



Changing Minds

■ NICK DAGER



Five years ago, Diane Cricchio, a freelance video editor, leased an Avid Media Composer editing system and set up shop in the living room of her apartment in Yonkers, New York. Her clients loved it, but, she says, "my landlord didn't like the people coming in and out." So she moved



her business, TimeLine Video, a few miles up the Hudson River to Irvington, where she leased a 300-square-foot space in a renovated boathouse on the water's edge. Two years ago she added three employees, a second Media Composer and 500 square feet of space. She also met Vicky Accardo, creative director at Minolta. The rest, as they say, is history.

For years, the company's brand-defining tag line has been "Only from the Minds of Minolta." Times change, and today Minolta is redefining itself. No longer just a camera company, it offers a range of digital office tools. As part of the changes, the old tag line is being dropped in favor of "Minolta: Do Something Important," which was developed by the advertising agency Hill Holiday.

TimeLine Video was hired to produce the film that introduced the new tag line at the Minolta business-product group's annual two-day

meeting. Although Cricchio has produced nearly 100 corporate-meeting openers similar to this one, this was her first project shot on 35 mm film. "The biggest challenge was the budget," Cricchio says of the \$40,000 she was given to create the 90-second opener. That and relying on the judgment of the cameraman and crew.

Cricchio says she's used to producing video, but with film there's nothing to see when you're on the set. "Is it in focus?" was one of the issues. "The leap of faith to spend \$3,500 on film," she says, was another. But she praises Tarquin Cardona, her director and cameraman. They met a few days after she got the assignment. Cardona showed her tear sheets of his work and, based on those and his reputation, she gave him the job. "He delivered exactly what those tear sheets



looked like," says Cricchio. "He has a nice eye and a good sense of humor."

Pre-production took two weeks. For the most part, Cricchio and her staff were given free rein regarding what to shoot. "There was no preconceived idea," she says. "We had a clean slate. Our own take was to imagine how a Minolta employee feels about the company and its mission and to try to answer the basic

question, 'What matters to me?'"

The shoot was cast over a weekend by the Marcia Greco agency and shot in New York City four days later. Cricchio wanted the five ethnically diverse actors to have props that represent both diversity and different facets of life lived to the fullest. "What we came up with," she says, "were simple objects, symbols: a bonsai tree, an exercise bike, a fresh



carrot." The models were dressed in casual clothes of gray, khaki and green so that attention would be drawn to the people and the symbolic objects. "It couldn't be about the clothes," she says.

Changing the image of a company is difficult, Cricchio says, but she believes that the film her company produced will help Minolta start the process. "I love these short-format pieces," she says. "I love making beautiful things. The corporate video world is so sophisticated now. It has to look like television." ■

