camera

Pretend you are talking to 1 person.

- Imagine you’re speaking to someone you know well
- Choose interview style and keep it consistent
- It is difficult to appear natural with teleprompter


fetch



Mitchell Fogelson

Carnegie Mellon University, PhD

Beyond Reach Labs







Rule of Thirds

a basic composition guide

Optimize for Video

Plan to **edit** between talking head, b-roll, screen caps of demo, etc

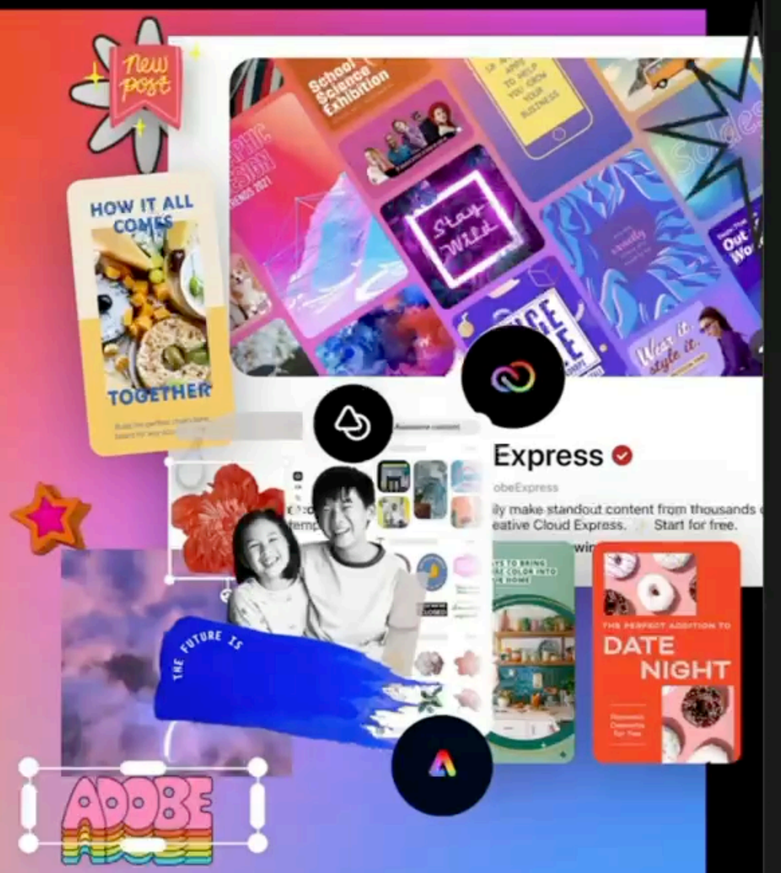
- Your audience wants more than a tiny image of you!
- I'm looking at you Zoom webinars
- Here is one example if you'd like to show slides and founder at the same time:



Adobe Express

SOCIAL MEDIA GOLDEN RULES

1. Scaling word of mouth is our **ultimate ambition**
2. **Collaboration** increases opportunity
3. **Participation** increases engagement
4. **Engagement** drives reach
5. Reach drives **awareness**
6. In most people's eyes, the **'best product' is the one they know**



