



CASE STUDY #7: TRAVELING HEALING ROADS WITH IMPACT MONTANA



CLIENT OVERVIEW

IMPACT MONTANA is a nonprofit committed to supporting Montana's military veterans, active-duty service members, first responders, and their families. Through holistic programs that address physical, emotional, and mental wellness—including assistance with PTSD, trauma recovery, and community reintegration—**IMPACT MONTANA** provides critical support where it's needed most.

THE CHALLENGE

IMPACT MONTANA needed a compelling video to promote and honor its annual "**Montana Warrior Ruck & Team Challenge**"—a physically demanding event held in the mountains that serves as both a community builder and a powerful metaphor for the emotional burdens carried by our nation's protectors.

The goal was twofold:

- **Inspire new participants, donors, and sponsors by showing the meaning behind the event.**
- **Communicate a deeper narrative—this wasn't just about endurance or competition, but about healing, sacrifice, and camaraderie.**

Key challenges included:

- **Capturing emotional resonance without veering into cliché or over-sentimentality.**
- **Balancing high-intensity visuals with reflective, solemn storytelling.**
- **Making it clear that this event is just the beginning of a broader support network for trauma-affected heroes.**

THE SOLUTION

GENTLE THUG VISUAL MEDIA crafted a narrative arc that honored the event's physical demands **while illuminating the deeper journey of healing**. This wasn't just a highlight reel—it was a call to action, a tribute, and a love letter to resilience. Strategic choices included:

- **Opening Imagery:** Stark stock visuals of veterans in combat zones and first responders on duty set the tone—showing where their stories began.
- **Poetic Voiceover:** Lines like "*At Impact Montana, we proudly use the word... 'warrior'*" guided the viewer from sacrifice to struggle.
- **Visual Transition:** Drone shots of the Great Divide Ski Area and group unity scenes signaled a shift from survival to support—"But healing needs a different kind of story."
- **Montana-Rooted Visual Language:** Wide-open spaces, mountain trails, and moments of stillness emphasized the landscape as both backdrop and balm.
- **Multi-Use Deliverable:** Optimized for social media sharing, fundraising events, and web placement.

THE PROCESS

- **Pre-Production Planning:** Collaborated with the **IMPACT MONTANA** team to define tone, mission-aligned messaging, and key emotional beats.
- **Stock + Original Footage Blend:** Carefully curated stock visuals of wartime moments and real-world first responder scenes, then transitioned into footage from the Ruck event, emphasizing contrast and continuity.
- **Script and Voiceover Development:** Crafted a sparse, evocative script that allowed the visuals to breathe—delivered via voiceover with restrained power.
- **Post-Production & Sound Design:** Layered atmospheric audio and cinematic music to guide the emotional arc. Refined color grading and transitions to match pacing and message.

THE RESULT

- **Emotional Impact:** Immediate positive response from the **IMPACT MONTANA** team. The video resonated with veterans, families, and community members alike.
- **Donor Engagement:** Deployment of the video helped raise visibility and awareness with prospective donors and corporate sponsors.
- **Community Momentum:** Participants from past years shared the video, widely expanding the organization's digital reach.
- **Lasting Asset:** The video is now a cornerstone of **IMPACT MONTANA's** digital storytelling—used across their website, social media, and in-person presentations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Start with Sacrifice, End with Hope:** Audiences connect deeply when shown not just what's hard—but what's possible.
- **Montana Matters:** Local visuals ground the story, reminding viewers this work is rooted in the communities they call home.
- **Less Is More:** Minimal script, intentional pacing, and quiet moments speak volumes in trauma-informed storytelling.
- **Events Are Just Entry Points:** Strategic video should open the door to the broader mission—and keep it wide open.

CONCLUSION

For nonprofits like **IMPACT MONTANA**, storytelling isn't just marketing—it's ministry. By trusting **GENTLE THUG VISUAL MEDIA** to help shape their message, they now have a video that doesn't just show an event—it **echoes a journey**. From warzones and emergency scenes to winding trails in the Great Divide, this case study proves that **healing needs a different kind of story—and a different kind of video**.