

# Chapter 1

## Video Marketing from the Ground Up

---

### *In This Chapter*

- ▶ Considering a marketing video
  - ▶ Deciding on marketing video strategies and tactics
  - ▶ Understanding the video production process
- 

**V**ideo marketing is hardly a new form of getting your message across to prospects and consumers. Ever since television station WNBT broadcast the first television commercial for Bulova Watch Company, at \$9 for a 20-second spot, on July 1, 1941 (before a Brooklyn Dodgers game), companies have marketed their goods and services using video.

Of course, the cost to produce and broadcast a television commercial has skyrocketed since then. Producing and distributing a commercial video message to the public via the traditional broadcast and cable television networks can now cost many millions of dollars. This high price has prevented many small businesses from distributing their marketing messages via video — until now. Thanks to the Internet, the YouTube site, and the reduced cost of equipment and technology, any company can now afford to create and distribute a video to its potential customers.

Everyone seems to be jumping on the video marketing bandwagon. But simply making and posting a video about your company cheaply and easily doesn't guarantee that the video you produce will automatically be effective or compelling. In this chapter, we tell you how to use video marketing for your business, differentiate between video strategy and video tactics, and determine whether to create a production unit in your own company or simply hire a professional video production firm to take on the task.

## Why You Should Consider Video Marketing

After you create your own video, you can use it to communicate in ways that other marketing tools don't. Though video won't replace websites, direct mail, and trade shows as effective ways to generate and close business, it can enhance these other tools to make them more effective. You can use video to monitor consumer behavior and connect emotionally with your customers by using a variety of different systems that are both effective and economical for any company.

### Online benefits

Most businesses now communicate online to some degree, and video is a powerful tool to support their online communication. Sites such as YouTube make video distribution and measurement cheap and easy. Video can help your marketing online in these four primary areas:

- ✓ **Behavioral analytics:** YouTube and other video hosting sites provide extensive viewer data that can give you deep insight into the behavior of viewers who interact with your videos.
- ✓ **Conversion:** Amazon, Dell, and other online retailers have publicly shared statistics showing that a posted video can increase the odds of a customer purchasing an item by as much as 35 percent.
- ✓ **Efficiency.** Software developers continually find new ways to integrate sites so that video messages can be easily shared and broadcast via social media networking.
- ✓ **Search engine optimization:** Bing, Google, Yahoo!, and other Internet search sites have made video a key factor in their search formulas. Posting an abundance of video on your website can move you higher in the search rankings — broadcasting your marketing messages to an even larger potential audience.

### Emotional benefits

Video offers the opportunity to use sight and sound to connect emotionally with viewers via storytelling. Unlike reading material, video content communicates passively: The viewer simply watches and lets the story unfold. Outstanding video entertains and influences viewers by invoking a series of emotions that result from showing images that connect their hearts and their brains with your product or service.



Effective marketing practices bring efficiency to the sales process. Ideally, your marketing program helps attract customers who are predisposed to buy your product or service at a premium price. To increase the likelihood of a solid return on any investment you make in video marketing, never forget that the powerful emotions of fear and greed motivate buyers to take action.

## *Efficiency*

The average person speaks at a rate of about 150 to 160 words per minute (WPM), which is half of this page. People read a little faster, at a typical rate of 250 to 300 WPM, or about a page of text in this book. That isn't much space to convey large amounts of information about your company's story or to describe a product or service in detail.

If the adage is true and a picture is truly worth a thousand words (we believe that it is), imagine the sheer volume of information that video can communicate. A simple 2- or -3-second video image can transmit tons of historical, emotional, and academic information simply from the imagery portrayed in the shot.



Because video has the potential to transmit large amounts of information, every detail is critical. As a video maker, you're now responsible for every image conveyed in every moment on the screen. Unlike editing a website or whitepaper, editing a video after you post it can be difficult (if not impossible).

## *Video Marketing as a Strategy*

After you understand the power of well-made video, you'll undoubtedly want plenty more. But don't produce video haphazardly — an effective video marketing strategy requires forethought, planning, and consistency. In the following three sections, we cover the basic ingredients of developing a video marketing strategy.

## *Content*

Your fundamental task when you begin video marketing is to choose the topics of your videos. Many companies start with a simple video that paints only a general picture of what the company does, which may satisfy the owners of the company (because it tells their story) but isn't necessarily effective in bringing marketing efficiency to the sales process.



To choose the content of your videos, focus on issues that are difficult to communicate via print or other marketing mediums. Detail every message you want to communicate with prospects, partners, and employees. The content of these messages provides good topics for video marketing. In Chapter 2, we suggest specific ways to identify the topics that will bring the fastest return on investment by video marketing.



Creating boring and irrelevant video is worse than creating no video. If you waste viewers' time, they will think less of you, your company, and your products and services. Strive to make the most interesting and relevant video possible every single time. If you show viewers that you respect their time, they will likely return the favor by watching your videos and maybe even buying what you're selling.

