



EXECUTIVE ELEVATION REPORT

Read it in one flight.

Product Videos



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Product Videos

Introduction

You're probably already investing in product-related video content – whether you sell software, technology or bubble gum. That makes sense. Many e-tailers report more conversions and have visitors that stay longer when watching video content¹. But are your videos enhancing the purchase process for your customers?

This report will give you insight into what makes a successful product video, how to measure success, and how to guide your team. You will understand the types of results to expect, from reduced customer service costs to increased sales.

We'll show you who's done it right and how to avoid some common pitfalls.

¹ Consumers are 64-85% more likely to purchase after watching a product video. Visitors stay two minutes longer when engaged with video.

Internet Retailer 4/2010 -- Comscore 8/2010

About

Executive Elevation

Each month, we write the Executive Elevation Report to help C-level staff understand the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Each report is crafted to help you understand and enable you to take action.

Read it on the plane

Our reports are specifically crafted to enhance your in-flight experience. With your phone off, your email unavailable and your tray table down, you can focus on becoming an expert in key aspects of digital marketing. You can enjoy this white paper in a number of ways:

- Real Paper – Download and print the report. Add a bulldog clip to conveniently bind it together for a true analog inflight experience.
- PDF On Screen – If you can't fathom printing and lugging this report around in your briefcase, we understand. Download the PDF and open it on your laptop, iPad, Kindle or Nook as soon as you reach cruising altitude.

Feedback

Your feedback, insight, and questions are valuable to us and will help shape future reports and podcasts. As soon as you land, call our feedback line: 617.819.4308.

Leave a message with your comments. Be sure to leave your full name and company.

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Learn the Lingo

A glossary of key terms

Use the right terms meaningfully

You may be tempted to skim this section, but if you do, come back to it later. Using terms correctly will show your team and vendors that you know exactly what you are talking about. It will protect you from getting played by unscrupulous ‘industry experts.’

This glossary will help you sound as smart as you really are.

Definitions

YouTube

So you probably know what YouTube is – the largest video player by far, and it’s owned by Google. The channel is large enough to have its own set of terminology for you to learn. Here are some key YouTube terms:

Video Annotations or just Annotations

Annotations allow you to add an interactive element to your videos. However, there are some limitations. You can only add text, create multiple endings, or link to other YouTube videos. But you can do all these things from within or on top of the video.

Correct Use

“Can we add an annotation that links to our Product Demo video?”

Video Editor

YouTube's video editor allows rudimentary editing of videos you've uploaded. You can combine videos, trim clips, rotate clips, add music, insert transitions, and stabilize videos.

Correct Use

“Let’s just add a soundtrack with the video editor.”
“Why don’t we combine those two YouTube videos using their video editor?”

Playlists

Playlists allow you to group videos for continuous play, one after the other.

Correct Use

“Let’s make a playlist with all the Tips & Tricks videos for our products.”

Other Channels

YouTube isn't the only choice to stream video. Here are some of the other players.

Viddler²

Viddler is a business-friendly video host. Branded content is very welcome there. Big brands like Gawker and Sony Playstation use it.

Vimeo³

Vimeo is a creative community with some serious restrictions on commercial content. Your options on Vimeo are to really let your creative juices fly and create high-quality "non-commercial" or artsy content to build your audience.

Blip.TV⁴

Blip.TV positions itself as a whole new approach to network TV. They foster and promote a new generation of quality user-generated content. It's much more focused than YouTube, but the content is still working itself out.

Live Streaming Video

Although it's not mainstream yet, it will be soon. Brands like Best Buy and Post-it are using live streaming video to reach their audience in innovative ways. Don't start investing big money in live streaming video, but do sign up for Livestream's newsletter and watch one program a month.

- USTREAM⁵ - Ustream hosts a wide-variety of video streaming channels. Take a look at what Jason Sadler is doing with his audience every day.⁶
- Livestream⁷ - Livestream is the more brand-friendly video streaming solution, with a much more professional interface and business model. Brands like Facebook, Best Buy and Post-it are all using Livestream to execute their live video strategies.⁸

Other Terms

Tagging

Tagging means attaching keywords to content. Most video sites have a limit on the number of tags you can use. Tags help people and search engines find your content.

Correct Use

"Make sure you tag the video with the SKU."

² <http://www.viddler.com/>

³ <http://vimeo.com/>

⁴ <http://blip.tv/>

⁵ <http://www.ustream.tv/>

⁶ <http://www.ustream.tv/iwearyourshirt>

⁷ <http://www.livestream.com/>

⁸ <http://www.livestream.com/liveatbestbuy>

Drop-off

This is when people stop watching a video. It is a good metric to look at when analyzing the performance of a video.

Embed

This is when you use the code provided by the streaming video host and place the video into another context.

Permissions

Most video sites give you a semblance of control over how public a video is. Permissions let you restrict or grant access to playing a video or leaving comments. You can distribute to a restricted audience in several ways.

Viral Video

There is a reason we have used quotation marks around 'viral' at times in this report. You can't *make* a 'viral video.' You can make a video, and it can spread in a viral fashion. Anyone who tells you differently is lying.

Correct Use

"What's the drop off point on that video?"

Correct Use

"I embedded my video on our product page."

"I used the embed code and put it on your Facebook wall."

Correct Use

"Set the permissions to allow comments with approval only."

Wrong Use, Right Use

WRONG: "All we need is a viral video. Then everyone will love our new product."

RIGHT: "What can we glean from the success of that viral video? It must tell us something about our customers."

The Landscape

Taking in the broad view

Product Videos Are for Everybody

As early as 2009, 67% of senior executives identified product-related video content as a priority for their digital marketing budgets.⁹ Zappos, one of the most successful online retailers, has produced over 50,000 product videos in-house, and conversion rates have increased anywhere from 6-30%.¹⁰

It isn't just Zappos that's seen the positive return on creating great videos. Ebags.com, an online retailer of backpacks and bags, reported a 138% higher conversion rate on product detail pages when a customer watched a video. Even CleanAirGardening.com reported a 20% increase in conversion for products featuring video presentations and, maybe more importantly, they saw a reduction in product returns.

Delivering Results

Measuring the success of your video content shouldn't rely solely on the number of times the videos are viewed. We recommend that you use a set of industry benchmarks to set and manage your expectations for the video content you create.

Reducing Returns

Some retailers have begun measuring the success of their video content by watching the rate of product returns fall by as much as 27%.

50,000 Product Videos Isn't Enough

By November of 2010, Zappos announced that they had released the 50,000th product description video shot in their 10 video production studios by their in-house team.

Most online retailers report anywhere from a 64 - 85% increase in conversions for products that include product demonstration video content.¹¹ But that's not the only place to look for measurable impact. Retailers have also seen a reduction in the number of product returns – up to 27%. One contributing factor to this reduction in returns may be that video demonstrations help manage a consumer's expectations for the product upon receipt.¹²

⁹ PermissionTV Survey 2009

¹⁰ Rico Nasol, Zappos, ReelSEO Interview, 2010

¹¹ Internet Retailer 4/2010 and Comscore 8/2009

¹² PFI Western VideoCommerce.org 12/2009

Types of Product Videos

Successful product video strategies vary widely depending on each brand's persona, voice and values. In general, product-related videos are not meant to 'go viral.' They're meant to help a consumer make a more informed purchase based on the product's features and functions. That being said, some product video campaigns like the now famous Will It Blend videos, have become viral sensations. Videos like this series meet our criteria for a product-related video by demonstrating the product's unique values: power and function (and of course the 'smoothie button').

Here is a synopsis of the types of product-related video content we've uncovered in our research:

Product Demonstrations

These basic videos are primarily designed to help consumers gauge everything from the scale (size) of a product to the primary features and functions the product offers.



Swype Demo Video

Not all product demonstrations need a voiceover. Product demonstration videos are specifically meant to show you the product. This video demonstration from Swype has no music, no voiceover, no sound effects at all, but beautifully demonstrates the capabilities of their product.¹³



Breville Demonstration Video

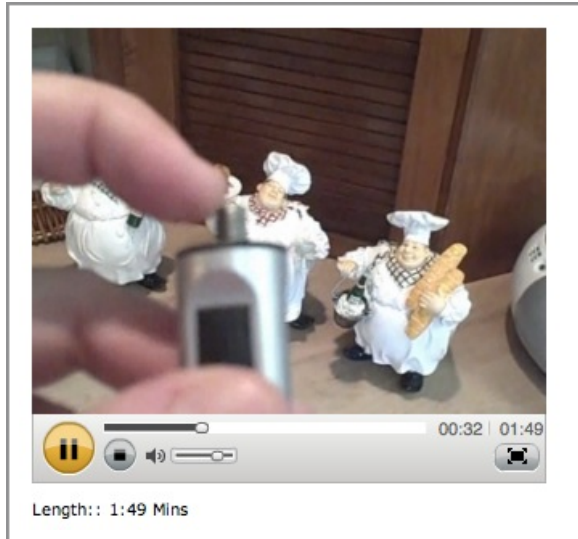
Other product demonstration videos include talent supplied by the brand. With well-scripted content and slick editing, they are designed to showcase the wide variety of features and functions of more complicated products or services.¹⁴

Testimonials / Reviews

Testimonial or review videos can be created by the brand or by influencers, prosumers, or consumers in the marketplace. Leveraging video testimonials and reviews can be a powerful way to demonstrate the features and functions that your consumer base believes make your products or services unique. Reviews can also help consumers identify with the products.

