

VIDEO PRO

How To Use Video Marketing In Your
Business To **Attract More Prospects & Sales**



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Video Marketing: Introduction

Online video has been used effectively for a while as a marketing and promotion tool by both large and small businesses in all industries. The resources required to create and air these videos -YouTube and the like- are readily available so that makes it easier for small businesses and entrepreneurs to reach potential customers quickly and affordably.

Whatever your market is, video gives you more opportunities to expand your brand by gaining it visibility and establishing credibility within your niche. Establishing a good video marketing strategy should be one of your goals if you want to target a wider audience.

To give you a clearer picture of video marketing and why it's such a powerful promotion strategy, let's break down it's main features:

- Low barrier to entry: as previously mentioned, online videos require very little investment to create. Essentially what you need are a web-cam and a YouTube account.
- Online video allows you to convey strong, compelling messages, establishes credibility and enhances your trustworthiness. People are much more likely to trust you and relate to you when they can see you and hear your voice.

- Like social media, online video allows you to make a stronger personal connection to your clients and prospects, making sure you build a personal connection even before you meet them face to face.

- It's good for your search engine rankings: according to a study conducted by Forrester Research, a stronger presence on YouTube can get you higher rankings because video has up to 50 times better chances than plain text to get to the top of search rankings.

All this makes online video the best solution for when you want to increase awareness for both you and your product, as well as accelerate the sales process.

So now that you know all this, you might be wondering how video can be used on your business. Let's quickly go over main business uses for video:

1. Website: The home page of your website needs a welcome video. This is where you explain the who, what and why statements, making sure the visitor gets all the relevant information regarding your business and how it can help them.

2. The sales page: In addition to crafting effective plain text on your sales page, you also need video if you want to get more conversions.

3. Blog: Just as you use your blog to provide product reviews, expert tips and so on, you can turn the blog into a Vlog or video blog and create video

that offers useful information such as explaining products and services, sharing tips, etc.

4. Product demonstration: Just about all businesses use video when introducing a new product to the market as a way to introduce the consumer to the product and demonstrate its usefulness and features.

5. Video e-mail: You can turn your messages into a video postcard by including video (or a link to a video) in the e-mails, and in the process engage the recipient.

6. Client testimonials: These can be very effective in business. Ask your clients and/ or colleagues to create video testimonials for you and do the same for them.

7. Tutorials: These are important for when consumers need step by step instructions on how to use specific products and services.

8. Video coaching: Lots of large companies use video to enhance service delivery and the trick is to make the sessions more interactive, personal and dynamic. Keep the viewer interested in what you're saying. Tools such as Ustream, Skype and Dimdim can be very useful when creating the videos.

The Benefits of Video Marketing

Now that you have a better idea as to what video marketing is, let's take a look at the benefits.

If you're having trouble selling your marketing team, clients, partners and boss on the concept of online video, they might feel differently when they look at some of the benefits the business stands to gain. We'll look at how exactly video benefits your business, and tips on how to get in on the action but first though, here are some interesting statistics on video.

1. YouTube is the second most popular search engine, right after Google, which of course owns YouTube.
2. YouTube gets more than 4 billion views per day
3. Over 80% of marketing executives include video content on their marketing strategies
4. Online video accounts for more than 50% of all mobile traffic
5. Just about everyone watches online video everyday

Looking at these statistics, you can see why video content is such a crucial element of your marketing efforts. Let's look at some other ways online video benefits both large and small businesses:

1. Video is easily searchable. Consumers are always looking for products and services. Where do they look? More than likely, they conduct an online

search. Search results can be affected by your social media presence, where your official social network pages act as an entry point to your website, micro site or promo page. YouTube is the second most widely used search engine and popular videos get high rankings on Google rankings. Other elements such as graphics, photos, Twitter, LinkedIn, Quora and other similar networks are also searchable but you'll have more customers coming in from your YouTube videos.

2. Video makes it easier to share your brand or service. About 700 YouTube videos are shared on Twitter every minute. This can make or break your business, depending on viewer sentiment. Video sharing is an integral part of social media and this can have a tremendous impact on your brand's visibility if used properly. Majority of the videos shared from YouTube are short, fun and informative; and they pull in droves of web traffic to the respective websites, leading to growth.

3. It levels the playing field. Traditional TV advertising can be very expensive; which is why it is reserved for the larger more established companies or organizations. But online video can be accessed and used by anyone, regardless of the size of their marketing budget. The trick is to be more creative and target your audience more specifically.

4. Real-time feedback and interaction. A lot of people leave comments on videos, which is an excellent way to learn more about your consumers. When you create videos that captivate and present the viewers an interactive platform to post views or comments, you're basically giving the consumers a voice; allowing them to pinpoint specific areas of your

business that require improvement. In the process you gain a lot of useful information about tastes, likes and preferences, and you learn to engage with your audience.

5. Video is easily measurable. Analytics exist in the form of simple tools you can access online and they do a great job of measuring every aspect of the video marketing campaign. You need to know which videos are getting good views, which aren't and how the views translate into new customers. There are dozens of nifty tools available for measuring video analytics and they should help you get a more accurate report on the performance of each video.

7. Video doesn't die. The videos you upload on YouTube will play a part on your marketing strategy for a much longer time than other forms of content. This might be good or bad, depending on your strategy, but generally the video keeps conveying the message and reduces your overall spending considerably. You may consider making an initial media purchase or video seeding as a way to promote the video but whatever you decide, the ad won't get pulled down as TV ads sometimes are when payment isn't made.

8. Video is always one click away from the BUY button. 34% of apparel shoppers are likely to purchase after viewing an ad online: only about 16% of consumers make a purchase after watching an ad on TV. When properly set up, online video allows a consumers to quickly access your product or service by following links to your website or sales page, where they can make a purchase. TV viewers typically have to log on to the site using a separate device in order to make a purchase, which undermines the

effectiveness of TV advertising in relation to online video.

9. When a consumer stops by your website and watches a video they usually stay a little longer than intended, which is one of the main reasons video is used in every part of the marketing campaign. Every video on your website should captivate the viewer and have them spend more on your services or products. Even simple 'how to' videos can have a great impact on sales provided you keep the content customer oriented.

10. Video is about selling. Or at least it should be. Far too many people miss out on opportunities by uploading videos that are either so boring they put the customer to sleep, or ones that are so vague they leave the customer completely confused. Another interesting scenario is where marketers focus so much on creating entertaining videos that ultimately they miss the bottom line. Remember you're trying to sell, don't focus entirely on entertainment, and instead try to communicate clearly, and make sure the customers know exactly what they're support to purchase and how.

Mobile video brings with it more opportunities for short, funny videos to advertise their products. 30 second mobile videos have an 83 completion rate according to Rhythm Insights. More involvement has to be centered on mobile video so you can find new ways to get people talking , sharing, and more importantly, buying your products.