## Promotion

You must use every tool in your marketing arsenal to draw viewers to watch. These marketing tools can help increase the number of views you receive:

- ✓ **Blogging:** Bloggers always look for compelling videos to include in their blogs and boost their own search engine results.
- ✓ **E-mail lists:** E-mail is still the most effective form of marketing for a consistent response. Send your videos to everyone you know.
- ✓ **Pay per view:** Target users who have a preference toward your product or service, and attract their attention for significantly less money than you would spend to broadcast a network TV commercial. Check out Chapter 19 for instructions on how to create effective pay per view campaigns.
- ✓ **Sharing sites:** Sites that repost videos, such as those featured on reddit or Stupid Video, can grab attention for your video and help it spread to more viewers.
- ✓ **Social media sites:** Post your video on your company's Facebook wall, and encourage your employees to follow your lead, or send an invitation to watch an exciting video for a quick blast of immediate viewership on Twitter. Be sure that your invitation on Twitter fits easily into its 140-character message limit.

## Measurement

Using a powerful marketing tool doesn't benefit you if you don't measure its power. Though the result of your video marketing program can certainly be measured in part by increased sales, the measurements described in this list may paint a more informative picture:

- ✔ **Number of new prospects:** If your product or service has a long and complex sales cycle, video alone may not be enough to close the deal. Look at the statistics to see whether your video is expanding your market opportunity.
- ✔ **Demographic statistics:** Perhaps you believe that your product is perfect for customers from Generation X (generally, people born in the 1960s and 1970s), but, instead, those from Generation Y (born in the 1980s or early 1990s and commonly known as *millennials*) are responding to the video. Maybe it's time to rethink your strategy.
- ✔ **Geographical statistics:** Who knew that your service would be popular in Iceland? Maybe it's time to open a new office.
- ✔ **Time spent watching:** Modern technology helps you as a video maker see exactly when your pitch bores or offends viewers to the point that they stop watching.
- ✔ **Hours you save:** Calculate the number of hours you have spent repeating your sales pitch to customers, and then multiply that number by your hourly wage. The amount reflects the number of dollars a good video can save you before you make a single sale.

If an item can be measured, you can bet that someone, somewhere, has created a way to measure it. Be open-minded in examining all statistics related to your video marketing program, and learn all you can from them. You can find information on how to measure the efficacy of your videos in Chapter 21.

## Applying Video Marketing Tactics

A strong video marketing strategy deserves strong action. You can add video to your marketing arsenal in several tactical ways. Chapter 2 describes many ways to integrate video with your marketing program — but first, consider adding these basic video tactics to your box of tools:

- ✔ **Run commercials:** Advertising is by far the most common and most effective use of video — even on the Internet. Identify the pain felt by your customers, and demonstrate why your solution will best solve their problems. Done well, these types of videos still show the highest and best return on investment.
- ✔ **Educate your public:** Whether you're teaching about your products or your industry, people search the web to learn. Educational videos give you a chance to show how smart you are and show why people should listen to what you have to say. Done well, these videos provide business process efficiency and can attract buyers.
- ✔ **Create a video blog:** Posts on your video blog, or vlog, are effective ways to attract people to your site and maintain their interest. Subject matter experts can use video in creative ways to teach and entertain an

audience while also pushing their products or services. A video blog is a good way to update your constituency about news and events taking place at your company.

- ✓ **Host a webinar:** People love to learn, and a webinar is an efficient and effective way to teach. Whether you stream video live or record a live event for later broadcast, an educational and compelling webinar can attract hundreds of prospects and convert them to buyers.
- ✓ **Take advantage of video production activity:** The process of making videos can itself be beneficial to your company. Involving everyone in the scripting process forces them to carefully contemplate company messaging. The production process is useful for team building and for developing culture and leadership.



Video marketing is an active process. Everyone in the company can somehow participate. The more people you involve with your videos, the more people you have to enthusiastically promote them to the world.

## Creating Marketing Videos

The video making process can seem intimidating at first glance, but order exists in the process. Your first time out, you'll undoubtedly spend extra time on understanding and executing the process, but the process becomes — trust us — faster and easier with every video you make. Follow these general steps to generate a compelling marketing video:

1. **Choose your audience.** Developing appropriate content is much easier when you know who your viewers are. (See Chapter 3.)
2. **Pinpoint your message.** After you know the *who*, you can figure out the *what*. Try to keep your message simple and concise. You can always make more videos if you have more messages to convey. (See Chapter 4.)
3. **Create a compelling concept.** You can't afford to be boring. If a topic doesn't excite you, it won't excite your audience either. (See Chapter 4.)
4. **Finalize the budget.** Less is more. Don't try to be George Lucas your first time out. Focus less on fancy effects, props, and locations and more on the story line. (See Chapter 5.)
5. **Draft a detailed script and storyboard.** The more detail you outline, the more easily you can meet — or exceed — your time and budget constraints. (See Chapter 4.)
6. **Brush up on your knowledge of any appropriate legal issues.** Protect yourself and stay out of trouble by knowing your risks and the law. (See Chapter 8.)
7. **Get your cast and crew together.** Involve in the production everyone you'll need to make and post your video. (See Chapter 7.)