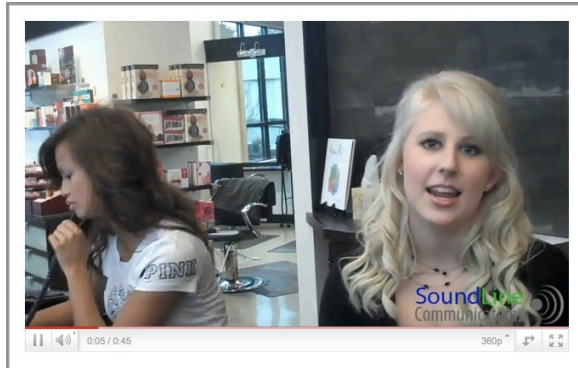
¹³ <http://swypeinc.com/product.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.brevilleusa.com/cooking/the-compact-smart-oven.html>



Amazon Customer Reviews

In 2007, Amazon.com invited consumers to upload their own video reviews and testimonials. These videos vary in quality but heavily influence consumers' decision making. Amazon also has the Amazon Vine program, enabling a select group of customers to post reviews about pre-release items to help other customers "make educated purchase decisions." This service isn't limited to video reviews but can be extremely helpful in seeding product reviews and testimonials for product launches.¹⁵

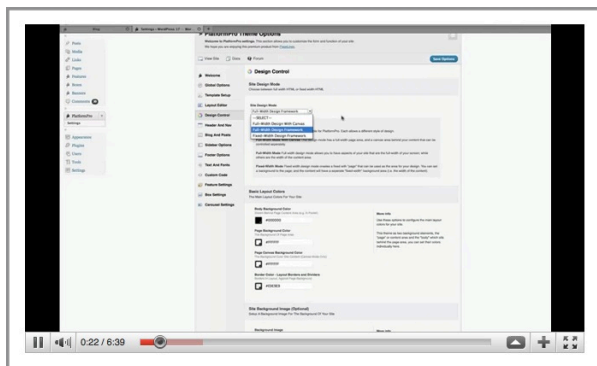


SoundLine MBX Testimonials

Service-related businesses have made heavy use of video testimonials for at least a decade. SoundLine MBX, who sell VOIP telephony services, produced testimonials designed to convert customers from a competing service. The testimonials are short and feature customers who were unhappy with the service they received from Jive Communications.¹⁶

How To / Tutorial Videos

While many consider tutorial videos to be support related, there is tremendous value in providing them as part of the pre-sale process. Apple uses support-oriented content to showcase how easy-to-use and intuitive their products are. This convinces consumers that their design innovations are specially built for consumers.



PageLines Support Documentation

PageLines makes software themes for the Wordpress blog platform. They have well-formatted support documents that include video demonstrations of their software in action. These support videos show how easy their software is to use. However, it's not included in their pre-sales material. As you begin building your product video strategy, consider including support content in your pre-sales distribution strategy.¹⁷

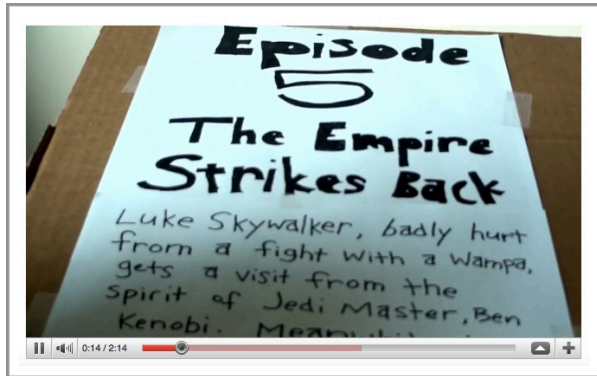
¹⁵ <http://www.amazon.com/gp/vine/help>

¹⁶ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N8HI_RCcNk

¹⁷ <http://www.pagelines.com/docs/design-control>

Gimmicky Video

If you have a clear and deep understanding of the audience for your products and services, consider creating gimmicky videos like the Will it Blend team.¹⁸ Fun, 'viral' video content can be a great way to get consumers to share your product content with the goal of increasing awareness for your products or services.

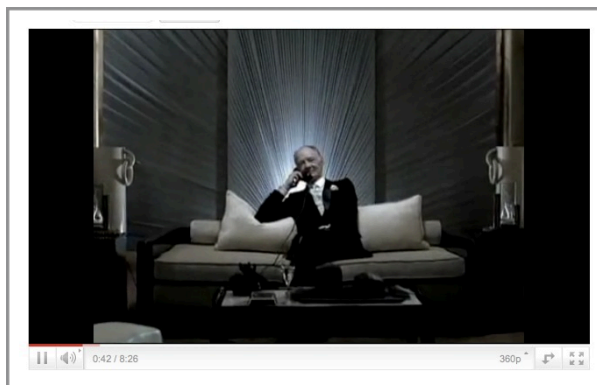


ThinkGeek.com

ThinkGeek.com pride themselves in selling the 'geekiest' products on the planet. They've built a clear understanding of their audience and know what kind of content their consumers will engage with and share outside of their online eCommerce platform. They also pride themselves in embodying the 'geek' within. Their video for the Tauntaun sleeping bag is a great example of the kind of content that showcases the product they're selling in a fun and entertaining way.¹⁹

Digital Cinema

Think of digital cinema as a product placement opportunity rather than a direct product video. Luxury brands like BMW and Yves Saint Laurent have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars hiring big-name directors to create cinematic experiences designed to include their products. This can be effective for positioning new products or services in the marketplace and can generate interest with your most loyal fans.



Christian Dior and Lady Dior

In 2009, Christian Dior hired acclaimed film director David Lynch to create a digital cinema experience as part of their Lady Dior film series. Lynch has created similar work for brands like Gucci, Calvin Klein and Christian Louboutin.²⁰

¹⁸ <http://www.willitblend.com/>

¹⁹ <http://www.thinkgeek.com/geektoys/plush/bb2e/>

²⁰ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IL5Nnay5sKY>

Old Fashioned Advertisements

One of the easiest extensions of your product video strategy might be the repurposing of your television commercial as web-video to reinforce your message in the marketplace. Putting your 30-second or longer direct response ads online is a no-brainer in today's digital age.



SodaStream

SodaStream spent money generating demand via a massive direct response campaign. Then they re-cut some of their infomercial content to their website. For consumers looking to share the TV ad, this may not deliver the full experience, but it's a step in the right direction.²¹

Determining What Kind of Video is Right for You

While gimmicky video content can be fun to produce, and, sure, it *might* 'go viral,' focus most of your efforts on video that can have a measurable impact on your business.

Generate content that:

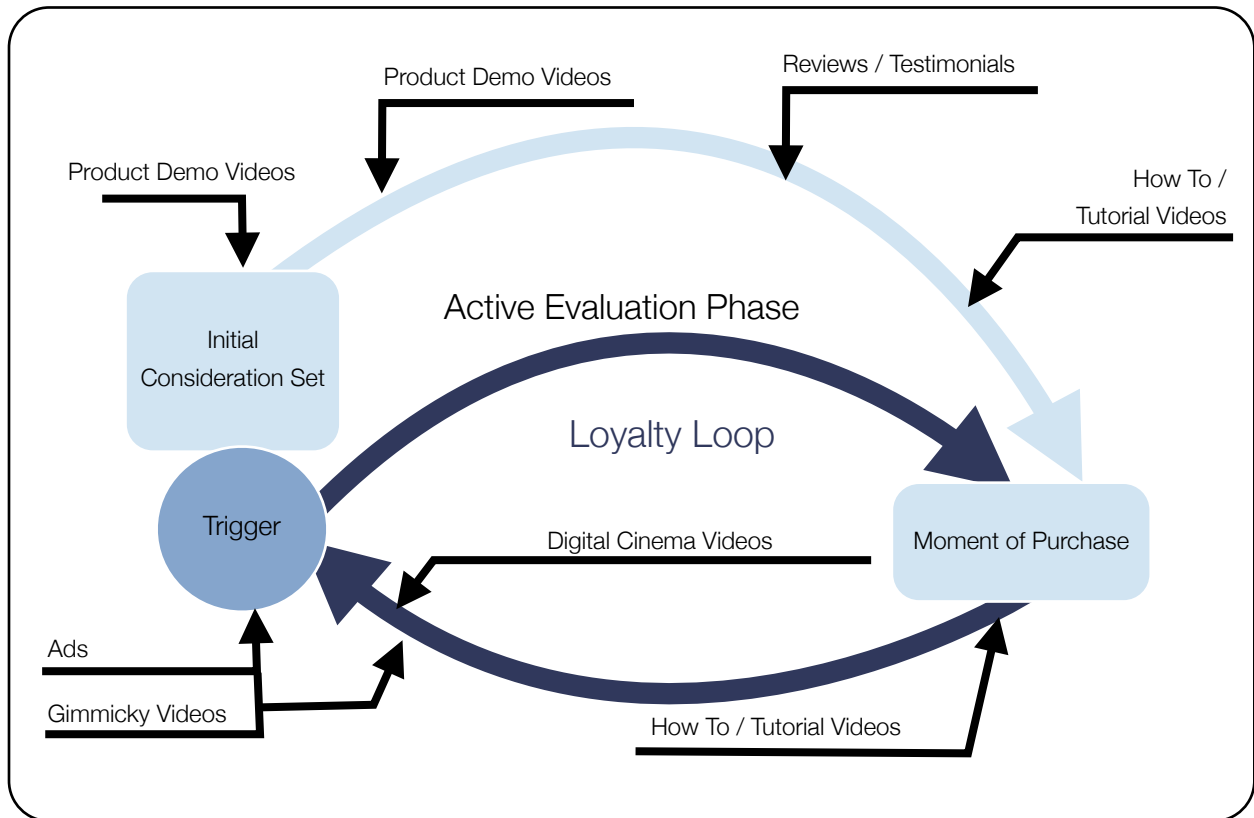
- Demonstrates the virtues of your product or service (product demonstrations)
- Ensures that you manage the consumer's expectations (how-to or tutorial videos)
- Highlights, creates or encourages glowing customer reviews and testimonials.

If you have existing video commercials or content designed for offline viewing, adding those to your digital portfolio is a great start. Get them out there.

²¹ http://www.sodastreamusa.com/product_info.aspx

The Customer Journey

Between pensiveness and purchase

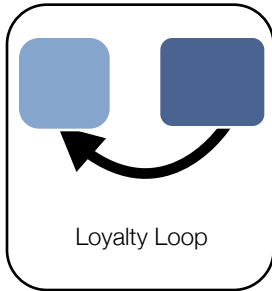


The Consumer Decision Journey illustrates where you should insert specific video types into the consumer experience.

Video in the Customer Journey²²

It's helpful to understand where each type of video fits in the customer's path-to-purchase. Anticipating different mindsets will help you create the right kind of content, distribute it properly, and contextualize it.

²² The Customer Decision Journey first appeared in June of 2009 as a new and revised model of understanding and mapping the consumer's path to purchase in an organized conceptual framework. The team at Tippingpoint Labs uses McKinsey's model to understand the digital path-to-purchase by focusing on building a strong loyalty loop prior to driving new consumers into the 'funnel' during the active evaluation phase. The full report can be secured from McKinsey at <http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com>



Loyalty Loop

Tutorial Videos

The Loyalty Loop is the first phase to consider. Customers who have already purchased your product may be seeking videos that help them resolve issues. They may also search for information to enhance their post-purchase experience. Tutorial videos created for the post-purchase experience can distinguish a fantastic experience from a disastrous one.