How can your business benefit from venturing into online marketing? New entrepreneurs are well placed to make use of the features and benefits to

their businesses. Find out just how your business could be using this tool to gain these advantages and find a way to implement a video marketing strategy that works.

How to Use Video In Your Marketing Strategy

Every forward-thinking digital marketing strategy combines the power of video with other important elements to create a marketing campaign that yields good return on investment, so as a business owner you need to learn how to implement video in your strategy. Most statistics from the world of digital marketing quote online video as one of the most important features on a website, and it's projected to account for two thirds of the world's mobile data by 2016.

With all these statistics floating around, the average business owner wants to know how they can plan, create and promote videos; considering their small budget and minimal production experience. Whatever your budget is, you need to build the identity of your brand and speak the language of prospective buyers, and video facilitates all this.

Marketing and the strategies in use today are constantly growing and evolving. This continuous innovation characterizing digital marketing means you can't be an expert at everything: but it also means novices can learn to adopt techniques they hadn't thought of or tried before. If perhaps you've been thinking video is out of reach for your company because the concept

is foreign to you, think again.

Let's break down the simple ways in which you, who hasn't built a career in cinematography can learn to leverage video for the success of your marketing plan.

1. Product videos

Creating a video for a pair of shoes might not seem like the most revolutionary idea when you want to promote the product but stick with me for a moment. Traditionally, companies make product videos that tend to tout the item's features, build up the brand and as always, focus on one goal: buy. This does very little to connect with the potential buyer and as a result, a lot of companies miss out on real opportunities.

Get more creative with your videos. Showing a 360 degree shot of the product might help the consumer see what it looks like but it doesn't help connect with them. Animate the product by showing it being used by actual people, show customer experiences and testimonials; breathe life into the product, and aim to provide value to your viewers.

2. Make a series

One way to engage people with the videos is to give them a reason to keep watching. Large brands like Target and Adidas all utilize branded video series as a simple way of creating and sustaining a recurring tie to their buyers.

You don't need to operate on a huge budget in order to make a high value series. Even with a limited budget you can still create an in-house series which demonstrates new ways to use a product, or a recurring how-to guide which helps solve simple problems, or a weekly tip series that offers relevant information to the viewers.

Whatever you choose to focus on, make sure you let the viewers know what to expect by communicating what the series will offer and let them know when they should tune in for the next installment.

3. Video contests

It's pretty clever this plan: letting other people do the work for you. If you want to create engaging video content but have a problem brainstorming ideas, you can run a contest on your social media page, email or website, and prompt people to create video around a specific subject matter.

Let them know how the winner will be selected and reward the winner with something valuable: no one will put in 20 hours of solid work for a \$5 gift card. Now when you get that video use it accordingly. If it's a promotional video for a product, use it as a tool to market that product. Conversely, if you wanted an artistic video to add character to your brand, then share it with your audience.

When people get actively involved in your brand it ensures they develop a stronger tie to your company.

4. Make every effort to be unique

You might have heard or read somewhere that in order to be successful every company must either be the first, the best, or different from the rest. It's an interesting principle and it certainly applies in the case of video and content.

Just because your main competitor made a talking dog video and got 100,000 views it doesn't mean you should. When you see Kmart get away with a racy play on words, that doesn't mean you can. It's very tempting to look at other success stories as a good source for ideas and sometimes that's okay: just try not to emulate what has already been done.

5. Do a parody or remix a popular song

Have you noticed how cleverly remixed videos tend to go viral? It's all about timing and creativity. If you can parody one popular video right as it's taking off, you can generate thousands of hits and in the process gain a larger following. A more targeted approach is the best and if it fits well with your product or service, and doesn't damage your brand image in any way, then use this as a way to get noticed.

If you want real effect, aim to create video that speaks to and offers real value to your audience, instead of chasing shiny objects. Look at how online videos are evolving and try to stay ahead. A couple of years ago, video- even for international markets- may have been created in one

country and then dubbed in English. Nowadays, marketers produce and post videos in local languages. Both large and small companies record customer testimonials in the speaker's native language, and use subtitles to translate for other markets.

The viewers connect with the person speaking and they also get the feeling that your company has a global focus. Translation doesn't have to be a priority in the overall marketing strategy but try to go beyond what you've come to expect from the marketing department, and discover new ways to get your audience closer to your brand, and create longer lasting impressions. Online video gives you the power of sight and audio, which means more ways to keep the viewer engaged while you sell them on the value of your product, service, or brand: and why they should be using it.

4 Steps To Creating Online Videos

The entire process of creating quality online video boils down to four steps:

1. Goals
2. Message
3. Format
4. Distribution and promotion

First step: Goals

Every video you make has an intended purpose so keep in mind what you want to accomplish when creating the video. Some of the more obvious goals include:

1. Boosting exposure
2. Redirecting traffic to your site
3. Building credibility and trust
4. Developing the brand
5. Gaining a foothold in the market

Video can do all this for you but consider what element of your business requires more impact. Whatever you have in mind, make sure it's part of the overall marketing strategy because video needs to be integrated into the larger marketing plan in order for it to be more effective.

Second step: Message

Effective video focuses more on content rather than technology. When creating the video, keep your audience in mind and give them something valuable. The average person operates on a relatively low attention span and this can be reflected in online video where long complicated videos get low ratings. Keep it short and concise, and keep these factors in mind:

1. Consistency: your viewers could get confused if you deviate from the main purpose of the video
2. Establish an overall theme for the videos
3. Focus on not just what you say but how you say it
4. Do not lose focus on your core message

If the video message is clear and coherent then people shouldn't have a problem understanding your message. Customers don't like complicated messages so if you consistently provide simple, clear messages, the message will become a part of your brand.

Third step: Format:

Now this part involves you deciding on the type of delivery you'd prefer for the video. You might choose to be on camera, create a slide show or screen capture, do a live webcast, etc. You have several options when it comes to the actual format of the video and you may sample one or more formats on different videos. Let's look at these formats:

1. Live recording through a webcam: this is probably the fastest and simplest option
2. Live recording through a webcast: websites such as Ustream.tv offer this service for free
3. On location: this involves you carrying a portable camera, and possibly a tripod outdoors
4. Screen capture or slide show: you might use PowerPoint for this, or perhaps Jingproject
5. Creating video or photo montage using tools such as Animoto

Remember whatever delivery you choose for your video, the format also determines to a large extent the effectiveness of the message conveyed. Consider your personal style, attitude, and that of your target audience, and then find an angle that works.

Some videos are meant to be humorous, some are just casual and others are more formal and authoritative. In which category does your message lie? Before you arm yourself with a minicam or a digital camera, look carefully into the tone and decide early enough the mode you want to set with the target audience, then start making arrangements for the shoot.

We'll talk about distribution and promotion in another chapter.

What To Tackle First?

Just like any other form of marketing, you need a strategy that will carry through your marketing campaign. The strategy will be a step-by-step guide that covers what exactly you want to accomplish and how you plan to accomplish it.

