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EFFECTIVE WAYS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS USING ONLINE VIDEO



Rich media content, new visual languages and shrinking attention spans are changing how businesses communicate both with each other and to their customers. Video is becoming **the** delivery medium for marketing and communication activities in the 21st century. Within this document you'll find ideas, advice and information on the key uses for online video, where to use them effectively and the effect they can have on the growth of your business.

CREATIVE VIDEO PRODUCTION FOR THE WEB, BROADCAST & MOBILE

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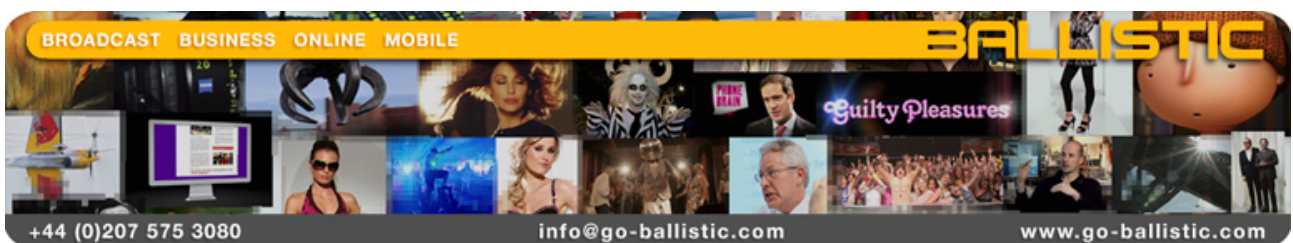
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INTRODUCTION

Video is making a huge difference to the online marketplace. Below in the following sections are the current, proven key uses for growing your business online, using video.

With each section you will find descriptions of the different types of projects that have proven to yield successful results. The number of businesses using this type of video (Popularity) is compared to the user response and therefore the effect on the business in each case (Growth Potential). Well made high quality video can keep people engaged, increase time spent on your site (adding a new experience for your customers) and increase the likely hood of further action, return visits and most importantly, sales.

At the end of the section please also read our **SECRETS OF EFFECTIVE SALES VIDEOS**. These are real world, tried and tested methods that will make a big difference to your business and your customers, when utilising video in the ways described. This section also looks at how you profit from an investment by using video within your business, this is mainly tailored to online video use.

1.THE CUSTOMER REFERENCE VIDEO

Video Customer Testimonials (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Nothing is more compelling than seeing and hearing your customer (ideally in their own environment) extol the virtues of your products and services or explain how you helped them achieve their business goals. These videos usually run from fifteen second snippets to a minute and are typically combined with or used to support other marketing material.

Video Success Stories (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Similar to a customer testimonial, these videos follow an interview format where the person on screen answers questions posed by an interviewer just off-camera. These videos are usually delivered as stand-alone marketing support materials and are often grouped with other customer success stories.

Person-in-the-street Interviews (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

These videos are typically done to promote events and to build buzz around forthcoming events but can also be employed to capture 'spontaneous' responses to targeted questions, these help promote your product or service and help differentiate the benefits of your brand compared to the real or imagined problems associated with your competitors. Drinks companies, telecoms companies and fast food companies often use this format in advertising. Sometimes they are genuine, sometimes they are staged.

2.PRODUCT AND SERVICE PROMOTION

Product Presentations (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Product (or service) presentation videos are typically employed early in the buying cycle. Product or service presentations focus on benefits and talk more from your customer's perspective. They should speak clearly about how your product solves a specific business, personal or economic problem that your customer/end user is experiencing. They are used to help customers and users differentiate between the benefits of your products and services to those of your competitors.

Product Demonstrations (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Product demos show how your product works and highlight the features that differentiate it from that of your competitors. Software screen captures, a 3D cut-away, or a high impact demo by a presenter are all excellent ways of showing how your product or service works. These videos are typically used to influence a prospect who is relatively far along in the sales cycle. In technology marketing these videos would be targeted at the technical approvers who need to understand how something works. In consumer marketing these would be targeted at buyers of larger ticket items who are further along the sales cycle.

Product Reviews (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

The best product reviews are trusted third party reviews. Video reviews can be found anywhere from YouTube to various business portals. To the extent they help you, they should be referenced. You can also partner with trusted third parties to create product reviews for your own products

Visual Stories (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Quickly rising in popularity, visual stories employ illustrations, animations and motion graphics with a voice-over to explain complex products or services in a simple and compelling manner.

3.THE CORPORATE VIDEO

Corporate Overview (Popularity: High - Growth Potential: Moderate)

These videos are the video equivalent of the 'company brochure' for small companies – intended to give new visitors to a website a better idea of the company. Corporate overview videos can feature company history, key products, executives/owners and other top level business info. As the cost of video production continues to decrease and the popularity of video increases you will start to see these videos being replaced by multiple, more target specific video.

CORPORATE VIDEO (continued)

Staff Presentations (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: Moderate)

Social media and other Web 2.0 trends have caused companies to reconsider how they communicate with external audiences. Your leadership team should not be the first and only consideration in representing your company. It is becoming more imperative to consider showcasing the people that drive the day-to-day operations of your company. Customer service representatives, technical experts and legacy workers are all valuable considerations for this new category of corporate video. Surveys show that there is more trust associated with these employees than with senior management. When you are selling to influencers in organisations (versus economic buyers or decision makers) it is especially important you represent your company with people that your customers and prospects can relate to.

4. TRAINING AND SUPPORT VIDEO

Training (Popularity: High - Growth Potential: High)

Corporate video first gained prominence with training (service, support, sales, personal development etc.) and continues to be one of the best uses of video. Online Video is a cost effective substitute for in-class training. You can also easily integrate video into online training management tools.