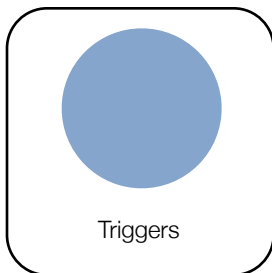
Generating new customers takes time, but ensuring the satisfaction of your current customer base can start today. Work with your support team to produce three to five videos that may reduce inbound support calls. Distribute them via email, your support platform, and on your product pages (if the video is helping with common user errors). Measure incoming call reduction and comments over time to determine if your videos:

- Are easy to find
- Address the right issues
- Result in a positive consumer experience

Digital Cinema, Ads & Gimmicky Videos

If you're going to release a new television spot, create an online cinematic experience, or just try and entertain your audience, first create and distribute the content to your most loyal customer base. Too many companies post their video online, send out a Tweet, post it to Facebook and hope it will take off and go 'viral.' The fact is, if your content doesn't motivate your most loyal customers to take action (buying or sharing), it probably won't motivate someone who's never heard of you.

Email your customers with a sneak peak. Make them feel special and invite them to be part of the in crowd from the outset. They can function as a high-value low-cost focus group. If they don't like it, share it and buy your product, it's time to revise your concept. This can protect you from investing too much time and effort in a video that wasn't going to work anyway.



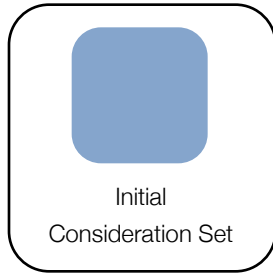
Triggers

Trigger content is designed to motivate a consumer to begin the (sometimes long) purchase process. Using video to trigger is difficult unless you spend some money to expose your potential audience to it.

Advertisements

The most likely trigger content you're investing in today is a television or rich media ad campaign. If that's the case, then you're probably already aware of the lift this kind of media can afford your products and your brand. That being said, if you trigger a consumer to enter

the Active Evaluation phase without the right kind of video content to support their interest, you may lose sales to competitors.

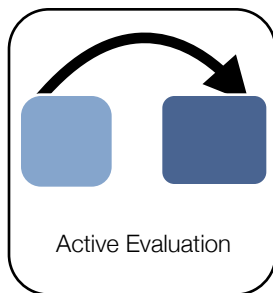


Initial Consideration Set

As soon as a consumer is in the market for what you offer, they generally have one primary brand in mind. If your brand created the Trigger, then it might be you. If not, how can your videos quickly invade that initial consideration set?

Product Demonstrations

One way to get into a consumer's evaluation set is to create videos that address the features, functions, or services that differentiate you from specific competitors in the marketplace. For example, if I sell mobile phone mounts for vehicles, I might create a series of side-by-side product demo videos showing our mounts staying attached on any road surface while a competitor's mounts fail. Make sure you have a video tagging and search strategy for any product demos that target consumers in the initial consideration and active evaluation phase of the consumer journey so consumers can find your videos.



Active Evaluation

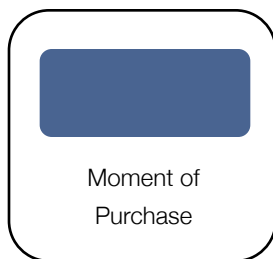
Like the Initial Consideration phase, the Active Evaluation phase is perfect for luring customers through videos. During this phase of the consumer journey, prospects consider and reconsider brands they encounter online. Any content you've created for the Initial Consideration phase should also be utilized here. Additionally, consider buying video placement where consumers do their research.

Customer Reviews & Testimonials

As consumers narrow down their brand choices, they'll start to consume customer reviews and testimonials. They will look for a reason not to purchase your product, rather than additional reasons to purchase it. Focus on content that reaffirms their decision by showcasing both third-party reviews and your own high-quality testimonials.

Tutorial Videos

Finally, present some of your best tutorial videos, especially if the consumer is concerned about ease-of-use, installation, or initial set-up. This kind of proactive support not only reduces support costs, but it can make a big impact on the final purchase decision. If your product looks easy to use (or if it's not, but you've got great online support content to guide them), you can drive them to the Moment of Purchase.



Moment of Purchase

You're only as good as your last customer says you are. Videos can help make the post-purchase experience personal, high-quality, and engaging. As soon as their order has shipped, send them a video that includes un-boxing instructions to head off any common issues. Or send a personal message from the CEO or product designers. The Moment of Purchase is an opportunity to quickly build a strong relationship and move your new customer towards the Loyalty Loop.

Some brands produce care-and-use videos and send them to customers a month or two after purchase. This kind of video experience reinforces their brand experience and generates new trigger events. It helps to build a strong loyalty loop after the purchase point.

Keys to a Complete Product Video Experience

Build a video strategy focused on the entire consumer journey. Remember to involve your support team in the creation of high-quality content to solve common issues and reassure new consumers.

Don't get distracted with fun, creative, 'viral' video concepts before testing them with your loyal customer base. If you're eager to acquire new customers through a mass media buy, evaluate the entire active evaluation phase to uncover the chinks in your armour. Where do your competitors show up in that journey? What kind of videos could sway a consumer's opinion? On which channels and platforms should you extend your content distribution?

Finally, reinforce the purchase decision of your newly acquired customers. Invite your team to come up with creative video concepts to immediately differentiate your post-purchase support and reaffirm brand loyalty.

Ground Your Strategy

Build a map of your consumer's journey today. Ask your team to focus on a marquee product or service. Get in the customer's shoes. Build a map of possible online destinations for researching a purchase. Note the videos they find. Investigate who created the video and their motivation (i.e., they manufacture a competitive product or they're an influencer in the space). Then create video concepts that you could insert into the consumer journey.



When You Land

We've created a series of PowerPoint slides designed to help you present the consumer journey to your marketing team. When you land, feel free to download the slides and watch the video on how you can present these to your team.

Steal These Slides

You can find these slides and the accompanying video at: <http://tippingpointlabs.com/videojourney>

What Works

Examples from outside the echo chamber

Proving the Business Need

You may be hesitant to jump into product videos, since they are perceived as an unproven strategy. Here are some examples of proven successes that have flown under the radar, with commentary from the CMOs who created them.

Gimmicky Video that Works: ThinkGeek.com

The Brand is the Message

ThinkGeek's video looks low-budget by design. Their whole brand embraces a lifestyle that mainstream retail does its best to ignore: geeks, those who love gadgets, SciFi, and/or fantasy.



"We're different. We do what we think is awesome and it has worked for more than eleven years," said Jamie Grove, Vice President of Evil Schemes and Nefarious Plans (a.k.a. Marketing) at ThinkGeek. "Video takes a lot more resources, a lot more time, and a lot more people. But, we weigh the values. If the product is enhanced by a video and there's a good hook, then we do it."

ThinkGeek is a very creative eCommerce channel that perfectly matches their implied unique value (we only offer products that geeks will love) with the homegrown aesthetic of low-fi video. From Nerf guns to remote-controlled spiders, their videos show people actually

enjoying the products in an approachable and relatable way. The people using the products in the video clearly would use them at home.



While the videos are plain fun to watch they also sell products very well.

A Good Example

ThinkGeek's Tauntaun Sleeping Bag²³ is a great example of creating fun, gimmicky video to entertain the audience with a product. The two-minute video is shot as a Star Wars spoof, complete with a cardboard version of the scrolling introductory titles. The video reenacts a famous scene from the Empire Strikes Back in which Luke Skywalker finds warmth on an ice planet inside a Tauntaun carcass. "Ultimately, it's about the customer and showing people having fun with the product," Grove said.

The audience immediately recognizes the scene made with children acting out the roles and the least special effects imaginable. It works because the audience can connect with it.

The video extends their humorous product description: "Classic Star Wars sleeping bag simulates the warmth of a Tauntaun carcass."

Threat Assessment

Let's address some of the doubts you may have when considering something like this for your brand.

"Too Silly"

The video revels in its amateur, homemade aesthetic. You might think that customers won't take the brand seriously if you don't make a "serious" video, or that amateur production is a reflection of amateur service.

"Too Long"

The attention span for web content – video, text, audio, and otherwise – is very short. Gimmicky videos, like those produced by ThinkGeek, run longer than average and tell more complete narratives than straight demo videos.

"Unnecessary"

The products ThinkGeek sells aren't exactly 14-piece home entertainment centers or IKEA bedrooms. They don't require a lot of installation or demonstration. Videos aren't necessarily an essential part of the product experience.

Despite these possible objections from a marketing perspective, ThinkGeek has pushed forward with increasing video production in their overall business strategy.

"We don't do videos for all products yet. We usually start with better margin, flagship products then assess each one as it comes along. We probably have video for fewer than ten percent of products right now but I'd like to get that to more than 30 soon," Grove said.

Enhance the product with a good hook

"Video takes a lot more resources, a lot more time, and a lot more people. But, we weigh the values. If the product is enhanced by a video and there's a good hook, then we do it."

Jamie Grove, Vice President of Evil Schemes and Nefarious Plans (a.k.a. Marketing) at ThinkGeek

²³ <http://www.thinkgeek.com/geektoys/plush/bb2e/>

How has it worked?

Qualitatively, ThinkGeek's gimmicky product videos amusingly convey the benefits of owning their products along with a relatable brand persona. Their videos hit all the right notes, showing benefits and functionality while staying true to the brand.

Quantitatively, the results are even better. According to industry analyst Internet Retailer, ThinkGeek's eCommerce revenues increased 55.4% to \$76.3 million in 2010 from \$49.1 million in 2009. Also, they're number 232 in Internet Retailer's Top 500 retail websites. And they achieve this without a brick-and-mortar presence.

Enhance the product with a good hook

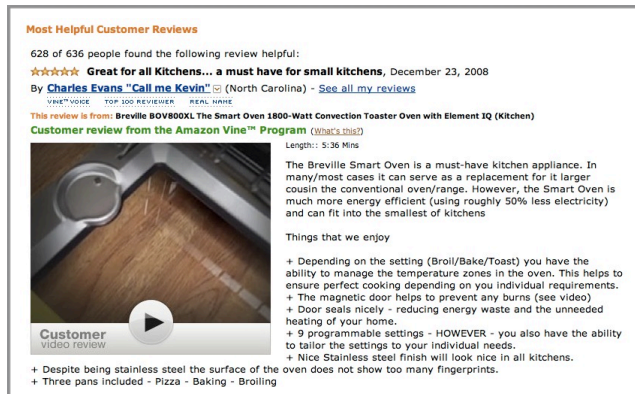
"We're hard-nosed retailers at the end of the day. ECommerce is the biggest and best video game and we want the high score. Video is an absolutely essential part of my strategy."

Jamie Grove, Vice President of Evil Schemes and Nefarious Plans (a.k.a. Marketing) at ThinkGeek

Product Reviews & Testimonials that Work: Breville and Amazon Vine™

Putting trust in the users' hands

Breville is an Australian-based countertop kitchen appliances manufacturer. They've made in-roads at U.S. retail but have found formidable opponents in long-established and trusted American brands like KitchenAid and Cuisinart.