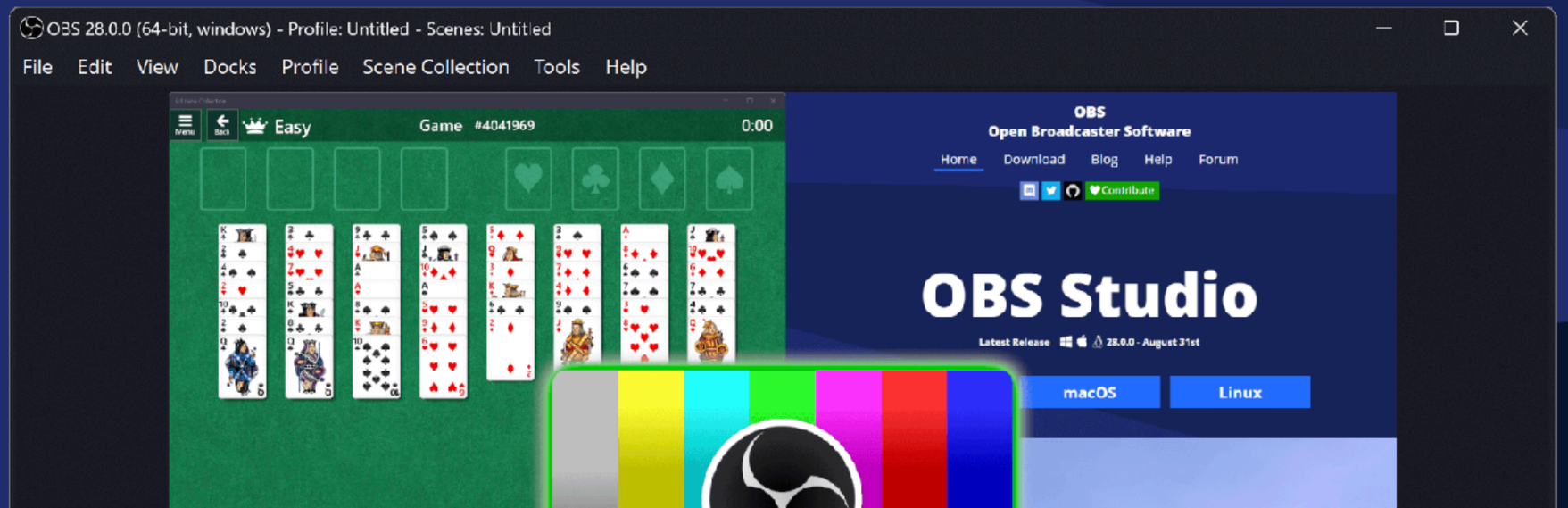
OBS Studio

Latest Releases 32.0.1 32.0.1 32.0.0

Windows | macOS | Linux

Free and open source software for video recording and live streaming.

Download and start streaming quickly and easily on Windows, Mac or Linux.