This strategy may include an itemized list of actions you need to cover in an assigned period of time; for instance content, optimization, etc. Learn more about this as you begin to implement the specifics of the campaign.

But how do you create the strategy? Online video is usually one element of a broader marketing plan and there are several factors to be considered here as you work out a plan to grow your business. Start with these three factors as they will help you realize what you want to accomplish and how you need to do that.

1. The purpose of the video

This is obviously the most important factor when trying to create effective video in your marketing strategy. Write down what you want to happen after your prospects watch the video. Perhaps you're trying to sell products, gain more followers or get subscribers: whatever the goal, knowing what the objective is will help you carve out a plan that revolves around it. If you have multiple objectives, write them all down and align the video concept

so that it targets specific goals.

Start by determining the following:

Specific emotions you're trying to invoke, and why. You could start with greed, fear and excitement; those work pretty well.

Target buyer personas: ensure the video is crafted to appeal to them
The action you want the prospects to take after they watch the video

You need a focused, actionable video and these considerations will help get you one.

2. Creating the videos

It's also an important functional question. Do you plan to make the videos yourself or are you more comfortable hiring an experienced marketer to do it for you? In some instances informal, personal videos tend to yield a better effect when compared to the typical over-produced formal ads that float around companies. This could be a decent option for a small business owner but whatever you decide, make sure the video is useful to the viewers.

3. Measuring the results

You need to know how your audience responds to the video because that's how you'll find out if you're getting any closer to your goals. For instance if

your plan was to increase your subscription list, you might need to follow closely the number of new subscribers and find out if you're getting any traction with the video.

One useful metric to focus on is your average prospect's attention span. You might find that most of your leads drop off only a few seconds into the video, and that would suggest that your intros are too long. Find a way to trim shorten the introduction and if possible, get right into the meat of the content.

When you start with these three factors you will have covered the basics and you will effectively utilize the marketing power of video, for the benefit of your brand. But before you close the book on this topic, lets find out how you can properly optimize the videos for a stronger effect.

Optimizing the video

There's a common misconception about video, where new entrepreneurs assume they can get customers by the thousands by simply uploading a bunch of armature promotional videos on YouTube and sitting back to count the money. Well indeed the notion of getting global exposure for your brand does sound exciting, but remember there is some work to be done so before you sit glued to your computer screen hands clasped in glee, find out what else affects the performance of your videos.

The same way you optimize a landing page and build large campaigns around a written piece to ensure it works, you need a similar approach with

video. Basically, you can't bank on every single video going viral, but with a little inspiration you can find a way to add some edge, customize it so it drives business.

Step #1. Build CTA

Have you ever watched a product video to the end and find it fades to black? It's a missed opportunity, which is surprising because most marketers know how important a good call to action is: try not to make the same mistake.

When you create your next video, include CTAs as a way to direct the viewer to your specific goal. Here's how to do this:

The video host could prompt the viewer directly

Use a bunch of cleverly designed YouTube annotations to point to specific resources

Include a link at the very end and use it to direct the viewers to your landing page

In addition to making the CTAs direct, ensure they also provide several options for your audience to reach you. A single demo might not hit your conversion target -not all personas are ready to make a decision- so include at least a couple of CTAs, one targeting viewers who are prepared to take action, and another CTA leading the indecisive prospects to more of your persuasive content.

Step #2. Your lead-capture method

It's a feature that's moved up from the world of written content straight into video. After creating the video, consider adding an email gate and have these go wherever the content is shared, starting with all major social networks, in order to ensure leads have a way to contact you, just in case they are ready to give out their personal information.

Several online video platforms will let you build a contact form to be included in the video; so basically you gather more information from the viewers.

Some best practices to consider for your video lead-capture:

Email gates work best on video targeting specific viewers: as is the case with long, highly detailed product demos. Email gates require some buy-in from the viewers so you have to provide enough quality, un-gated content for the viewer before you ask them for personal details

Try to minimize the field as you set up a contact form in your videos. You don't want your prospects fatigued by the time they complete the sign up process.

The next time you create a marketing video, start by implementing these steps. They are the foundation of great, effective online video and they will

help you streamline the process, making sure the video performs well in every part of the purchasing cycle.

How to Use Video to Drive Inbound Marketing Efforts

If you're creating promotional content as a way to market your brand to consumers, then you're already utilizing inbound marketing. When you combine the power of email, blogs, social media, podcasts and other promotional channels you get a proven strategy that grows your brand- and by adding video, you move to another level of engagement where you maximize your potential for viewership.

Bellow, we'll discuss how you can introduce video into some of the more useful channels in order to maximize the effect of your inbound marketing campaign.

Email

According to data compiled by eMarketer, companies that incorporate video in their emails record higher click-through rates, higher sharing and forwarding, longer time reading emails, increased conversion rates and higher revenue.

If your marketing strategy requires you to create and retain email subscriptions then incorporating video in the emails will be a plus for you. Eloqua, a company that specializes in providing automated email marketing

services, notes that businesses that include video in their emails experience a 75% drop in subscriber opt-outs. Another firm dealing in online marketing reports a 51% growth in subscriber-to-lead conversion rates in cases where video is included in emails.

Though you may find it challenging to integrate video in your emails without any playback issues, don't let that stop you. Include a number of clickable links in the video as well as backlinks which lead to your website, which of course should feature more videos.

Blog posts

A large number of Internet users scan your articles for video content so if you don't feature any, you will lose prospects. Check out the statistics below:

1. 40% of Internet users respond better to visual posts than they do plain text (Zabisco).
2. Compared to plain text, video content pulls in up to three times more inbound links (SEOMoz)
3. Viewers will spend 100% more time on your pages if you have video

Social media

As more companies drop money into social video apps like Instagram and Vine, you won't find a better time to incorporate video into social media. Keep in mind though, that the value of any social video lies solely on its

shareability; so if your target audience likes the videos and shares them on their networks, it will boost your visibility and increase awareness for your company.

BI Intelligence reports that social media and word of mouth are the main ways people discover video content online, so obviously you need to provide your subscribers and fans engaging videos if you're going to get better visibility. In order to drive traffic to your landing pages, ensure you include a clear CTA in the video posts.

Inbound marketing is more about 'pulling' at prospects than 'pushing' messages at them so you have to find a way to generate organic sharing around your videos. The shares expand the growth and reach of your message and as a result, your brand gets more valuable earned media.

Implementation of good video SEO

Truly effective marketing requires the synergy of technical and creative fields; this ensures that the videos remain relevant and engaging.

Proper SEO implementation involves significant technical work. Video SEO doesn't start with the production and it doesn't end when you click the publish button: a good SEO strategy will include significant technical implementation. This ensures your video gets seen by the right people in the right place and at the right time, and if you tap into your creative genius then the video views will convert into actual benefit.