Most Helpful Customer Reviews

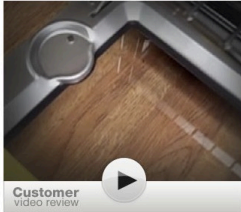
628 of 636 people found the following review helpful:

★★★★★ **Great for all Kitchens... a must have for small kitchens**, December 23, 2008
By **Charles Evans "Call me Kevin"** (North Carolina) - [See all my reviews](#)

VINE VOICE 100+ reviewers REAL NAME

This review is from: **Breville BOV800XL The Smart Oven 1800-Watt Convection Toaster Oven with Element IQ (Kitchen)**

Customer review from the Amazon Vine™ Program (What's this?)
Length: 5:36 Mins



The Breville Smart Oven is a must-have kitchen appliance. In many/most cases it can serve as a replacement for it larger cousin the conventional oven/range. However, the Smart Oven is much more energy efficient (using roughly 50% less electricity) and can fit into the smallest of kitchens

Things that we enjoy

- + Depending on the setting (Broil/Bake/Toast) you have the ability to manage the temperature zones in the oven. This helps to ensure perfect cooking depending on you individual requirements.
- + The magnetic door helps to prevent any burns (see video)
- + Door seals nicely - reducing energy waste and the unneeded heating of your home.
- + 9 programmable settings - HOWEVER - you also have the ability to tailor the settings to your individual needs.
- + Nice Stainless steel finish will look nice in all kitchens.

+ Despite being stainless steel the surface of the oven does not show too many fingerprints.
+ Three pans included - Pizza - Baking - Broiling

Breville reached out to Amazon²⁴ but not merely to sell more toasters. Breville signed up for the Vine program. Per the Amazon website:

"...Vine™ is a program that enables a select group of Amazon customers to post opinions about new and pre-release items to help their fellow customers make educated purchase decisions. Customers are invited to become Amazon Vine™ Voices based on the trust they have earned in the Amazon community for writing accurate and insightful reviews."

Breville Director of North American Marketing Rob Sheard understood the inherent value of product testimonial video from real consumers. "It is especially valuable to launch a product that you are confident will be well reviewed, that base of five-10 five-star reviews and video ... right out of the gate provides a strong foundation for the consumer to establish confidence," he said.

Vine participants created a number of amateur yet informative product demos and testimonials. If Sheard was concerned about getting bad reviews or untrustworthy content, he didn't show it.

"Amazon is the most trusted consumer review site. It ranks very high in organic search, and they are the #1 spender when it comes to paid [search]. So chances are, if the consumer is going through the decision process, it will play a factor."

Trusted 3rd Parties

"They are valuable not necessarily because of the quality of the video work but they deliver a first hand, in depth overview from a trusted 3rd party."

Rob Sheard, Breville Director of North American Marketing

²⁴ <http://www.amazon.com/Breville-BOV800XL-1800-Watt-Convection-Toaster/dp/B001L5TVGW>

Threat Assessment

"Loss of control"

Breville took a leap of faith with Amazon Vine. They put their brand into the hands of the consumers. There was no guarantee that the return would be positive. One defective product or bad user experience could have put Breville at risk for negative buzz. This is the key threat offered by user-generated video content.

The Vine engagement, however, has been high quality. Breville had strong enough products that they could rely on the Vine participants to produce fair and positive reviews. This is a result of a strong brand value to produce products of the highest quality that are focused on consumer needs. User-generated video content is an excellent proposition for high quality products.

How has it worked?

Amazon has become a top partner in Breville's sales channel.

According to Sheard, "eCommerce is the fastest growing segment of our business, and Amazon is our largest partner in that channel." Not only is Amazon a partner for the present, Breville sees the value in planning for the future:

"...[A]s mobile becomes more and more a part of multiple levels of the decision process (finding the item, learning more in store, comparing price, etc.), Amazon will probably grow in importance as the de facto information gateway whether via an app or mobile browser," said Sheard.

Straight Product Videos: J&P Cycles

Oversimplification or Under-complication?

Viral success cannot be manufactured. Even if it does happen, there's no guarantee that millions of views on YouTube will necessarily translate to sales. The most basic and intrinsic value of video is that it can show, rather than tell, a story. Straightforward product demos may seem basic, but they can provide the added push to convert a sale.

J&P Cycles is one of America's largest retailer of motorcycle accessories. A highly customer-centric company, J&P Cycles populates some of its product pages with basic demonstrations of their products in action. While not flashy, they show how correctly and effectively to use the product.

A Good Example

CycleCare Formula 22 is a very simple spray & wash for motorcycles. The product page at jpcycles.com includes two videos: one from J&P, and the other a low-budget demo straight from the brand, Cycle Care. The demo has all the production values of a home video of a little league game. However, it cuts all of the fancy production values to demonstrate the use and effects of the product.



Instead of having to wade through cumbersome specs and descriptions as to “why” a product works, J&P understands that its better to just show it working. There’s nothing more compelling than results.

Threat Assessment

J&P faces two tough challenges with this video strategy:

"Cheap production values"

The video they’ve embedded from Cycle Care has very low production values. This runs the risk of making the brands look unprofessional and/or unskilled. Consumers may be less likely to take them seriously.

"Off brand"

The video comes from another brand. the manufacturer of a product they sell. This means the aesthetic and brand values won’t necessarily match J&P’s.

These threats are a non-issue for J&P. They know that they have a loyal user base – having built a reputation on service – and that Cycle Care’s video pairs well with J&P’s own brand values. Further, they know their audience isn’t looking for glitzy, fancy video to know what will clean their rides. The expectation is results without fuss.

In considering and knowing their audience, J&P mitigates the potential risks of 3rd party, low-budget video.

How has it worked?

The video strategy is just one part of J&P’s overall commitment to customer service to drive revenue and cut costs. According to Internet Retailer, the J&P online service program has facilitated nearly \$50,000 per year in savings from effectively managing customer feedback.

“We’ve truly raised the bar on service to our customers and increased efficiency at the same time,” said Rich Brecht, Senior Contact Center Manager at J&P Cycles.

It’s all about the audience

ThinkGeek’s kitschy videos play to the eclectic personalities of its geek audience.

Breville, faced with the challenges of breaking into a new market, found success through fostering organic buzz by tapping into consumer-generated content.

J&P Cycles drove revenue and reduced cost with basic product demos that showed how their customers could easily and effectively use their products.

The unifying idea is that you have to match the content to the audience. Knowing and setting the audience’s expectations of your brand and products is key to creating and distributing video content that really works.

Instead of trying for big-blast ‘viral’ success, focus on meeting the needs of your base.

Videos As Customer Service

“We’ve truly raised the bar on service to our customers and increased efficiency at the same time.”

*Rich Brecht, Senior Contact Center Manager,
J&P Cycles*

Brandscape Architecture

Building and sharing audience

What's a Brandscape?

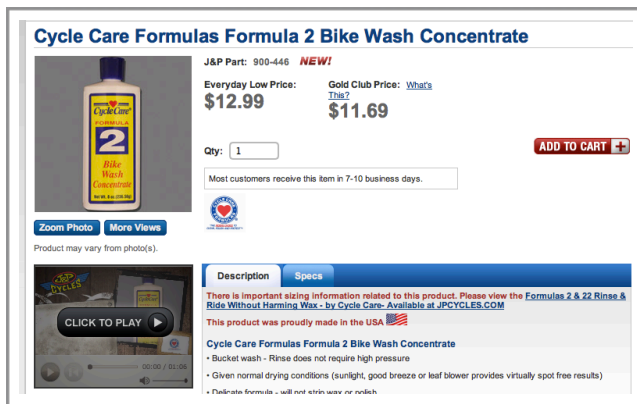
Different people use the term brandscape in different ways. But to us, a brandscape is a partnership with other brands whereby you share resources, audiences, and content.

A good example is Nascar. Owners put together crack teams of drivers. That's the content piece, racers racing. Nascar itself has a huge audience. And brands pay to get their logos out in front of that audience. The relationships go much deeper than just paying for some ad placement.

This same concept can be applied in exciting ways with product videos, limited only by your imagination and willingness to extend your reach. Some brands have access to a loyal audience. Some brands have big marketing budgets. Some brands have great content.

In many cases, brand partners have a combination of strengths and weaknesses in those three areas. Through strategic partnerships, they can play to the strengths and transform the weaknesses.

By partnering on a deeper level, each can get access to what they are lacking and build from there. The face of marketing is changing, but these three needs will remain.



J&P Cycles

An interesting example of a product video brandscape is J&P Cycles. They carry a wide variety of products that they don't manufacture. But they invite manufacturers to create videos about their own products.

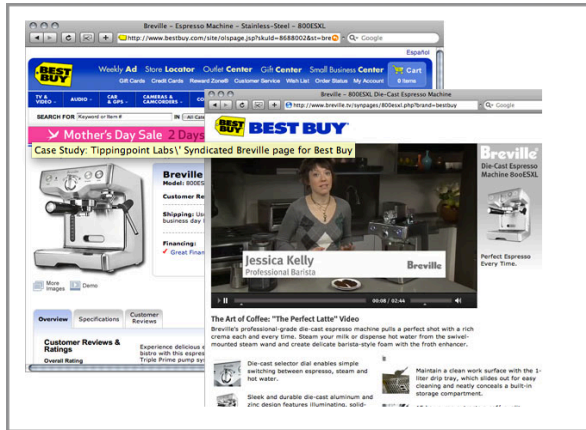
Then J&P adds some of their own branding elements to the videos and hosts them on the eCommerce product pages and YouTube channel.

In the case of Formula 2 Bike Wash, Cycle Care provides the valuable content that drives sales that impact both partners. If J&P had a loyal and valuable enough customer base, they could even charge brands for the opportunity to get these videos in front of those customers.

Brands like Cycle Care would be smart to pay in that instance, because it would give them the opportunity to differentiate and elevate themselves over their competition. The most valuable piece of the puzzle is access to a great audience. The more the audience trusts the brand providing the access, the better.

Key Learning

It's OK to let go of control over all your product video content. Let other interested parties step up and lend a hand. You'll save money and get a ton of value.



Breville

The opportunity to create content for eCommerce vendor partners is too good to pass up. Breville partners with both Best Buy and Bed Bath & Beyond.

Best Buy adds their own branding to the videos Breville provides. These syndicated videos had an immediate impact on sales. In the first month of having a video with it, one Breville espresso machine sold 15 times more units on BestBuy.com than the previous month.