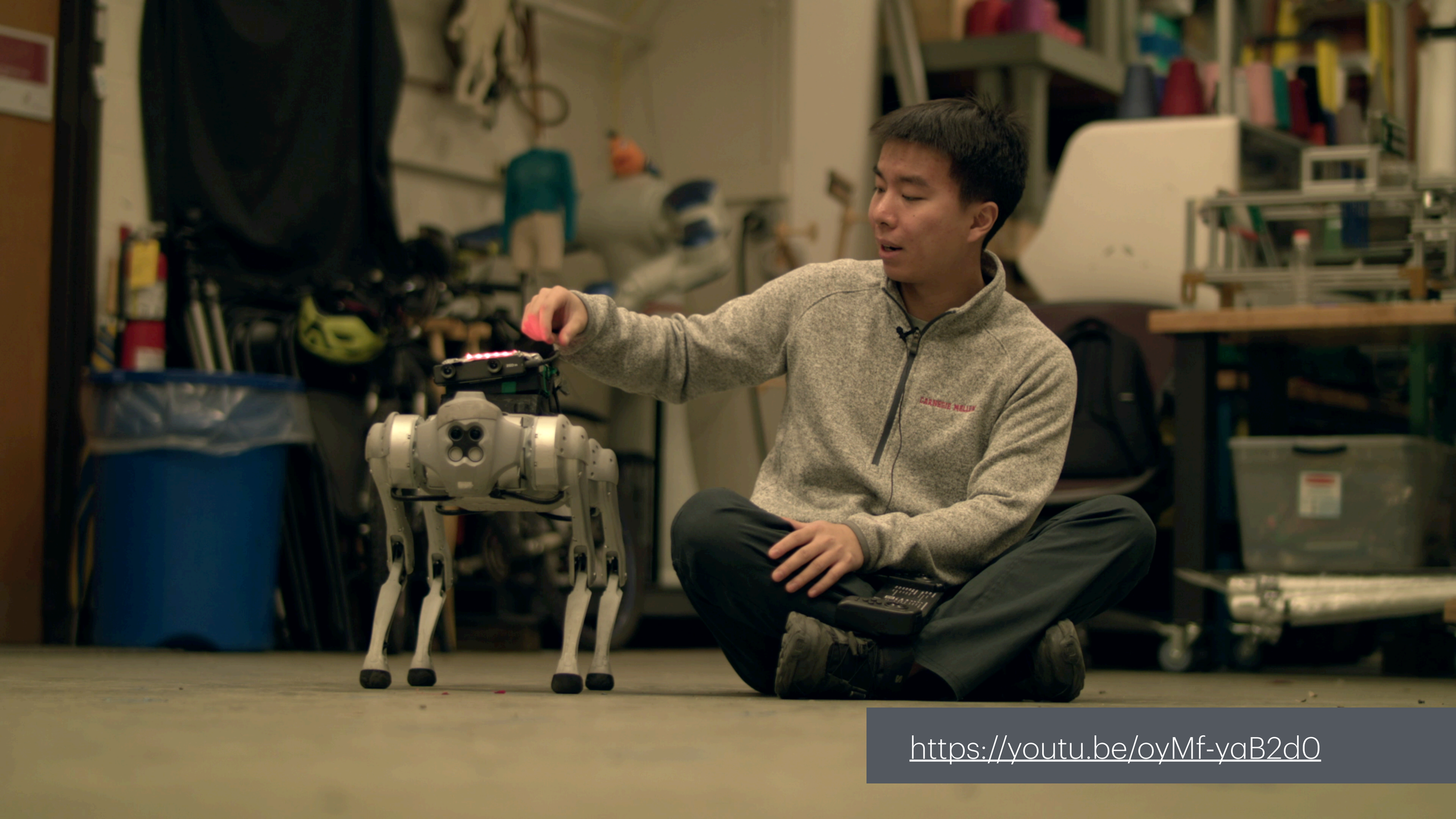






This chromakey setup was used to capture talking heads you've seen.

Controlled environment with mic on boom very close to subject.



https://youtu.be/oyMf-yaB2d0

Stock video as a design element



Coverr, Pexels

Pexels

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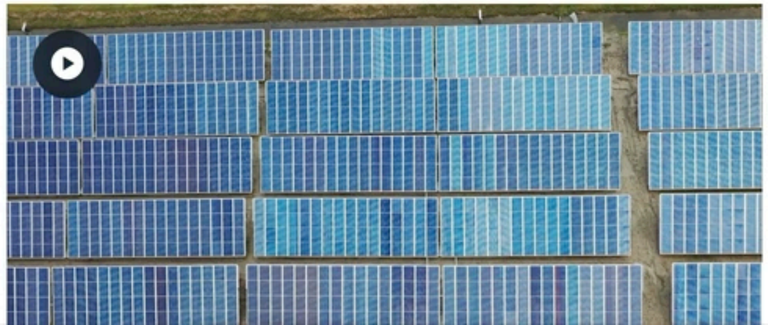












IDeATe

Equipment in Hunt A29

- 2 **Canon R6 II**, 4 **Sony FX3** tripods, lighting kit, microphones, cell phone tripod mounts...



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Integrative Design, Arts, and Technology

Undergraduate Programs | IDeATe Courses | IDeATe Resources | IDeATe Spaces

IDeATe › IDeATe Resources › IDeATe Lending Collection

IDeATe Lending Collection & Office

The IDeATe Lending Office in Hunt A29 has an extensive collection of equipment that can be browsed via the University Libraries Catalog—here's a direct link to the IDeATe Lending Collection. Borrowers must have their Carnegie Mellon ID card ready to present when borrowing an item.

The IDeATe Lending Collection is a university-wide resource consisting of audio/video, photographic, and sound recording devices such as digital cameras, video recorders, microphones, and projectors. Items are designed to support the entire Carnegie Mellon University campus community and may be borrowed by any students, faculty, and staff at Carnegie Mellon's main Pittsburgh campus.