Search engines refer to social signals when creating their ranking algorithms so the role of video in your marketing efforts will only get bigger in time. What held back video marketing in the past was the issue of cost but the success of short form video means marketers don't have to spend large amounts of money producing long videos.

Short videos encourage experimentation and creativity and they ensure the content being uploaded is reactive and much more relevant. Upload your videos to all the top marketing channels including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Metcafé, Vime and Google+ and tag the videos. When posting the video make sure you enable all the features that make it easy for users to share it on their own networks.

More people are spending time watching online video and as a marketer you should take this opportunity to market your brand to a larger audience by creating something of value for them to watch. When handling SEO for your videos, think first of the customer, then SEO second. When you optimize the video for your targeted audience it will be more effective in the end.

If your company is planning new marketing strategies or enhancing existing ones, then you know well enough how challenging it is to come up with ideas that work and gather the resources needed to meet your goals.

But don't focus on how challenging the project can be; instead look at all the different platforms you can execute your content in. These areas can be very useful in your marketing campaign:

- Blogs
- Webcasts and podcasts
- Social media
- Websites and Microsites
- Events
- Newsletters
- Mobile apps
- Online communities

Your main goals should include lead generation, online engagement and increasing brand awareness but of course areas such as customer education, conversion rates, direct sales, lead nurturing and site traffic also play a role in the success of your campaign.

The main obstacles for companies trying to implement video marketing include a lack of effective strategy, poor management buy-in and inadequate in-house resources. These are all in-house challenges and they can slow down traction if you don't pay close attention.

Problems arising from the industry side include a lack of budget for video production and bad content. Creating decent content is a simple matter of finding good writers and production team to work on the video.

Start looking at ways your business could implement video marketing without suffering the common problems many firms go through. With proper planning you should have an easier time working out the angles.

Enter the YouTube nation

As more businesses turn to video content marketing as the best solution for expansion and growth, quite a number of large and small businesses continue to make mistakes with their YouTube channels, resulting in fewer views for their videos. Interbrand's Top 100 shows exponential growth in YouTube ad video production in just about every industry, and companies are spending more money to make quality video ads, raising the aggregate production value to billions of dollars.

In addition to creating more effective YouTube channels, brands such as Toyota and Coca-cola are also embedding their YouTube videos on their websites. In fact, over 80% of the top 100 brands now embed their YouTube videos on their websites; which perhaps blurs the line between digital channels, but remains an effective strategy.

As online video evolves, more diverse video methods and styles arise. Intel for instance employs both professionally produced videos and user generated content for a more powerful effect. So why is it that brands are investing so much money into video marketing but are getting so few views? The entire YouTube ecosystem- everyone from large brands to little start-ups- could use more followers and one of the ways to get this sorted is to focus more on video content marketing.

Video content marketing and YouTube

A lot of entrepreneurs assume they can get away with assigning a couple of tags and brief description to a YouTube video and then add to their company name "we do online video content marketing'. It's not always that simple: you need to work out an angle for your videos if you want to grow more followers.

5 Elements of viral videos

Instead of starting with the common -and impossible -question what makes a video viral, let's begin by exploring several elements that play a role in turning a video viral:

1. Human connection

Find out if your video elicits a strong emotional response. When a video elicits strong emotions it creates a strong urge to share. A perfect example is FirstKiss, a campaign created by Wren Clothing, in which the video features 20 strangers kissing. The video had over 2 million views the morning it was posted and had over 70 million views in two weeks!

2. Cuteness

Humans are wired to gawk at cuteness. Ben Huh knows this best and exploits this tendency by including on on their ads cute photos of cats and

adding some witty and/or silly captions to make surefire content. But it's not just cats that do well in ads, dogs work too, as well as adorable babies, and a colony of waddling penguins.

3. Newsworthy content

Seemingly anything these world leaders do or say is newsworthy, and because we're in a time when social media is prevalent and partisanship at an all-time high, even political opponents engage and share content about their leaders. This fuels emotions like anger, outrage and disgust; and these types of videos spread virally.

4. Humor

Humor has for a long time helped people deal with pain and physical adversity. It is also one of the biggest drivers of video virality. The pop culture is riddled with viral comedy and this can be observed with Jimmy Fallon, who makes viral videos 100 percent of the time.

5. The no-linear/ or the unexpected

Here's one way to look at this; diversity of content is very essential, and people always want the unexpected. An unedited video depicting people in their natural state, responding or reacting strangely to a situation, tends to draw a lot of views. Us humans are actually pretty strange, so if you keep thinking linearly you will definitely miss out.

These five elements can be observed in many of the viral videos posted on YouTube and as a marketer you can learn how to implement some of the features in your own videos. It should be noted however, that in order to increase the chances of the video going viral, you might have to combine several elements.

There really isn't a limit to what you can present in terms of piquing people's curiosity about the unexpected. Anything from flying saucers or missing Malaysian airplanes; anything you think will get people rattled, could be useful. Find a way to keep people engaged on different topics but when you're done with these five elements, you may need to look at a few other issues you may not have thought of.

SEO

For most marketers SEO is a tricky beast, mainly due to the frequent Google algorithm updates, but in order for your videos to get views by the thousands, you have to make them more search-friendly. Here's how:

You can use Google's Adwords Planner for this but start by doing some research on the words you want to rank for, in your specific industry and when making a title and meta description, use those words clearly in a phrase format. People are more likely to search for something like “best payments and invoicing software”, than say, “payments for pals!”.

Multi-platform promotion: After embedding your video, upload it to YouTube and different distribution outlets under a different name. Keep in mind YouTube and Google are the two main search engines so try not to

cannibalize your rankings, and make only minor adjustments in order to take advantage of both.

Use transcripts. Both Google and YouTube don't extract all the words on your videos so sometimes the search engines have a problem deciphering your video to find the subject matter. One way you can help boost your video SEO is to transcribe the video and turn the accompanying text into a relevant blog post. The blog will alert the search engines about the context and as a result Google will qualify your content.

Now that you know all this, the next time you upload a video on YouTube or other destinations, ensure you've implemented these steps. They are all important elements in any successful video marketing campaign and they've worked for other brands so they should work for yours as well. When you streamline the process of making effective content for sales, lead capture and SEO, you will notice a huge difference in how the videos perform throughout the cycle.

Valuable Video Marketing Metrics

You've dedicated time, energy and money into creating a great video marketing campaign; now it's time for you to take a step back and analyze how the videos are performing. Because each campaign is unique, different metrics act as the main performance indicators. In this chapter we'll discuss the metrics you'll find most valuable to your brand.

These metrics are important to everyone from the expert marketer to content creators, advertisers and the average business owner. A large number of diligent and empirically motivated marketers don't handle video analytics the same way they do web analytics and conversion metrics and this has a terrible effect on their marketing campaigns. Let's dig into correcting that.