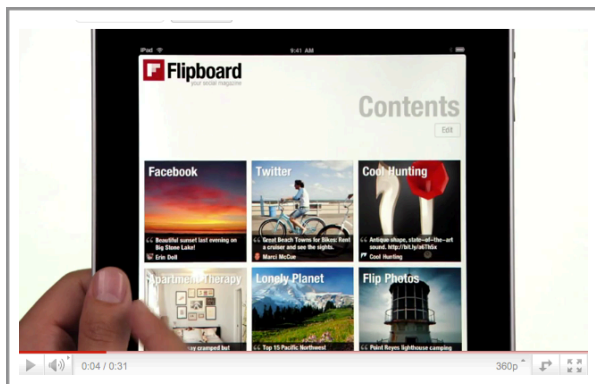
This brandscape is not as complex as some, but it doesn't have to be. The important thing is to get your product videos

in front of a valuable audience. Bed Bath & Beyond doesn't even rebrand the Breville videos, they just put them on their site with Breville's branding.

There is no reason to think that your product videos need to stay online, either. There are many ways to use product videos offline and in physical environments. Breville also has had success having DVDs of product video compilations playing on loops in retail environments.

Key Learning

Work with your retail partners to find out what kind of content they're looking for and then offer to provide it. It's a win win situation – you get more exposure and drive sales, and their customers have a richer experience and buy more.



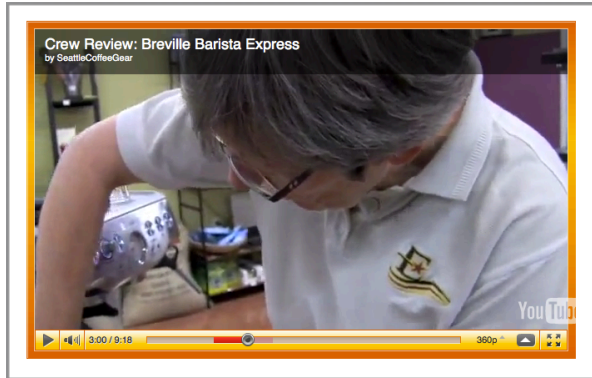
Apple

Another very visible example of a brandscape is the prevalence of apps in Apple commercials. By showcasing the brilliance and utility of apps created by other brands, Apple successfully shows the power of their own devices.

This is great exposure for the apps featured, as well.

Key Learning

It's OK to draw attention to the secondary partners that make your product work or work better. When they shine you shine.



Seattle Coffee Gear

Brandscaping your product videos doesn't just have to mean that you are supplying videos to retailers or having them supplied to you.

There are bound to be prosumers who are influential in your category. Many of them make video reviews for their blogs or YouTube channels. Don't forget that with the level distribution field online, they are brands, too.

Since we've been on the topic of Breville already, a perfect example is Seattle Coffee Gear. They make all kinds of coffee

and coffee product videos that use and review products, including Breville's.

Breville can embrace Seattle Coffee Gear's videos. They can post them on their web properties, tweet them, or even send out an email blast encouraging their audience to visit and watch their review videos.

Since the content is valuable, it reflects well on Breville to share it with their customers. At the same time, it promotes the brand and expertise of Seattle Coffee Gear. And that type of increased engagement and awareness can move product.

Key Learning

When people online or off say nice things about your product, spread the word. This applies even when they are just using your product in a meaningful way. Reviews and online video are user-generated product placement. Embrace it.

Distribution Portfolio

Utilizing appropriate platforms and channels

Get in front of the right eyeballs

To maximize the ROI of your videos, you need to distribute to multiple channels and to the right audiences. Take a balanced approach to channels in various phases of their life cycles to reach the most people. Some of these channels will be sure things, some worth a try, and some you'll want to experiment with lightly.

Sure Things

This is where your product video needs to be. Spend 50% of your time publishing and optimizing your content for these channels:

- **YouTube:** This is actually less about the community (in fact, YouTube comments are usually pretty valueless. Many of these channels are more about analytics and functionality. Videos on YouTube are easily shared in social channels and embedded on other sites.
Their analytics package is fairly robust, letting you know exactly where your videos are watched. They measure the drop-off of your videos so you know when people start, but don't finish, your video.
- **Your .com Product Page:** This may seem basic, but product videos are your richest online content about your products. Make sure they show up in the most content-rich page for the product. This will most likely be the top result for searches for your product. Make sure your video is prominent on the page with a big "Play" button on it.
- **etailers:** Wherever your products are sold online, especially Amazon, talk to retailers to ensure that your video appears. It shouldn't be too much of a lift for them to add a line of code from YouTube. Their channel will be more valuable to users as it incorporates high-quality video content.

Hedge Your Bets

Consider distributing your videos here. However, these platforms are in earlier life cycle phases. Don't spend more than 30% of your resources and time getting your video content here:

- **Facebook:** This popular social networking site is at the peak of its Escalation Phase and their traffic continues to rise. But the site is so big that a lot of the content is divided against itself. When simply adding video to your default page (the one for daily announcements), you run the risk of it getting lost in each user's deluge of content. Don't add your video to Facebook unless you already have a very robust communication strategy in place there. And even then, it would be wise to have a separate Video/Multimedia tab to ensure that it gets strong placement and isn't lost on your wall.
- **Press Page:** It's common for .com sites to have a press area that offers a chronological history of major PR events. These are often helpful for news media for product launches but are also traffic magnets for sites. If you're launching a new product and digitally reproducing the press release, it's OK to add the video. If the video is not available at the time of launch, don't worry about adding it later. Just make sure it gets to the product page. You're better off investing

your time in making sure you have high-resolution video, imagery, and other assets available for media outlets. Don't wall this off either; there's no benefit in making content unavailable to consumers.

- **Vimeo:** This emerging video channel is in the Gestation Phase of the New Media Life Cycle. The content is really high quality. If you're creating video with high production value, this may be a good channel to get honest feedback from a community that values video. It may not be the place to sell widgets, but it can help your overall video hook, esthetic, and branding. Avoid if you're producing low-budget, gimmicky video or videos with heavy marketing messaging.

Tread Lightly

These channels are a little green and not worth too much of your time. However, the right content creator can jump in early and help define and dominate them. Spend no more than 10% of your resources on them.

- **Mobile:** Mobile video marketing is growing quickly but is still in the early Adoption Phases of the New Media Life Cycle. Right now, if you're putting your video on YouTube you're doing all you need to for mobile. It will be interesting to see the different ways big brands approach mobile marketing (including 2D barcodes), but there's not much you need to do for mobile video yet.
- **Live streaming:** There are very few reasons brands need their own live video program, on TV or the web. For live video to work, it needs a reason to exist. Why make it live when you can record it and let it live on? The primary advantage of live video is real-time Q&A, but it can be risky. Look for opportunities to appear on existing live TV or web video as part of a brandscape or media opportunity before you produce your own.
- **Viddler:** This emerging video channel promotes itself as a video solution for brands. However, there's little more you can do here than you can already achieve with YouTube, and their audience is less than 1% of YouTube's. Their biggest selling point is advanced analytics, which can be beneficial. Try it, but don't rely on it.

The Agency Turf War

Assembling your troops

As you already know, the swiftly changing media landscape has wreaked havoc on the traditional agency models. Even the new "traditional" digital agencies are scrambling to keep up with the marketplace.

So who should you turn to for making your product videos? Or should you turn to anybody? It all depends on what you want to make.

What you want to make should rest heavily on your overall strategy. Strategy should come first. It's important that whoever is making your videos is accountable to someone who sees the bigger picture. Work with your agency partners to build a cohesive video strategy designed to be successful as a whole. Here are some things to keep in mind when you're navigating the agency turf war.

Public Relations Agencies

When it comes to earned media, your PR partners are surely creating content for electronic press kits (or digital media releases), they're probably scouring the web looking for great coverage from bloggers and video-bloggers. Your agency should distribute the videos they create on your existing YouTube or Vimeo channels – don't get stuck with their proprietary platforms.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
PR agencies are really well connected in the digital and media worlds. Rely on them to help generate testimonial videos and product reviews from their high-quality contacts.	Distributing their media kits outside of your existing video distribution strategy. Do what you can to use your existing video channels.	Provide a monthly report of video reviews and testimonials ranked by how influential the creator is and whether the review was positive, negative, or indifferent.
Powerful spokespeople have always been a forte of PR agencies. If you're engaging a spokesperson, have your agency think about the type of video content you could create with your spokesperson to enhance the customer journey.	When creating online video content with a spokesperson make sure your agency negotiates an infinite term of use and distribution for the videos.	Help you understand how influential the spokesperson is with an online video audience. Make sure you understand how your video content will be distributed by your spokesperson.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
As your PR agency secures video media appearances, make sure someone is capturing these appearances in digital form and that you understand the usage rights from the media partner.	Your PR agency's desire to target only the biggest media outlets. Invite them to find undiscovered talent that's already creating great video content and smaller, influential online outlets.	Inquire about behind-the-scenes video content if your company or hired spokespeople are booked on a video program. Think about how you might leverage that content.

Ad Agencies

If a 30-second (or longer form) TV spot fits into your budget and strategy, by all means go with a big ad agency. Make sure your branding "big idea" is carried through in whatever concepts they come up with.

You'll want to carry that big idea through in your less ambitious efforts. So if their concept stems from your product's unique value and benefits, it will be much easier to tie it all together, regardless of who produces your other videos.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
Ad agencies are powerful creative allies that work incredibly hard to penetrate the marketplace with well-crafted messaging. If you're creating spots with your ad agency, make sure they create a campaign with digital video extensions and a plan to execute on it.	Make sure they understand your desire to execute a longer-term digital video campaign that hinges on their initial video spot. Make sure you push hard to understand the digital video extension strategy.	Invite your ad agency partner to think about the entire customer journey and to provide you with a through-line of content that starts with their initial advertising concept but follows and extends the messaging further down the purchase path.
Given your agency's creative energy, invite them to help you build out your digital video channels on YouTube and Vimeo in a more brand-oriented manner. Tell them you're committed to these channels and excited about the creative potential.	Anytime your agency recommends creating a campaign microsite, make sure you push hard to understand the benefits and risks. Usually there's a more effective approach to prove the concept before investing in the microsite build-out.	Have your ad agency think about your channel page on Vimeo or YouTube as a destination worth buying advertising to attract viewers on the consumer journey. Ask them to build an entire strategy designed around the video you create and distribute there.