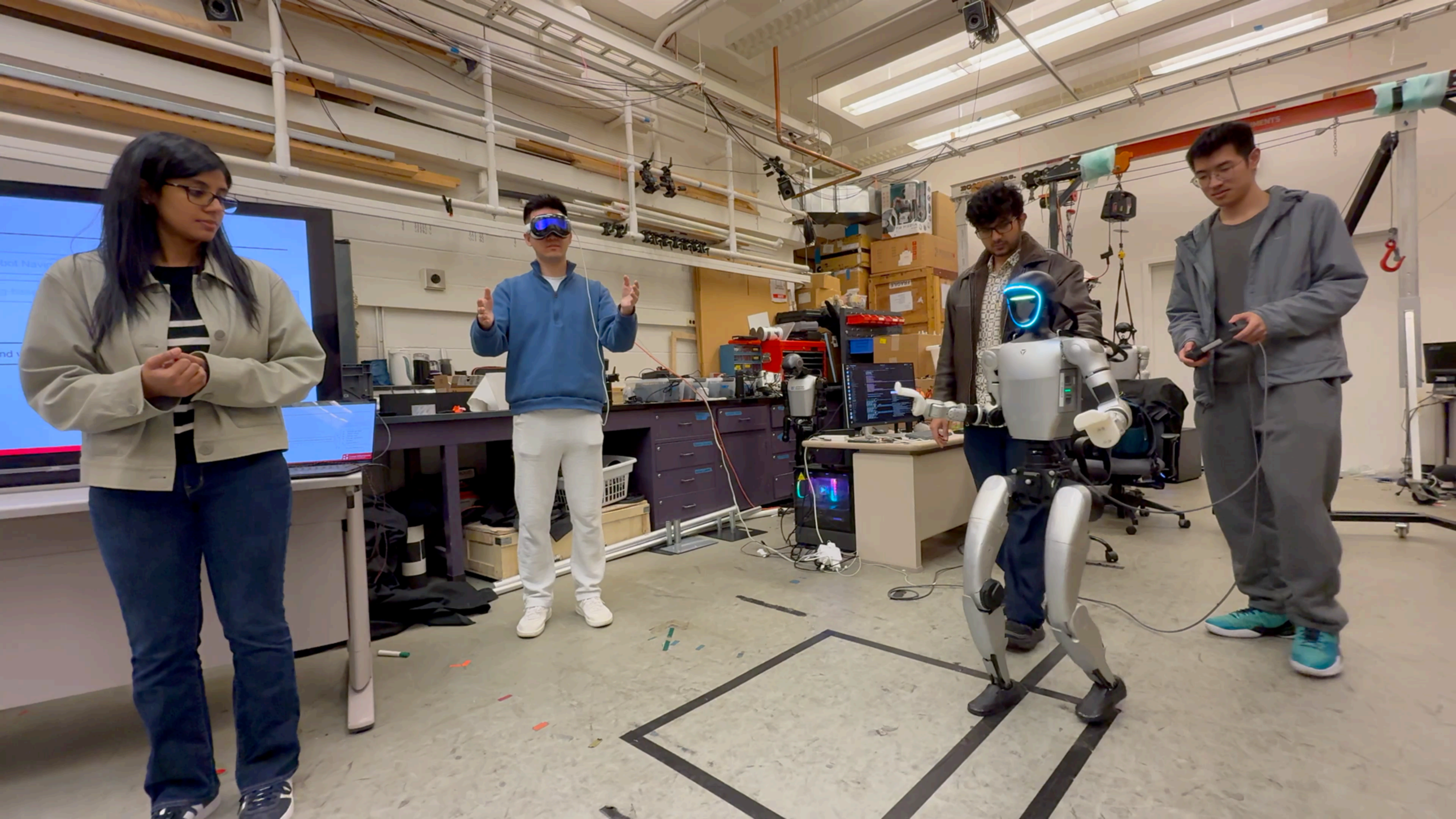
The IDeATe Lending Office is located in the basement of Hunt Library directly across from the elevator, in room A29. **Check the current hours.**

B-Roll

Gathering your own video clips

- Stabilize your camera.
- Think about how the shot is composed.
- Should it be a static shot?
- Pan, tilt or physically move the camera slow and smooth.
- Let’s compare b-roll from my “good” cam vs iPhone 16 Pro


EARNING SC
OR INNOVA



Audio is King

If your audio sounds bad, people will tune out.