1. Earned media

This is any viewership you get as a result of social trends or behaviors, i.e. word of mouth, as driven by owned and/or paid media. Let's say for example you paid to have a video promoted on YouTube, someone watches it and likes it, then decides to share it on their own social networks. The views derived from that share are what marketers call earned media.

This is an important video marketing metric because people have an easier

time trusting recommendations that come from their own networks (family and friends). According to a recent Nielsen report named Truth In Advertising, over 80% of global respondents from 58 different countries asserted that they find digital word-of-mouth advertising to be the most trustworthy.

A different survey conducted by Harris Interactive for The Webby Awards reported the same thing: seven out of ten millennial social users are more likely to make a purchase on different items after seeing a friend's post.

When you track earned media it allows you to see where your content is being shared and as a result you can gain some more insight into the more engaging social channels.

2. Engagement metrics

Along with earned media, this should be a common metric to every marketer in the format of the ubiquitous; Shares, Likes, and Comments around your video content. In any video campaign, you have to make sure that actual people are watching and interacting with the videos you post online. Of course the initial sharing of the videos will fuel this engagement, which is why we mentioned earned media as the most important metric.

Engagement and earned media can fuel video discovery across different social media platforms, which expands your reach and ultimately, awareness. As a marketer or entrepreneur the success of your efforts will lie on your ability to make videos that people want to watch. It sounds easy

but it's really not: which is why keeping an eye on engagement metrics is key to the success of the campaign.

3. Click-Through Rate

This is the percentage of time viewers click on the CTA in your video. Your video should have a link that people can follow through with. This particular click can lead viewers to a different video, your website or product purchase page. Basically, the click-through rate is a measurement of how well your ad drives action. Your video won't do you any good if it doesn't convince the viewers to do something.

Unless the sole purpose of your video is branding, you will need viewers to take action in order to justify the investment made in video advertising. In order to maximize your ROI, pay close attention to the click-through rate.

4. Completion rate

Want to know just how compelling your message is? Completion rates will give you a fairly accurate idea. In case you have no idea what completion rates are, this is the percentage of people who watch the video to the end. It's a good way to measure how engaged the user is with your videos. If you find the percentage high it means that the content has been well aligned with the targeted audience.

According to TubeMogul, a software platform for digital marketing, viewers remember brand messages at a higher rate when they watch the entire ad:

additionally, brand awareness grows significantly when viewers watch the full ad. A crucial metric for any video campaign, the completion rate will let you know how engaged and captive your audience is.

5. Subscribers

Subscribers are important in our effort to raise the total amount of time viewers have spent on the videos, or 'minutes watched'. When each fan subscribes to your channel, they get automatic updates whenever you upload a new video, and this will ensure they get new content on their YouTube channel.

You can get this information in your Engagement report under the subscribers tab. The report will contain details about how perhaps you've gained and lost subscribers on different content, dates, geographical locations, etc. By using this feature, you'll be able to find out which video helped gain you more subscribers, and in contrast, you can also find out which content drove potential subscribers away.

Remember ROI

It might seem obvious but if your videos don't make more money than they cost to produce then there's a problem somewhere. Your ROI, or the amount of money generated from sales resulting directly from the video vs. the amount of money spent producing the video, should be measured as well. It will let you know if your campaign is gaining traction or if you're looking at the whole thing wrong.

6. Placement performance

This is more a summary of metrics than a metric itself. When evaluating placement performance, you'll need to consider most of the metrics we've mentioned. Let's say for example your campaign involved distribution of video through social games, social networks, blogs, etc. Comparing the metrics for each of these placements will give you a good idea as to what the best channel is for your future marketing efforts.

Your key performance indicators will determine this but you can use the aforementioned metrics to gather information on placement performance and then you can focus content distribution on placements that meet the KPI better.

By leveraging these metrics, you will have gained the intelligence needed to optimize your video and as a result, increase the average watch time. This will get your videos more visibility and that will lead to more opportunities to funnel the mass of viewers back to your website for into your conversion funnel.

Employ Effective Online Video Distribution Channels

Ever had a sneaking suspicion that you could be missing out on a wider online video reach? You could be, if you're limiting your brand to YouTube, as opposed to combining it with other marketing channels available to you. Operating on a single video content channel can curb your marketing potential and impact the growth of your brand; which is why we're going to look at several other avenues you can explore in your effort to gain more exposure.

Due to the constant evolution of video marketing, you may have to reevaluate your strategy every now and then, just to make sure you're not limiting your potential by operating on older methodologies. You may have done this lately and if so, where do you think video platforms excel these days- and where do they fall short?

Keep in mind some platforms may make more sense than others, in regards to your brand or goals, but these are the top players:

YouTube: Hardly surprising, with more than 1 billion unique visitors every year and over 4 billion hours of video watched monthly, YouTube pretty much dominates the video market.

Vimeo: With close to 1 billion visitors last year, and a constantly growing

member list, Vimeo is quickly becoming a major force.

Brightcove: Its video player loads over 3 billion times every month and the site boasts over 6,300 customers all across the world, in over 63 countries.

Now let's take a closer look at these platforms and see if they have any similarities or differences, and find out which one excels.

Quality

It would help your campaign if you invested in high quality video content but if your platform doesn't support it, you'll have wasted a lot of money. Let's say for instance if you embed a high quality video on your website, would the platform run it in HD, or do they support SD?

The most popular video platform, YouTube, tends to drop to much lower resolutions in situations where bandwidth is limited. In this case, your best solution for a consistent, top quality video stream would be Brightcove and Vimeo.

Vimeo supports 720p HD, and it maintains picture integrity throughout the view. Brightcove on the other hand does adjust the quality based on availability of bandwidth, but it never goes into SD, so the viewer doesn't ever get a grainy picture.

Searchability

If the goal of your video is to pull in more leads then obviously search will

be important to the strategy.

You've most likely been sucked into the black hole that is YouTube. This happens because this platform has video curation skills that are second to none. It also dominates organic search results beyond YouTube and into Google and other search engines.

Because YouTube uses its parent company's (Google) methodologies when conducting searches, it makes it more challenging for other platforms to compete with its search function. It is highly optimized and will give you all the tools you need to narrow down your target audience further than you'd imagine. When you have an organic audience constantly watching videos on this platform, chances are a good number of them will stumble on your videos.

Embedding

For some marketers hosting a video directly on their website is more important than inbound marketing and in such cases embedding takes priority. Keep in mind the quality of all your videos has an impact on the overall quality of your website. That obviously counts out YouTube's schizophrenic HD-SD vibe.

According to YouTube, hosting related content that is not necessarily specific to your brand can in some cases increase the chances of your visitors leaving for good.

If you're aiming for a high quality embedded video then Vimeo is your best solution, and more so if you're only dealing with a small number of videos.

Customization

Are you in the process of building your own content network? Apart from skill, one of the things you'll need is a platform that grants you more control, with enough customization tools. In this feature Brightcove takes the lead as the best contender for marketers working with a large number of videos. The platform allows you to add personalized pre-roll/post-roll ads, give your player a personalized skin and play around with a whole bunch of customization tools.