Social Media Agencies

Many brands are working with an agency that's focusing their efforts on sparking social media engagement. These agencies can be wonderful assets in helping distribute and promote your product video content. A word of caution: make sure they're communicating with your other agencies to gather a clear and global understanding of the video strategies and tactics being employed across your organization.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
<p>Your agency's proficiency in the social media world makes them a prime agent for identifying and encouraging the consumption of third-party product video reviews or testimonials.</p>	<p>Social media agencies are all hoping for a 'viral hit.' Push back on any 'viral' strategy that isn't conceived of as a valuable project without a concern for whether it will 'go viral.' Make sure they understand that a 'viral success' is a nice to have, not a must have.</p>	<p>Invite your social media agency to create a report, in collaboration with your PR agency, that chronicles the third-party video content created and how it was shared. Ask them to rank and review each piece of video to help you gauge the value of each piece created.</p>
<p>Social media agencies are well positioned to give you a better understanding of the influential market movers in your industry.</p>	<p>Reaching out to influencers can be a double-edged sword. Push back on concepts that rely on simply sending out product to influencers in the hopes of a review. Ask your agency partner to create a deeper, longer-term relationship with the influencers by having them solicit the creation of video reviews.</p>	<p>Rely on your social media partner to dissect the personalities they interact with online into a clearly articulated structure that helps you understand who influences purchase decisions in the marketplace. Invite them to create an influence pyramid and to share it with your PR agency.</p>
<p>Video comment, response, and subscriber-building exercises can greatly impact the reach of your video content. Your Social Media agency is positioned to help with this.</p>	<p>Buying ads on a platform like YouTube can push your video view numbers through the roof, but push back on this strategy alone as a driver for success.</p>	<p>Have your social media partner create a comprehensive promotion and distribution routine for the specific video channels, like YouTube, that you're posting video on. Make sure they're growing a valuable organic audience for your content.</p>

Digital Agencies

Your digital agency may be excited about your new-found enthusiasm for creating video content. They're adept at finding ways to highlight the content you're creating on your channel, but make sure they're thinking about the broader distribution footprint of content that you're creating.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
<p>Your agency understands the reporting systems you've integrated. Make sure they're involved in the integration and tracking of video performance.</p>	<p>You probably don't need to buy any new analytics packages to report on the interaction with your video content. Don't spend any money immediately on new tracking technologies, unless you clearly understand what new reporting it will deliver.</p>	<p>Have your digital agency assist in delineating which pages and products have video integrated into the pages. Ask them to help you build a set of custom reports that help you analyze the success of your video strategy.</p>

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
<p>With their expertise in new technologies, your digital agency can build out your channel pages on YouTube, Vimeo or Revvr.</p>	<p>Many digital agencies will pitch you on a proprietary video player or TV Channel for your website. Avoid this at all costs (unless you're dealing with rights-managed content).</p>	<p>Instead of building something new, have them focus their efforts on building out your broad brand footprint into the channels you're using.</p>

Your digital agency probably understands the power of features like video annotations, playlists and subtitles. Make sure they're involved in helping your video content creators leverage these tools.

Some digital agencies pitch a video distribution strategy that involves posting video on every video channel possible. Avoid this approach by ensuring they understand you're focused on specific channels for strategic reasons.

Make sure your digital agency provides you with clear guidelines, best practices, and insight into the channels you're using for video distribution. Encourage your other agency partners to work with your digital agency to ensure a consistent and successful approach to inter-connecting all your video content.

Media Buyers



When working with a media buyer, leverage the influence they have with your video distribution channel choices. For example, your media buyer may be able to help you get a "Brand Channel" on YouTube by leveraging their buying power with Google. Brand Channels are usually exclusively held for advertisers who spend a lot of money buying ads on YouTube. Your media buyer can be one of your most valuable partners if you ask the right questions.

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
<p>Promoting consumption of the videos you've created can be extremely powerful, even if you're using advertisements. Use your media agency to build a deep paid promotional strategy.</p>	<p>Rich media ad units can be fun, but they can also be expensive experiments with poor results. You may have great video content, but it probably doesn't warrant a rich-media ad unit.</p>	<p>Bring your media buying partner into the fold early and ask them to help you identify specific strategies across the consumer journey to promote your video content.</p>

Leverage Their Sweet Spot	Gently Push Back On	Ask Them To
<p>Your media agency understands the opportunities outside of the digital space. Leverage their understanding to explore traditional media buys that can expand the success of your video content.</p>	<p>Many media buyers focus on the biggest outlets. Sometimes, there's great value to targeting extremely niche websites to drive success.</p>	<p>Pull your media buyer into areas where they might not have originally looked for success. Ask them to uncover some relatively small sites where the content might be the most relevant.</p>
<p>Your media agency knows how to find value. They also know that they can leverage longer-term buys to get better rates.</p>	<p>Sometimes you have to buy campaign-oriented media, but think about building longer-term relationships with some of the video channels your content resonates with.</p>	<p>Work with your media buyer to devise a long-term approach to building a deeper relationship with specific online properties. Have them think outside the box and look for sponsorship opportunities where video content is already being created.</p>

When You Land

It is worthwhile to get all of your agencies working together on a cohesive product video strategy. When you land, set up a partner meeting and invite all of your agencies to participate. The goal of the meeting should be to outline a clear video strategy for your product videos and to hash out the role of each agency as it pertains to creating, promoting and distributing your video assets.

In-Source or Out-Source

Getting the work done

There are many factors to consider when developing a plan for your video resources. Anything you can't pull off in-house, you'll need to outsource. But, with the advent of online video, the lines between what you can and can't do have blurred. Not all video content needs to be expensive or have high production values. On the other hand, sometimes great production can be an important differentiator.

Strategic Video Partner

The first agency you should look for is a partner who can drive your video strategy. Since many, if not most, of your production options aren't going to have the chops to make sure your strategy is sound, find someone to drive the strategy and coordinate all your production efforts. You may have someone in-house that can fill this role. But make sure they're able to clearly articulate your product video strategy and the consumer journey.

This will also help alleviate the problems that can arise when so many agencies are trying to say that they can do anything whatsoever.

Once you have the strategic and coordination pieces in play, consider the rest of your options. Certain types of agencies are going to be great for some things and not for others.

General Video Production Houses

These outfits come in all shapes and sizes and competencies. It's important to ensure that your strategic and creative goals are clearly expressed. If you are leaning on them for creative, make sure they are engaging fully with your strategy.

It is very easy to have beautiful product videos that are very well made but have next to nothing to do with your overall product. Communication and reinforcement of your goals is key.

On the other hand, let these guys do what they do best. They should render an interpretation of your strategy that is appropriate for the medium they are working in. If you push them to try and express your idea too strictly or literally, you may lose some of the magic they can offer.

Product Demos

You probably will want to outsource your product videos. High production values are key to showing your product in the best possible light. Additionally, a well-produced video works best in retail environments and can be syndicated to your retail partners' sites.

Think about creating videos that will work online, but could become television spots or be shown on a retail store floor if they work. This bigger, more strategic approach to creating video content opens up options. We've had almost every single client end up using the online video content we created for everything from a trade show booth to a television commercial. If you create low-quality video from the start, you'll be forced to re-shoot it when you decide to use it

elsewhere. Make sure your partners know you want to think about all the distribution possibilities when creating the video content.

But just because you're outsourcing doesn't mean you can't drive efficiencies. Work with your video partner to create a format that you can use across products and categories. A format will allow you to shoot and edit as many videos as you need in the most affordable way possible. If your format allows, you can also shoot multiple videos – and even products – at the same time and batch the editing.

Testimonials / Reviews

If you're creating your own testimonials or doing interview reviews with outside influencers, you can take a variety of approaches. The threshold for deciding on insourcing or outsourcing will depend largely on what kind of finished product you are going for. If you are going to a conference and getting talking head testimonials, you can have your own people running the camera. You may need to outsource your editing, though, depending on the graphics and editorial treatment you desire.

Make sure you talk with your editing partner before you go and shoot a bunch of content. Involve them as you plan your content to make sure it will work.

An in-depth profile with b-roll, nice lighting, and motion graphics will most certainly require outsourcing.

How To / Tutorials

What type of agency makes the best support content? No agency. In-source it. Remember, you have a wealth of talent within your Product Designers, Product Managers and Customer Support staff. They are the ones who know your product from the inside out, who deal with the contingencies of its use every day.

So find creative ways to use their expertise. Shoot low production value videos addressing consumers' concerns and questions. Let them know your brand is invested in their satisfaction. No agency can replicate your internal team's deep knowledge of what you make.

If you're working with a trusted video partner, invite them to come in and host a workshop for your staff on how to create great product support content. Even invite them to set up a little production kit or studio for you to make things look and sound as high-quality as you can, without discouraging content creation.

Of course, if your products require more in-depth planning and editing, outsource the production. But find ways to leverage your people as talent and contributors.

Digital Cinema

If you're a luxury or niche brand and you want to make a splash, digital cinema is a very interesting emerging medium. This is an area where having your strategic video partner can be very helpful keeping the film on strategy.

Since the premise of digital cinema is to let the vision of the director shape interesting content, your partner and you will need to work to infuse it with your product's values. You're showing, not saying, on a whole different level.

If your budget is a bit tighter, that doesn't mean you can't consider digital cinema. There are always innovative, aspiring directors and even film students just looking for some funding. If you place your bets with the right talent, you can even help to develop a star. Think of how far that could extend the life of your product video. Even if you don't, you may still come out with an affordable and interesting video.



Gimmicky Videos

One of the big question marks out there is who you should turn to for your gimmicky video – the video you hope will go viral. There is really no easy answer to this. But you will run across agencies who will claim they can do it for you.

The best advice for gimmicky videos is to start small. Experiment with ideas until you find a formula that works as you test it out on your audience. For example, the Old Spice Guy videos took years of creative iteration to develop into the hit that they became. And Old Spice didn't stop there, they took that formula and played it out with Ray Lewis for their TV ad. It takes time to make a winning gimmick.

You'll have a much better chance of success if you stop thinking of a single gimmicky, or viral video, concept and start thinking about a fun, monthly 'show' you can create and execute at a low cost. Blendtec, the smart guys behind one of the most-viewed video channels in YouTube history, made a splash with a monthly show called "Will it Blend." This formulaic concept gives you a chance to build a loyal audience over time and stands a much better chance for success.

Ask your creative partners to think about a longer-term 'viral' video concept and choose wisely. Make sure you commit to a longer-term concept with a unique hook if you really want to increase your chances of success.

Industry Stats

The inside numbers

When evaluating the business case for using product videos online, consider the various ways that web content can affect awareness and your bottom line – including web traffic, web revenue, reduced support costs, and increased in-store sales.