8. **Gather your gear.** Now is the best time to buy fun “toys,” such as cameras, microphones, and monopods. (See Chapter 9.)
9. **Scout out locations.** Look for the best places to shoot your video. (See Chapter 6.)
10. **Shoot the video.** The day of shooting is a day of fun on the set. (See Chapter 12.)
11. **Edit it.** Manipulate all elements of the video into a unified whole by cutting, combining, and rearranging its various elements. (See Part IV.)
12. **Refine and polish it.** Add music, titles, and graphics, for example. (See Part IV.)
13. **Broadcast it.** Distribute your video on the web. (See Chapter 17.)
14. **Promote it.** Show your video to everyone you know, and persuade them to pass it around to everyone they know. (See Part V.)
15. **Measure the response.** Find out whether you’re getting the results you want, and learn, learn, learn how to make your videos more effective. (See Chapter 21.)

Of course, you can’t always handle all these tasks alone. Video marketing is fundamentally a team experience, though it may often be a team that consists of only two or three people wearing several hats. This list describes the roles that must be filled in your video production:

- ✓ **Camera operator:** Controls the camera and gets the shots
- ✓ **Director:** Engineers the look and feel of the production by managing actors and crew members and, ultimately, deciding how to orchestrate all elements of the video
- ✓ **Editor:** Constructs scenes (including cutting unnecessary material) to achieve the director’s vision
- ✓ **Graphics creator:** Uses Photoshop and PowerPoint and other graphics programs to create graphics
- ✓ **Lighting designer:** Ensures that lighting is bright, even, and appropriate
- ✓ **Producer:** Orchestrates the overall video production, including managing the budget, processing legal issues, and procuring hard-to-find objects
- ✓ **Production crew:** Helps gather props, apply make-up, devise costumes, make set changes, and serve coffee
- ✓ **Promotion manager:** Helps publicize the video to attract viewers to the finished product
- ✓ **Soundperson:** Holds the microphone and eliminates extraneous noise
- ✓ **Talent:** Can include experts, actors, or simply company personnel. Often, they perform roles outside their comfort zones (even to the point of looking ridiculous onscreen) for the sake of your company.
- ✓ **Writer:** Creates the concept and the script

Chapter 7 gives you insight into these people and how to get them to help with your project, even if you have no money to pay them.

## *Choosing Between Doing It Yourself and Going Pro*

The video production process isn't for everyone. Your company, for example, may not have enough employees with the necessary time, talent, or desire to maneuver the process and develop systems for continually pumping out fresh marketing video. Hiring a video production company is an alternative to making videos in-house. If this idea appeals to you, consider a company's skill level in these areas before hiring one:

- ✓ **Acting:** Choosing a believable cast is critical to connecting with prospects. The company you hire must have a large pool of talent and be willing to hear your opinion about casting.
- ✓ **Budgeting:** The cost of hiring a production company is the primary consideration — prices can range from \$500 to \$500,000 for a single video. Shop around, and find the best quality for your money.
- ✓ **Editing:** Too many videos are now simply “mash-ups” of music and graphics, all moving too fast to make a true emotional connection. Look for seamless editing that enhances the story.
- ✓ **Finding locations:** You don't have to be in the same state (or country) as the production company, but it should have access to locations that project the appropriate company image.
- ✓ **Managing resources:** To create a quality video, the production company must have an adequate pool of acting, directing, and editing talent.
- ✓ **Storytelling:** A competent storyteller cultivates the most effective marketing videos, so the company you hire must be able to spin a good yarn. For example, many wedding videographers have jumped into the business video game.
- ✓ **Writing:** Either make your message explicit or find a company that can help you frame it into a compelling script. The worst online videos invariably result from a production company's use of the same boring formula it uses on countless other videos.

The best way to choose a production company is to watch its video products, review its budgets, and speak to its clients about their collaborative experiences. If you don't like the company's videos, don't assume that it's the client's fault. The production company is ultimately responsible for creating successful marketing videos, regardless of a client's direction.



Working with video professionals is not an all-or-nothing choice. You may be able to build an effective video marketing program by hiring a few key freelancers to shore up your organization's production weaknesses.

## Animated alternatives

If you want to skip the production process or you aren't a team player or you simply lack the time and resources to hire a production company, you have alternatives: Visit [www.xtranormal.com](http://www.xtranormal.com) or [goanimate.com](http://goanimate.com) to see how these sites have produced online software to help you create animated videos on your own, from your own desk. Both sites supply you with computer-generated characters that resemble humans in a variety of scenes so that you can generate any scenario you need.

Go!Animate lets you record the voices to match the characters, and Xtranormal creates computer-generated voices from the script you type. Both are somewhat robotic, yet videos on YouTube from both companies have well over 1 million views -- which just goes to show you that it's less about the quality of the production than about the quality of the content.

<http://www.pbookshop.com>

<http://www.pbookshop.com>