When compared to Brightcove, both YouTube and Vimeo are somewhat restrictive when it comes to customization and control so if control is important to you, Brightcove your best option.

Investment

There is absolutely no harm in exploiting a popular free platform such as YouTube but still, if you're looking for the functionality of Vimeo or Brightcove you might have to shell out a couple of bucks. (note: Vimeo does offer a free package but it comes with limited features.)

YouTube is a service, but Vimeo and Brightcove offer you solutions. If quality is a priority for your campaign, then loosen the vice grip on your finances and make that move.

Analytics

As you get into big data, you'll discover you need good analytics for video. The three platforms we've mentioned so far have their own tools for measuring analytics, but Limelight Networks is especially notable for its analytics collection.

It has a way of weaving into the on-going narrative, which makes it easier for you to understand exactly how video connects with other working components of your campaign. Video has a considerable effect on your bottom line and understanding its impact will help solve problems and pave the way for more efficiency.

Niche focusing

The top three platforms, YouTube, Vimeo and Brightcove operate as blanket platforms, supporting different purposes in a wide spectrum of industries. Consider Savvy, a quickly growing video network that focuses on top industry leaders giving speeches at conferences; the network allows the leaders to get more exposure beyond their own industries and in the process, this keeps professionals informed on industry news and trends.

If you can find a niche delivery system and use it to engage your audience, you'll have tapped into great power.

So which video platform do you use for your brand? These factors play a

role in the accomplishment of your goals so go over each platform and see how their unique features affect your marketing plan.

How Emotions Influence Video Sharing

By some considerable margin, First Kiss remains one of the most viewed viral videos, with over 70 million views within its first month of release. The film's director, Tatia Pllieva combined a gamut of emotions- curious, awkward, coy, tentative and gauche- to create a passionate three-minute montage involving 20 strangers kissing for the first time.

Director Pllieva brought together 20 young -or mostly young- strangers, all good looking, gay and straight, to kiss each other for the first time, and what ensued was a compilation of adorable elementary reactions in adults who found themselves in a slightly awkward but exciting situation. The heart races for most of the participants as they tentatively attempt to make small talk, each person wondering if they should make the first move, most are embarrassed by try to conceal it with laughter; but all this sort of fades away when their lips meet.

The partners are seen exploring the kiss and slowly turning it into a mushy, passionate chemistry that most people long for, and which can happen to anyone, with anyone, and at any time. The video was shot entirely in black and white and it seems to trigger nostalgia and longing, instead of discomfort.

Now, think any of this was luck? No. It was the careful manufacture of content married to extensive and rigid research and an artfully plotted strategy. You may have seen videos of sneezing panda cubs or cute cats doing the rounds online and when properly executed, these videos are hugely successful because they pique at people's emotions.

I would like a viral video!

Every brand wants their videos to go viral but of course most of them go largely unnoticed. The key to driving engagement and sharing of your video is to target specific emotions, and really tug on that leash. Most marketers understand this and some manage to make memorable videos but there's always the challenge of blending those emotions in a way that causes the right effect.

Next time you want to make a marketing video for your brand, consider these factors:

1. Emotional appeal

As Bruce Lee once said so memorably, 'We need emotional content'. If a video makes you feel happy, shocked, angry, tearful, etc, it has great potential to achieve multiple shares. Strong emotional reactions are what marketers go for but like your marketing professor always said, it's best to keep things positive. Videos that cause positive reactions are more likely to get shared than say, a video that causes anger or disgust.

2. Make it powerful

Most of the videos getting millions of shares across multiple social media platforms all elicit strong emotional reactions. Whether these emotions are positive or not, you have to really nail it. Budweiser nailed it with their Puppy Love commercial during the 2014 Super Bowl. Its a perfect example of a super shareable video, involving love, friendship, the cutest puppy ever, and a happy ending that pulls at your heartstrings.

They got a mix of emotions and worked them into a lovely commercial; but, like most viral ads, they don't scream Budweiser throughout the ad, in fact, the brand only shows up at the end of the ad, where it then closes with a clever hash tag #BestBuds.

3. Humor

Humor plays a huge role in making videos go viral. Of course the content varies and what makes one person crack up tends to be subjective, but generally, some things are simply funny. Watch a few ads containing humor, such as Old Spice's 'The Man Your Man Could Smell Like' ad, or that other one, 'Gangnam Style' by Psy.

These videos can be shared across all demographics, because they appeal to just about everyone. That's the power of humor; it appeals to a wider audience and if the video makes people laugh, it will be shared.

4. Children and animals

For some reason children and animals, whether used together in a video or respectively, they really take over the Internet. It could be because it's harder to script a video involving kids or animals- because they're harder to control- or because they are naturally funny, cute and genuine.

Whatever the reason, videos such as Charlie Bit My Finger or Otters Holding Hands are Internet sensations because they are either funny or cute.

5. Parody

Dozens of brands have parodied popular videos for their own agenda and in some cases, they experience great success. Miley Cyrus' Wrecking Ball video for example, has been parodied hundreds of times by individuals and brands, but of course it helps that the singer has millions of followers and she's naked on the original video.

Videos that allude to popular culture in funny, silly or outrageous ways have great potential to go viral. Kanye West's video for Bound 2 is one example. The video is so ridiculous it caused an Internet sensation and resulted in multiple parodies, done by different people across the world, including one by Seth Rogen and another one by James Franco.

Why are emotions so important?

Digging into this whole concept of using emotional content in video

advertising, a study was conducted by Ehrenberg-Bass Institute for Marketing Science, in an effort to understand how emotions play a role in medial social sharing. After analyzing 355 billion videos from a popular video distribution channel and analytics platform, Karen Nelson-Field, senior researcher at the institute found that videos that triggered strong emotions from the viewers, positive or negative, were twice as likely to be shared across social media as those that contained a somber message.

The study also looked into the various emotions that ensued from people watching the videos, and they found that positive emotions- mainly exhilaration- were the most effective in triggering shareability. The second positive emotion was found to be hilarity, and as marketers have discovered, these emotions help viewers remember the the video- and they hope, the brand.

While emotions are universal, you also need to remember that different people respond differently to specific kinds of emotions. Strong emotions tend to cause subjective reactions so understand your audience well when developing the video. If you keep their emotional baseline in mind, it should help make the video useful for your brand.

Video marketing can do wonders for your brand, but it takes considerable effort to pull all these elements together and create a system that works. Few people get it right the first time; even experienced marketers make blunders when strategizing on a marketing campaign, but there's always another angle to explore, a new opportunity to reach people, so failure

shouldn't hold you back.

Use this information as reference for when you want to explore the world of video marketing, and let it guide you in making videos that have a positive effect on your brand but remember to be creative, and dare to go where others haven't.