Higher Conversions

Most online retailers measuring the effect that adding video to a product page has on its conversion rate. According to Internet Retailer, “visitors are 64-85% more likely to make a purchase after watching a product video.”²⁵

Longer Brand Engagement

Product videos can help you deliver a deeper brand experience, whether you’re e-tailing your product or not. Differentiating your experience is key in a marketplace where most product browsing experiences look extremely similar. Increased consumer brand engagement, or the time they spend on a page or site, is another way to measure the impact your videos have on the consumer experience. According to Comscore, “Visitors stay, on average, two minutes longer when engaged with video content.”²⁶

Broad Footprint

Distribute and embed your video using a limited set of large video aggregators, like YouTube or Vimeo. Consistent content distribution has the additional benefit of delivering higher-quality search results. Forrester Research has indicated that video content is 53 times more likely to appear on the first page of Google’s search results.²⁷

Build a Broad Footprint

Video content, distributed broadly, is 53 times more likely to appear on the first page of Google’s search results.

Impact on the Store Floor

Creating high-quality product video content can have an impact in stores for you and your retail partners. We have clients who taken their online video content and displayed it on end-caps and shelves to enhance the customer experience at retail. Understanding what works online can ensure that you’re delivering content on the retail level that drives sales. Even your online video can have a positive impact offline. According to Nielsen, “Online video content drives a 6% increase in in-store sales.”²⁸

²⁵ *Internet Retailer* 4/2010 *Comscore* 8/2010

²⁶ *Comscore* 8/2010

²⁷ *Forrester* 1/2010

²⁸ *Reckitt Benkiser, Nielsen, May 2010*

Manage Customer Expectations

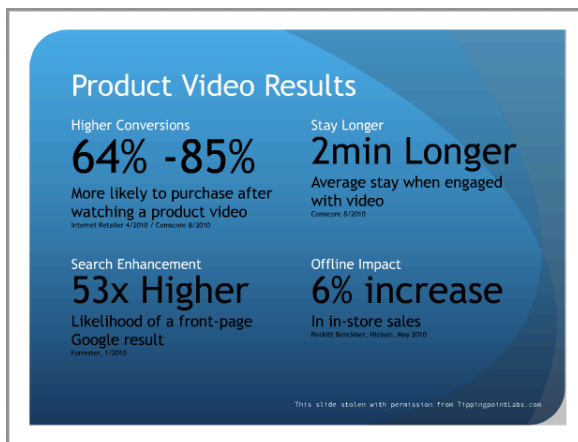
Informative videos can very effectively manage consumer expectations – before they make a purchase. As a result, product returns are significantly decreased. Video-related support content also helps consumers troubleshoot and learn how to use your product correctly. The numbers are compelling. Internet Retailer has reported that the right kind of video content can reduce product returns 25-27%.²⁹

Push Marketing

Many manufacturers are using their video content to increase the effectiveness of their push marketing campaigns. Delivering video content directly to prospects, leads, and customers within email marketing campaigns increases engagement. Implex's recent marketing survey revealed that email click-through rates jumped 96% when the email featured video content.³⁰

The Higher the Price Tag, the Bigger the Impact

For luxury goods and larger purchases like appliances, cars, and technology, video can make a bigger impact on the purchasing decision. Twenty percent of males cite online video as having a significant impact on luxury purchases like jewelry and watches.³¹



Impact on Customer Satisfaction

Video content can help reduce product return rates by 25-27%.

When You Land

We've created a series of PowerPoint slides designed to help you present the industry stats to your marketing team. When you land, feel free to download the slides and watch the video on how you can present these to your team.

Steal These Slides

You can find these slides and the accompanying video at: <http://tippingpointlabs.com/videostats>

²⁹ Ice.com Internet Retailer 12/2009, PFI Western Videocommerce.org 12/2009

³⁰ Implex 2010 Email Marketing Trends Survey

³¹ Ad-Ology Media Influence on Consumer choice 9/2008

Measuring Success

Beyond impressions and visits

More isn't always better

Conventional wisdom says the more times a video is viewed, the better. However, ensuring that your video strategy is actually driving business – not just views – is essential. If your videos aren't measurably driving revenue or reducing costs, they are just taking up valuable resources.

Here we've outlined some advanced metrics to measure the success of your videos.

Views per pageview

This metric gauges how frequently a page's visitors watch an embedded video. This is a better metric than simply counting how many views each individual video receives, as you're now factoring in the overall exposure of the video.

Consider two videos: Video A is viewed 200 times in a month. Video B only 100 times. However, Video A is embedded on a page that received 200,000 views in that same month. The video was viewed once every 1,000 visits. Video B is on a low-traffic page that received 10,000 visits. That's one video view every 100 visits. Visitors to that page are ten times more likely to watch the video!

Measuring your content relatively – via the views per pageview metric – will help you to better understand what types of content your visitors really consume and can help shape a better user experience for your site.

Product Conversion Rate with and without video

If you're creating product videos for some, not all, of your products, check the online conversions for all the products at the end of a sales period. Are the products with videos converting better than those without? If not, you may need to revise your video strategy.

Also analyze how video affects your in-store sales. According to Nielsen Research, products with online video components have seen a 6% increase in in-store sales. Make sure you get monthly sales figures for products with videos and chart their sales trends after videos are distributed.

Support costs

Remember, video success doesn't have to be measured only by sales. You can also use product demonstrations to reduce customer support costs. Is support receiving fewer calls about products that have video?

Do a savings analysis. You may reduce costs significantly by producing more video.

Avoid Wasted Resources

If your videos aren't measurably driving revenue or reducing costs, they are just taking up valuable resources.

Awareness

Your videos must be sharable on the social web. Good video is shared on multiple sites because people find so much value in it. Measure how many views of your video are coming from your owned channels – your .com, YouTube channel, blog, etc. – and how many are coming from other channels. If possible, measure the traffic that the other sites receive. This aggregated reach is a better indicator of online awareness than your own traffic.

Also, visit Google Insights to check search volume for your brand, products, and related terminology. This is a key ingredient in calculating online brand awareness.

The Report To Request

Keep monthly tabs on your video performance. Ask your staff or digital agency for a report that lists monthly views for each video on each channel. This will show not only how often but where the video content was consumed.

If the videos correlate to a specific product, do a side-by-side comparison of that video with page and revenue performance of the correlating products.

Analytics are relative, and there are few industry benchmarks that will be 100% relevant to you. Measure performance of your content against similar pieces of content. You'll always need to start from scratch, so your first report is your baseline. Extracting meaningful, actionable learnings from the reports will take time as you see the engagement levels of your content evolve. The more you look at the numbers, the more patterns you will see, and it will become easier to see what activities, specifically, drive interest in your content and brand.

Analytics Insight

Remember, all analytics are relative, and there are few industry benchmarks that will be 100% relevant to you.

Secret Metrics

Hidden value worth considering

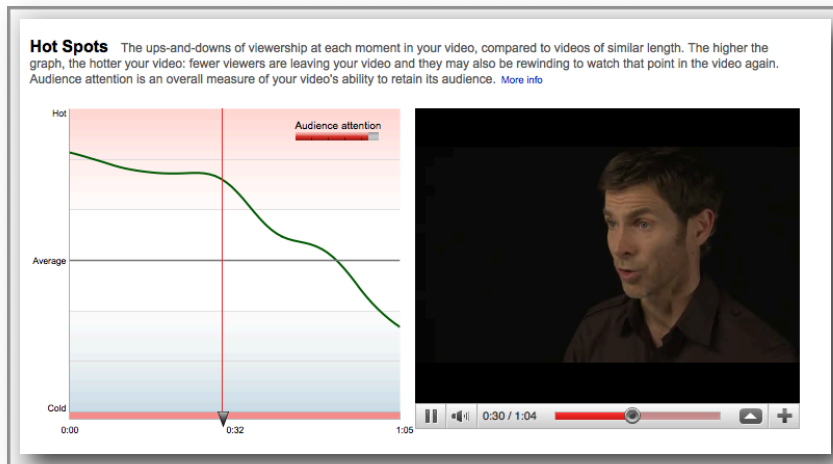
Digging deeper into the numbers

You probably won't see these numbers on standard dashboard reports. They may not indicate immediate impact to your bottom line. They're worth looking at, because these secret metrics will help you to improve your content incrementally to deliver your desired results.

Dropoff

Dropoff is the point where people stop watching your video. YouTube has a great "hot spots" interface that quickly shows where the dropoff in video interest happens.

Some channels don't measure dropoff, so you may need to do your own internal testing.



However, it's a really valuable tool for crafting the videos that fit your audience. You may be making videos that are too long and costly if people are deciding to purchase after only watching half a video. Or perhaps they see a hero product shot and skip the talking head altogether.

Paying attention to dropoff ensures that you efficiently create product videos that meet your goals.

Legs and a Long Tail

Measuring the longevity of your product videos is another key component to analyzing their success.

Everyone is searching for that viral success. Everyone wants to see their video spread from Facebook wall to Facebook wall, racking up tens of thousands of views per day with no external promotion. The reality is that this is very, very rare.

Revenue-generating product video needs to be consumed at about the same rate as the featured product's life cycle. If your video promotes a flash-in-the-pan product, available for a limited time, then the video view trend line should be very high at first and then drop off.

The Long Tail

Measuring the longevity of your product videos is another key component to analyzing their success.

However, if you're introducing a new product designed to be on the market for years, watch the video view line over that period of time. Does it remain fairly steady? If so, the video is probably doing its job. However, if the views are high at first then fall off but your product is still on the market, the video itself may be having little impact on sales. You're probably not promoting it in the right channels, or the audience finds no value in it.

Also, if there's a spike in the viewership long after launch, you might have achieved some sort of viral success or spike in interest. Analyze the video's traffic sources further to find out why. Build on that success.

Mobile Views

One-third of all mobile data transmission is streaming video.³²

Video is quickly becoming an integral part of the mobile browsing experience. Before you rush to build up a big mobile marketing strategy or pay big bucks to build a mobile-enhanced version of your website or a flashy mobile app, make sure that your video content is being consumed on mobile devices. Good analytics packages will tell you what kinds of devices are being used to view your content.

Mobile video views are also good indicators of content consumption on the shop floor. Consumers may be looking for supplemental research content while making active decisions in the store. An increase in or significant volume of video views from mobile devices indicates a possible need for more point-of-sale messaging or educational content. Mobile-friendly, quality videos can trigger a prospective customer from evaluation to purchase.

On The Shop Floor

Consumers may be looking for supplemental research content while making active decisions in the store. Look for mobile trends that may indicate in-store video viewing.

