

Dan Hayes



Dan Hayes is a documentary filmmaker and founding partner of Freethink Media, a creative communications agency based in Washington, DC.

Realizing he couldn't draw, paint, or wield any artistic instrument particularly well, Dan's passion for filmmaking started at Wauwatosa East High School. As a student in Mrs. Kelly Frederick's photography class, he learned the essentials of composition and the power of visual communication.

After his graduation from Wauwatosa East in 2001, Dan went on to major in Mass Communication at Miami University and began experimenting with video. Outside of class, he started watching films by Errol Morris, DA

Pennebaker, and the Maysles brothers and developed an interest in documentary filmmaking.

Shortly after his graduation in 2005, and with very little experience, Dan created his first feature documentary, a behind the scenes look at the Miami University Men's Glee Club -- a 100-man chorus with a 100-year tradition at the university.

In 2007, Dan was hired as a video producer by Reason.TV, an online video channel devoted to libertarian journalism. He produced videos on a wide range of topics including economics, politics, and culture. In November 2009, he went to film a group of Wisconsin-based World War II veterans visiting the WWII Memorial in Washington, DC through a program called "Honor Flight." It turned out to be a life changing experience.

The veterans Dan interviewed opened up and shared about their war experiences and about their lives after the war. With 1000 vets dying every day, time was running out to capture their stories.

In the fall of 2010 Dan founded Freethink Media and began production of his second feature length project. *Every Day is a Bonus* documents several of the most recent trips of the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight of Wisconsin. Dan and his team have captured over 100 hours of footage. The film is in the final stages of post-production and will be released to the public in the spring of 2012.

In addition to this film project, Freethink Media has grown to six full-time staff and produced dozens of web videos that have earned millions of online views. Videos produced by Freethink have appeared on national broadcast television shows like Fox's *Special Report with Bret Baier*, Comedy Central's *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, and *The Colbert Report*.