How To Use Video Contests

Every element of digital marketing holds in it great potential to reach and influence consumers. Consider social media, earned media, engagement marketing, user-generated content, consumer-generated content, outsourcing, crowdsourcing, co-creation, etc: they all affect your brand. The evolution of these and more elements has over time led to mass experimentation with the more effective components, such as video contests.

Running a successful video contest is not an easy task but if you have all the parts needed to make a good contest, you should have people scrambling to participate. Ensure you do the following before launching your next video contest:

Define your objective

It's the most critical step when running a video contest and a lot of people get it wrong. Marketers run video contests for different reasons and without an actual goal or objective it would be difficult to gauge the success or failure of the entire process. These are some of the main reasons video contests have gotten so popular:

- Higher ROI from creative production costs
- Increased engagement and time spent with the brand

- Generating buzz and word-of-mouth
- Sourcing target insights

Determine what you hope to achieve by running the contest and gear it towards that objective. If done right, the contest should yield multiple benefits.

Select the theme

When deciding on a theme, you may keep it aspirational and open enough so that the participants can inject their personalities. This might be hard to do when you're marketing a highly technical product but still, try to look beyond product specifications and consider the following:

How will the brand fit into people's lives?

Are there any conversations going on about your brand, and if so, can you use that in the contest?

How does the current user-generated content reflect on the brand?

Good themes compel the participants to deliver the brand's message subtly, so it doesn't come out as a list of benefits.

Craft the brief

The brief is a crucial component in the creation of the contest. It communicates to the would-be participants and lets them know what to do; which is why ultimately it has such a tremendous impact on the content

they turn in.

Rule of thumb: Tell the audience in simple language what you want done, and set reasonable constraints. Unless you want the content to show specific imagery, there's no need to inject too much color imagery in the brief. Use simple language and start with an inspiring brand story then move on to why you want videos from them. Keep it short and include the following:

1. The personality and tone you want
2. The audience that the videos are targeting
3. Description of any resources the creators have
4. If needed, a CTA to be included in the video
5. The limitations set forth

Incentives

Determining the price and criteria for selecting winners is crucial for pulling in not only the best talent but the right kind of talent, as based on your specific goals. The more basic incentives are cash, products and travel packages, visibility (could mean publishing their work on the website or on TV), etc.

In order to attract the most talented people from your networks, implement a significant prize for the winner (a minimum of \$10,000), selected by a special jury or the brand itself vs. a “most views” or “most votes” criteria.

If however, your goal is to engage the audience or generate buzz, the winner could be chosen on a most views or votes basis, and the price should reflect the effort. Basically, weight the prices in accordance with your goals.

Promoting the contest

Creatives tend to operate from self-organizing communities all over the web but even with the best theme and price package, many video contests launched without the aid of an experienced crowdsourcing partner go unnoticed. When promoting your contest, the crowdsourcing expert does the following:

1. Engages communities and groups in platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn
2. Reaches out directly to smart creatives on Twitter, Vimeo and YouTube
3. Builds relationships with student groups and school administrators
4. Posts opportunities in multiple creative sections on multiple websites

If you want the contest marketed to a larger audience you may have to reach out to an expert.

The timing

Timing is crucial for the success of the contest. It usually takes a few weeks to create good work for the contest as well as generate enough buzz. Let

the time frame be 8-16 weeks.

Another crucial factor to consider is the submission deadlines for other competitions. Schedule the competition so that it ends several weeks after other contests have ended, so you don't lose potential competitors to fatigue.

Basic rule of thumb: Never extend the deadline of the contest. That would be a huge breach of trust and you would lose credibility with any talented creative.

Moderate content

Not all video contest platforms allow you to control incoming content, but even so, learn how you can moderate what participants are submitting.

Moderation has its benefits:

You can help submitters improve their content in case they miss the mark

You have more control over your brand's identity

Be consistent when moderating content. If the competition requires by-the-book adherence to the instructions posted on the brief, ensure all approved work goes through the same level of scrutiny.

Use all approved content

It's a question a lot of people ask: What do I do with all those videos?

Some ideas to get you working:

1. Distribute good quality videos on websites such as TubeMogul.com, and remember to include SEO best practices so they show up in search results
2. Embed some of the videos on your own website
3. Feature the videos in your social network profiles as a way to boost engagement
4. Run another contest rewarding public where people vote for the best video and reward participation

Understand the law

All video contest hold a few legal implications so whether you launch the contest on your own or choose to work with a partner, look into this:

- Ensure your brand is protected against copyright issues
- Rights to offline and online usage of content
- Set terms and conditions and establish proper contest rules

When you run a contest it gives you a truer interpretation of how people perceive your brand. Listen to them, engage with them and see what you can learn from their participation.

How To Make Your Video Stand Out From Your Competitors

Because of its ability to tell stories and therefore influence people emotionally, video is the most appealing ad form in any medium. Whatever type of market you're working in, video gives you immense power to influence and cause a positive response from your audience. Want to crank up your marketing a notch? You've already learned what video marketing is and how to come up with a good strategy, so now you could use a few more tips to get the videos trending.

- Always have a few testimonials for your product, so that the larger audience can see how much people love your service or product. This will have a large influence on your audience because video testimonials are not easy to fake.
- Answer common questions. You can do one video per question, or if you'd prefer, create one video to answer a bunch of questions.
- Address some of the factors that lead to objections from your audience. If your prospects come up with excuses to not taking action, find out what these objections are and tackle them; that way you will bring your leads closer.

- Subtitle an existing video. If you have a bunch of quality videos trending already, one way to get even more views is to reproduce it with subtitles. You might need to confirm any copyright issues before reproducing the video.
- Record an inspirational video for your audience. This could be angled towards a specific niche in order to have a more powerful effect, or you could find a general topic that affects the average person.
- Tell stories visually. It doesn't take too long to create a storyboard that walks people through a simple story that tells a message at the end.
- Get someone well-known to appear on your videos to teach. This will work; whatever industry you operate in.
- Stop motion graphics are notoriously difficult to make but if you can manage to make one, they tend to go viral when they're done really well.
- If you have the visuals but don't want to use your own voice, you can hire professional voiceovers to do the work for you. Fiverr would be a good place to start, and you can get a professional to do it for as little as \$5.

- Guide your audience through an experience. For instance, a guided meditation or a writing exercise.
- Use PowerPoint to create a slideshow and narrate as you walk the audience through the slides.
- Encourage your viewers to subscribe and ship them a video every month or send an exclusive video newsletter.
- Include video on your squeeze page. Landing pages that feature video tend to get higher conversions than other form of landing pages.
- Show your prospects a behind-the-scenes video, detailing the nitty gritty of your business. Unless you have solid reasons for not doing it, it will soften up your audience because people love seeing what goes on behind the scenes.
- Introduce your team to the audience. Introduce everyone from the people working in the offices, the guys who answer the phones, and the delivery guys.
- Pick the right time to piggyback off a popular current trend; for instance if the elections are coming up, create an election video to keep people busy.