³² Allot Mobile Trends Report, 2/2011

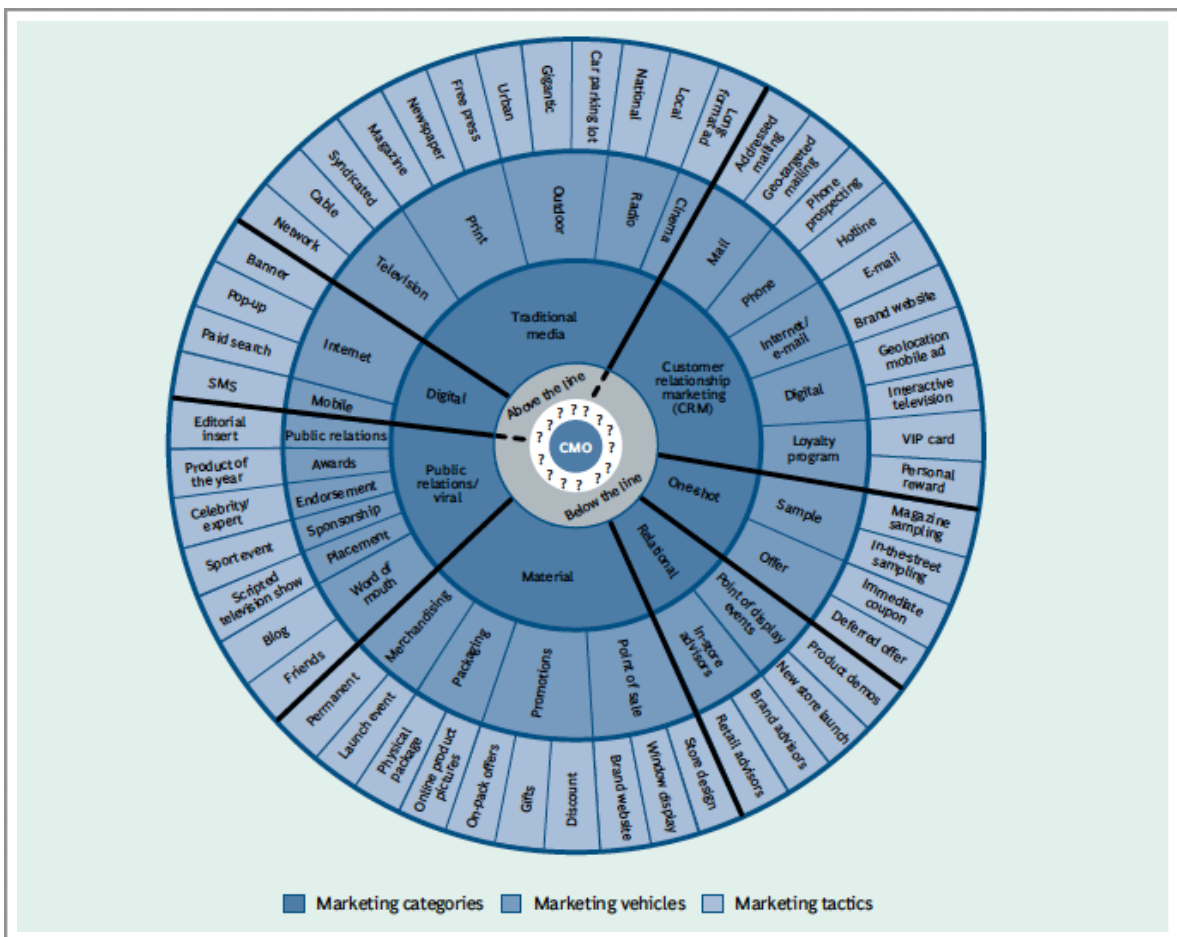
CMO Pizza

Slicing up your budget

Finding a Way To Budget for Video

As video becomes an integrated part of your marketing efforts, you need to find a way to ensure that you've accurately budgeted for the creation and distribution of your video content across the entire consumer journey.

Your marketing choices have expanded well beyond a reasonable number. Concurrently, the content you need for each bucket continues to overlap. You need product video for CRM, digital, and PR. Sometimes the same video, sometimes not.



SOURCE: The CMO's Imperative: Tackling New Digital Realities, Boston Consulting Group

Simpler Slices

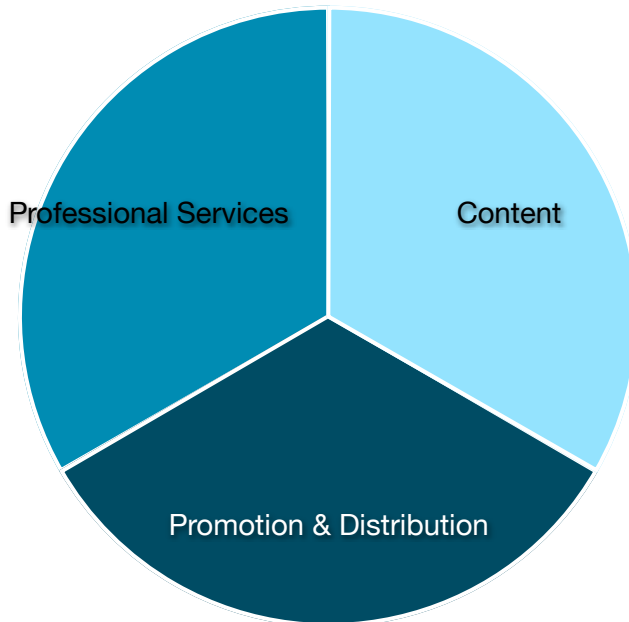
The complicated content and media choices you see in the CMO Pizza graphic are not going away. But, a change in perception could simplify your approach.

The truth is that content is not merely overlapping into different applications. The entire pizza depends on content.

Navigating the complex inter-relationships between the content created, the strategy employed to distribute and promote it, and the professional services behind each aspect of the content you create requires a higher-level strategic approach.

Consider thinking about your digital video strategy in three large slices.

Conceptual Framework for Your Marketing Budget



New Slice #1: Recognize that everything you create is content.

All your digital marketing content, including product video, depends on creative ideation, strategy, and careful planning and management.

New Slice #2: Professional services make your marketing happen.

And, no matter the application, channel, or platform, your message needs to get to your audience. But the re-oriented viewpoint is channel agnostic. You need your PR partners, internal team, ad agencies, digital agency and even your social media team to offer up creative and strategic ideas to help you be successful.

New Slice #3: Distribution and promotion.

You also need a completely integrated approach to distributing and promoting the video content

you (or others) create. That means each of your partners must be assisting in the strategic iteration and creative execution of your distribution and promotion approach. Sure, your media buyer may become the lead agency, but with a clear integration across partners you will be even more successful.

Re-conceiving your budget buckets this way will keep you from getting mired in questions like "What do we do about social media?" or "How do we re-purpose our TV commercial for YouTube?" Instead, your options open wide to create what will work best for your brand. It will free up your agency partners to think of the best solutions, not just the TV solution or the social media solution.

Speaking of Agencies

Changing a full third of your focus to content creation will also free – and require – your agency partners to coordinate closer with each other. Your creative agency might come up with the big idea for your product's campaign and will probably control your 30-second spot. But they may also have to work with a video partner who is taking behind-the-scenes footage. Your PR agency will be forced to think beyond what events and placements they can get. They may also sell you on creating content around the event.

This re-mixed CMO Pizza actually incentivizes all agency partnerships. By playing nice with each other and pushing the limits of their current offerings to produce more content, they can win more of your business.

Applying this to video

So, the goal is to create a video content budget every year designed to be used across your agency and vendor partnerships. You set aside funds that will be used to create video content. And you challenge your team and your partners to create videos that meet your customers at the appropriate phases of the customer journey.

Your primary video partner can be in charge of orchestrating all the agency video content and, in effect, be in charge of the video creation budget with you.

Instead of thinking about your video strategy in silos, immediately you'll have a better way to manage, evaluate and measure the merits of any proposal provided to you. For example, if your advertising agency devises a wonderful concept for a 30-second spot, you can ask them to separate the content production from the creative, and evaluate the best use of the remaining video budget.

Think about your content budget as being available to any of your partners and invite them to present integrated, well thought out video concepts that play through the entire journey.

What To Do Today

Taking the right first steps

Getting Started from the Top Down

As an executive, challenge your team to think of a more global approach to creating your product-related video content. Arm them with your high-level goals and a clear understanding of your commitment to a more integrated video strategy. In addition, ask them to start with three main exercises designed to gain a better understanding of the role video can/could/should play in your product marketing plan.

In your first video strategy meeting

Invite your entire team to participate in your video strategy kick-off meeting. In this meeting cover the following items:

- The broad range of video options to be employed
- The ways you can start measuring the business impact your videos make in the marketplace
- How you can fit the consumer journey into your strategy

As action items, ask your team to map the consumer journey and profile the existing video content along that journey. Make sure they look at the competitive landscape and report on the videos competitors create and distribute. Invite them to make a limited set of recommendations based on where they believe your videos can make the biggest impact.

Involving your partners

After your team has reported back from their initial digital journey, invite all of your agency partners to participate in the reporting of your findings. In this meeting ask them to work together to build a complete video strategy across the entire spectrum of opportunities to impact the business.

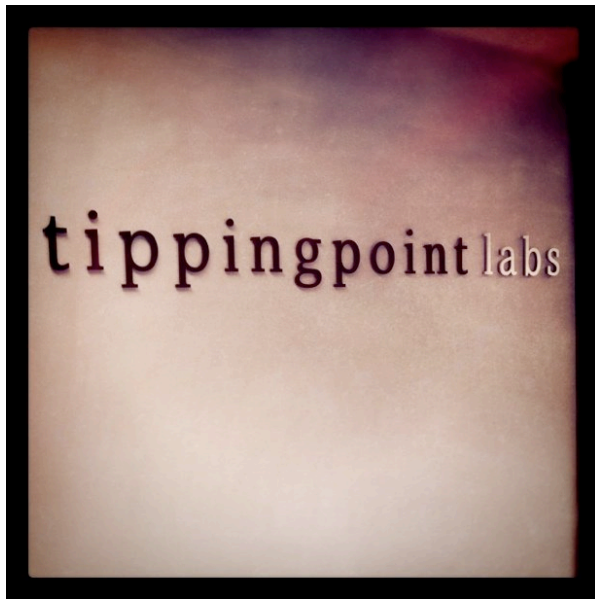
Make sure you demand that the team present a cohesive plan, not individual agency recommendations, designed to be presented at the end of their process.

Don't stop and wait

If you're already creating product video content, make sure you immediately ask your team to create a regular reporting structure designed to showcase the impact these videos are having on your business. Make sure they understand that video views may be important, but only if they help drive revenue or reduce costs. Encourage them to work towards connecting the dots to revenue.

Learn More

More from Tippingpoint Labs



We use our suite of conceptual frameworks to help brands reorient their marketing toward an ever-evolving digital landscape. Through strategic consulting, workshops, and marquis content creation, we enable brands to market more effectively, reach their audience, and meet their goals.

For more complete and customized guidance, please contact us:

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This Executive Elevation report reflects some of the conceptual frameworks we've developed for understanding media and marketing. It is meant to guide you through information and option overload.

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