- You need an audio strategy.
- Avoid noisy / echo areas
- Can you use a wireless lav mic?
- Interviews often done with mic on boom. ***Proximity.***
- *Rooms with rugs, heavy curtains*



Audio-Technica Pro 70 Cardioid Lavalier Microphone

A little more on mic proximity…

Camera + separate audio device

- It is possible to use the audio from a well recorded source instead of the audio recorded with a distant built-in mic
- This is called “dual system” and putting them together is easy
- Adobe Premiere uses the **synchronize** feature. After selecting the two similar audio sources, it will use the poor audio to sync the good version.

Enhance Speech

v2

Drop audio or video to enhance

Choose files

MONO-007.wav v2
01:01:44

Files will automatically delete after 10 days.

MONO-007.wav v2

6:59 1:01:44

Original Enhanced

Speech 90%

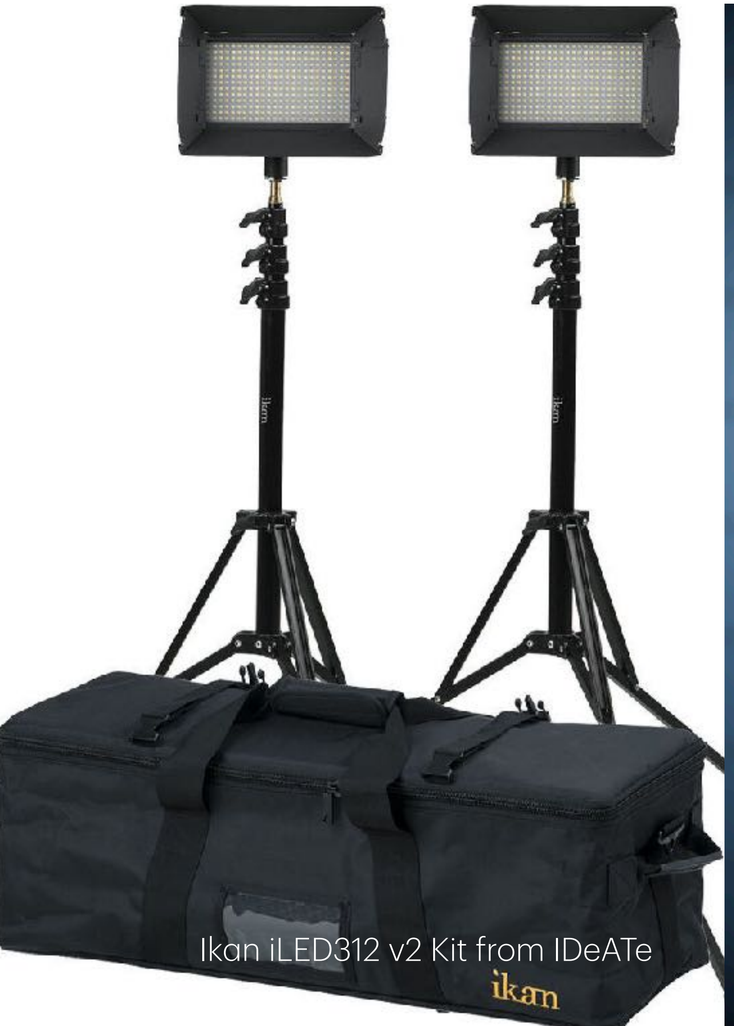
Less More

Background 10%

Less More

Lighting Basics

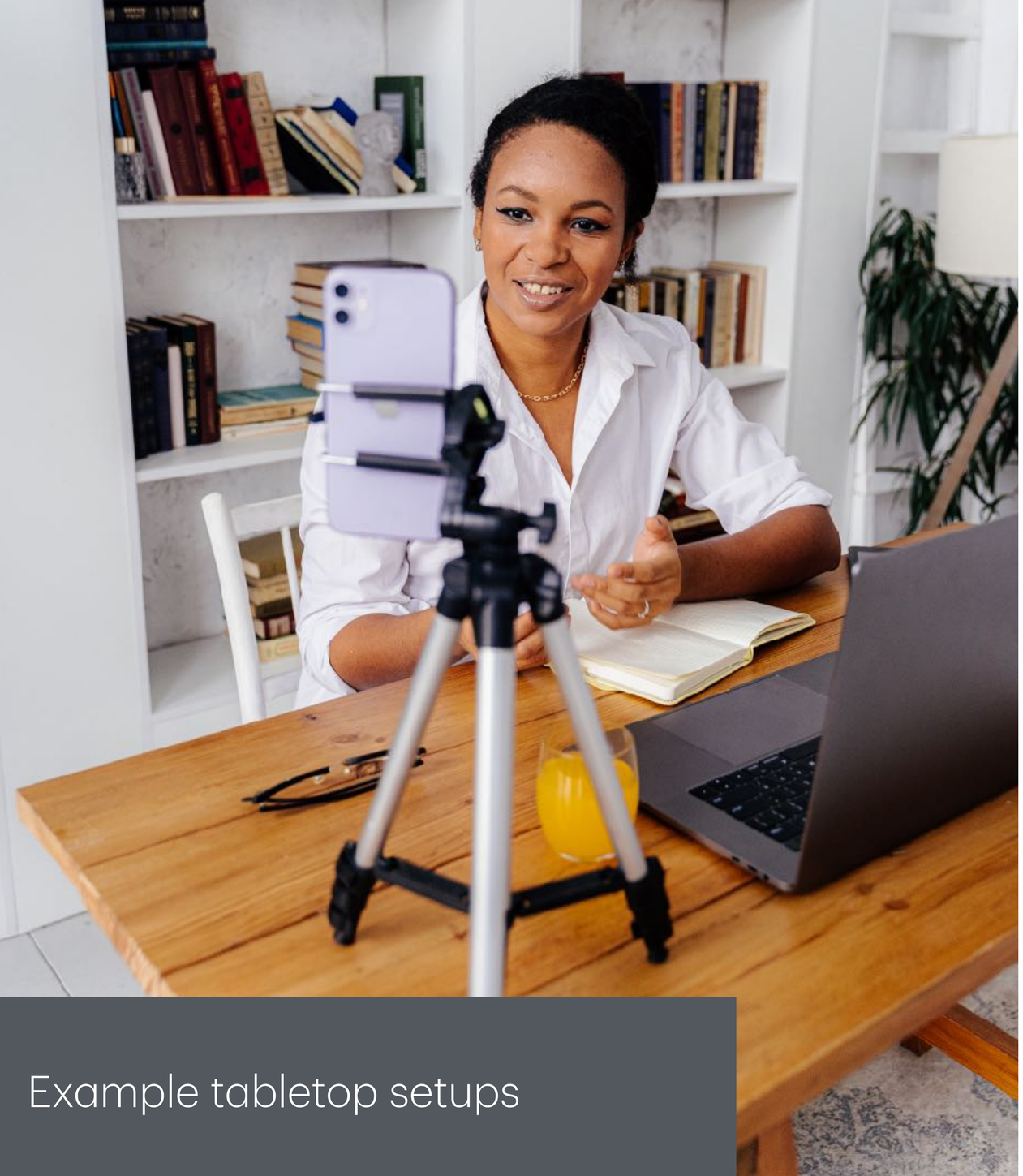
https://youtu.be/nQ0eBkAX6xo?t=379



Ikan iLED312 v2 Kit from IDeATe



Credit: Curtis Judd / Online School for Video Lighting and Sound



Example tabletop setups

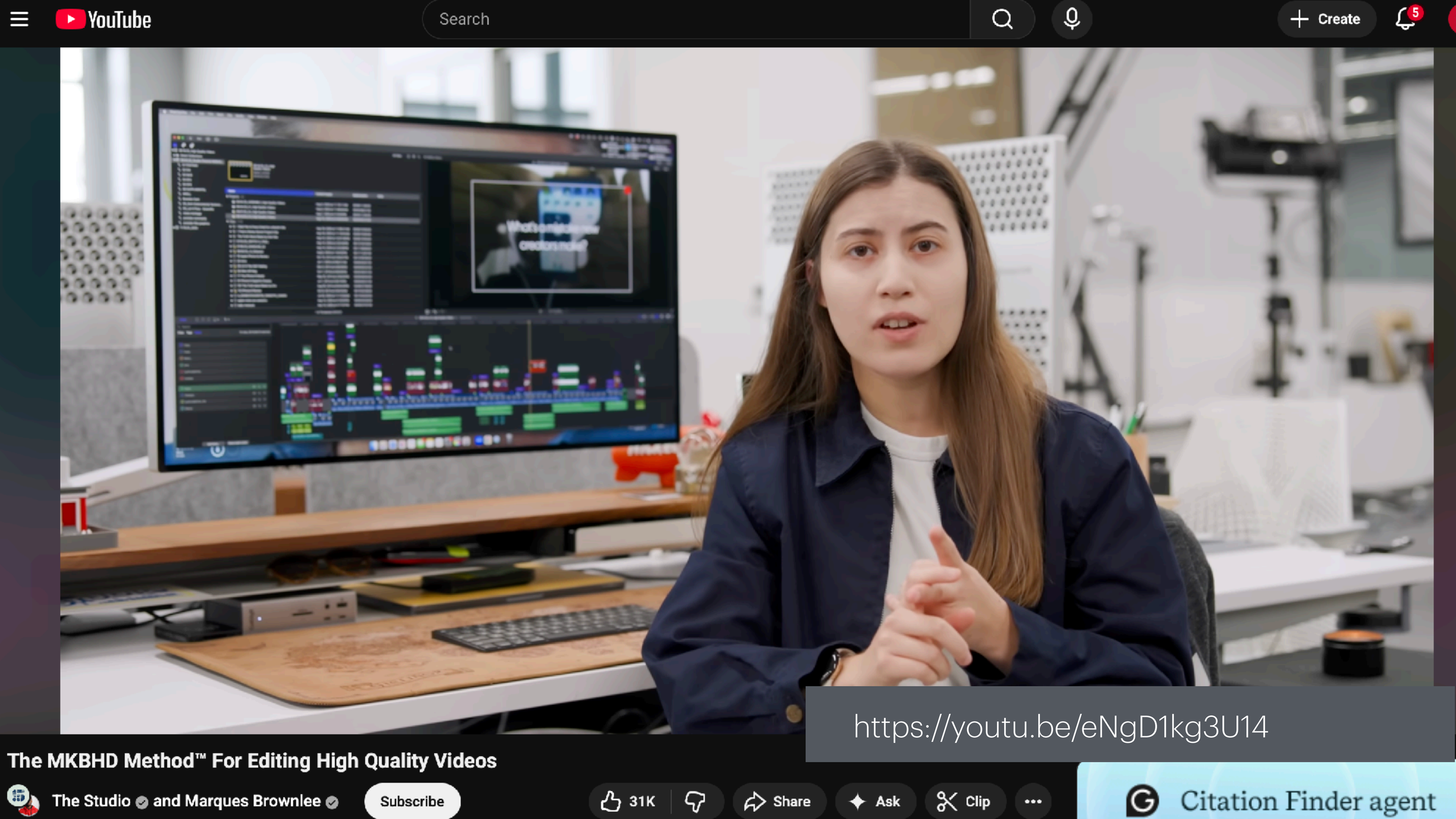


Pexels,
Mizuno K

Editing

Where it all comes together.

- Adobe **Premiere**
- Apple **Final Cut Pro**
- Black Magic Design **DaVinci Resolve**
- **Many others that will get the job done**


YouTube
Search
Create
5
https://youtu.be/eNgD1kg3U14
The MKBHD Method™ For Editing High Quality Videos
The Studio and Marques Brownlee
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May 19, 2023 (5)
Cole Herber
Undergraduate Research Assistant
Carnegie Mellon University
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Aug 26, 2024 (1)
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