- Carefully plan and execute a clever publicity stunt. Find something gutsy to do in public and have someone film it. But be careful with publicity stunts because they tend to backfire terribly if done wrong or when posted at the wrong time.
- If you have a topic that relates to your personal life, tell a story about it.
- Every once in a while share a random useful rant or thought, and post the video as-is, without editing. Be completely uncut.
- Find something interesting to record and do a timelapse video. Sunsets might be a little overused, but constructions can be intriguing. Condense the video to a few minutes or seconds.
- If you don't mind controversy, take an unusual stance on a sensitive issue or say something controversial.
- Find as many weird or funny urban myths and prove or disprove them.
- Pose a question, or puzzle, then answer it in a later video. This will keep people busy and interested, and it allows you to present content later, in case you need to buy time.
- Show and tell the tools you use for your job. For instance if you're making a how-to video about fishing, get all the different tools needed

for the job and show how they're used.

- Tell them what not to do in specific situations. Explain common mistakes and show them how to avoid them.
- Get out of the office and conduct a public poll on a certain topic. Ask random people questions and post the video to show how people feel about the issue.
- Host a competition. You could for example host a fishing competition and then interview the winner. Put the entire thing on video and post it.
- Issue them a challenge. You could ask them to catch a rare fish, create an app, etc.
- Post a good video response. If it turns out very good, it could get featured on the 'related videos', where it'll get a lot of views.
- Cover a large event. This could be anything from a trade show, seminar or conference.
- Show them what your typical day is like. Have someone record you all day and then speed it up to show how you spend your workdays. Impersonate a famous or popular person. If you teach piano lessons, appear dressed as Elvis or Lady Gaga for a lesson.

- Unpack a popular product. Anything will work here; if you're a gamer then the latest offering from Microsoft's X-box should get the audience excited.
- Work with other successful video marketers and publish the video on all your platforms.
- Record a hidden-camera video of something exciting, like say a rock concert, and show people what it's really like to attend one.
- Create a list of useful tips and go over each tip, giving the viewers exclusive information.

These are some of the ways experienced video marketers make their videos stand out. If you want your videos to cause an effect then you have to be super-creative. If you're finding it challenging to come up with a unique angle, you could always use these tips to kick start your video channel. It's a fun and effective way to communicate while selling your products or services.

Online Video Marketing Trends

Let's wrap up this guide with some online video marketing trends.

Short videos have taken over 2014 and short video applications such as Vine have continued to dominate the video marketing industry as a key element of most brands' digital strategy. There has been however, an increasing emphasis on quality when it comes to video production so as brands rush to sustain consumer interaction with valuable and engaging content, audiences are demanding more from the production budget.

It is only through quality production that a consumer will, for instance, grant the company or brand permission to feature the videos on their social pages, whether it's through likes, shares or retweets- a top goal for most brands. Apart from quality, apps such as Chirp.io and Shazam have become more influential. Chirp allows users to share photos, contacts, webpages and more using sound where information is sung from one phone to another.

Gone are the days when large brands dictated what content the consumers viewed or edited: more people are watching new content and they are responding in very different ways. Popular video curating platforms such as Vine and Instagram have made production a lot easier and consumers are able to share engaging content in a more open environment.

This in itself has changed the way in which companies approached marketing, and it has in many ways brought brands down to the consumer level, ensuring a more streamlined form of communication where the brand and consumer operate as equal partners.

Intense competition

The video market has become more competitive for marketers. In order to stand out, marketers have to learn how video content impacts their businesses and find out how to create the videos in order for them to remain relevant. As most companies invest money and time in video, a bigger role is placed on the marketing department to make sure the company's videos are easily accessible, engaging and stand out in a heavily crowded market.

When operating in a crowded marketplace, you have to make sure the content is tailored to a specific audience. Whether or not the content is fun, informative, entertaining and engaging, it should be tailored for a specific audience in order to ensure its success.

Multiple platform viewing

The average household has over six devices connected to the Internet, so consumers are no longer tethered to a single device: people are always on the move, and so is their content. Marketers have had to ensure that all videos they produce can be accessed from a variety of platforms, and this has further enhanced the evolution.

Mobile advertising has seen a huge growth over the last few years with almost half of mobile subscribers signing up for ads. However, while for a long time most users were 10x more likely to receive image-based ads compared to video, the impact of video ads has almost whitewashed the concept of image-based advertising.

As video advertising gets more commonplace in mobile devices, marketers have to embrace a multi-screen strategy so they have an easier time connecting with audiences across multiple platforms.

Banded video content

2014 has seen a continuation of branded videos from large companies, SMEs as well as micro business. From Volvo Trucks (Van Damme), to East West reunion, these ads have reached staggering numbers of views across multiple channels, all over a short period of time. Cisco states that video users will double to 1.5 billion in 2016 and just about every company will be using video primarily to communicate their brand to consumers.

While we have witnesses large budgets being thrown into online video production, a large number of SME's and micro businesses are tapping into the advertising power of online video as a more effective way to tell their story and connect with consumers.

The death of long-form videos

Netflix is an established online video hub and it has managed to maintain a strong position in spite of great evolution and stiff competition. That said, more producers and content holders are monetizing their content and are going 'direct to consumer', which means they're starting to rely less on services such as those offered by Netflix, Amazon or iTunes.

Several out-of-the-box products offering user-facing apps and e-billing systems have already hit the market so this shift might happen a lot faster. While many VOD Netflix-style services exist today, more companies are choosing to adopt a more hybrid business model that combines subscriptions and ads, much like Hulu/Hulu Plus does.

Email video marketing

Video email marketing has been for the most part, largely underused: which is strange because marketing firms agree that it's one of the most effective way to communicate to consumers online. It is quite possible that some of your main competitors still haven't discovered the usefulness of email video and that would mean a great opportunity for you.

For many consumers, receiving an email with a video message is the surest way to connect with them online. The only other solution that beats email video marketing is a face-to-face meeting. A survey by reelSEO reported that 82% of marketers who used video in their email campaigns found it more effective.

Typically, technology facilitates the evolution of digital marketing and 2014

has seen more ease of use, much better playback and more embedded videos. There are many ways to integrate video into online marketing and as the year progresses we will continue to see more innovative campaigns.

Micro videos and social media

The biggest trend in social media this year has been the 5-7 second video ads. They pose a huge challenge for marketers who have to break down a brand's story into small, effective visuals, but it's also a huge opportunity to enhance creativity which is shared among different audiences.

This explosion in user-generated clickable videos and animated GIFs has brought the game to a whole new level and has brought along all sorts of experimentation from brands across the globe. The concept of using small pieces of moving media to tell stories quickly and effectively may have sounded a little misguided a few years back, but that goes to show the industry's great capacity for change.

As more brands get smarter with their ads, we can expect many more SMEs and miscor businesses to embrace the medium and begin experimentation; and over time, make real progress in the social space.