Just-in-time learning (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

Contextual training videos are becoming very popular on the web. 'How-to' videos, video manuals, on-site video reference, quick assembly demos, and other types of video are being used to supplement or replace traditional training. Mobile video will increase the popularity of this type of video

5. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Internal Communications (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: Moderate)

In larger companies few people have the time or interest to understand what other groups or functions within the company do or even why they exist. Internal videos that highlight business plans, new business activities and achievements can improve knowledge transfer and lead to more effective communications. They are also a great way to show off your local hero's.

Employee Orientation (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

Once your new recruits are on board employee orientation videos are a great way to get new staff up to speed. Company history, structure, procedures, policies and codes of behaviour can all be communicated effectively with video.

Health, Legal & Safety (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

The cost of dealing with health and safety related issues within organisations continues to grow. Video is one of the most effective means of minimizing these costs.

6. ADVERTISING, MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Commercials (Popularity: High - Growth Potential: High)

While advertisers are becoming more selective in how they chose to spend their promotional budgets with broadcast television, other venues for commercials such as online video pre-roll, online sponsorships, in-game advertising, event sponsorships and in-theatre advertising are starting to take the place of broadcast / cable TV commercials. A proliferation of video screens cropping up on every building, device and structure has created an even more diverse set of advertising opportunities. The challenge will be to create specialised content targeted to an ever shrinking niche audience.

Viral Video (Popularity: High - Growth Potential: High)

A video is viral if it is so compelling that people want to share it. (Calling a video 'Viral' doesn't make it so). Viral videos have to be extremely engaging, entertaining, shocking or meaningful to be successful.

ADVERTISING, MARKETING AND PROMOTION (continued)

Unfortunately some of the most successful viral videos have little connection (and therefore value) to any brand.

Email Video (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Testing has shown that open rates can double if you include video in your email marketing activities. To be effective the video should be purpose-built to elicit a specific conversion activity such as requesting a demo, more info etc.

Infomercials (Popularity: High - Growth Potential: High)

Infomercials have been around forever. While they continue to be the primary focus of web-based parody videos they have remained remarkably resilient over time. The shopping channel is, in effect, a 24 hour infomercial. If done well, Infomercials can be very effective at selling certain consumer products.

Content Marketing (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: Huge)

This is a broad category that will become very important over the next months and years. Much of the content (video or otherwise) being created today by companies is focused on selling. Focusing on solving your customers problems first and then associating your brand with those solutions will be increasingly more important and effective. (e.g. B&Q could create a branded 'how-to' series that sits on their website and shows their customers how-to fix anything. They would, of course, reference tools and supplies available in their store but more importantly, they would generate tremendous value for their customers and prospects – value that would accrue to them over time.)

Landing pages and micro sites (Popularity: Moderate - Growth Potential: High)

Video is beginning to replace or supplement text and graphics as a content element on many corporate websites. Landing pages can offer a more compelling call to action with video. Some micro sites on larger web properties are self contained, purpose-built conversion machines that have the singular purpose of generating a conversion activity (sign-up for more info, attend event, order something etc.). Video is becoming an important part of the conversion process.

7.PR SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Video Press Releases (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

The standard four paragraph press release is now being supplemented with video and rich media to tell a more engaging story. Video is now being purpose-built to directly support the important company announcements. The new challenge for press releases is to change the focus from the company to the customer.

Community Relations Video (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

If your company is out working in the community, being good corporate citizens, helping the environment or contributing to important causes you should be capturing those efforts on video. Show the world what you are doing, don't just talk about it.

8.EVENT VIDEO

Event Presentation video (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

Events represent a unique confluence of expertise and opportunity – often under-leveraged. Trade Shows, meetings and conferences are usually attended by your top sales people, your corporate executives, industry experts and other influential business people. If you are speaking at an event or someone is referencing your company you should be capturing this valuable content on video.

Round table Sessions (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

Take the opportunity at an event to corral four to six of your best customers and other industry experts, put

EVENT VIDEO (continued)

them in room and record/film them talking about industry trends, business issues and the future of your industry. This content will be the most valuable content you could ever capture!

9. OTHER USES OF VIDEO

In Store Video (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

Wal-Mart in the USA has its own profitable in-store TV network that makes shoppers aware of new promotions. LCD screens are ubiquitous. In store LCD's will be networked and customizable offering you the ability to promote your own goods and services or make money by promoting other complimentary services.

Company Lobby / Waiting Room Video (Popularity: Low - Growth Potential: High)

HD Plasma & LCD screens are popping up everywhere – why not in your lobby (if you don't already have one) or reception where you can get a jump start on first impressions and take advantage of a captive audience.

Mobile Video (Popularity: Low - **Growth Potential: Huge**)

There s an Ap for that! Mobile video will soon be the largest video category outside of broadcast. In the short-term, mobile video will consist of hastily re-purposed video made to fit on a mobile device. It will quickly evolve into a much more specific format – five to fifteen second specifically targeted messages that are part of geo-located and micro-niched promotions. Don't miss this wave of opportunity!

SEE THE NEXT SECTION: SECRETS OF EFFECTIVE SALES VIDEOS

THE SECRETS OF EFFECTIVE SALES VIDEOS & HOW YOU CAN PROFIT FROM THEM

So, how do you do it? How do you ensure the videos you add to your site will indeed be effective and help drive sales? The truth is, as with all marketing tools, there's no one sure fire method that is guaranteed to always work, but here are a few of what we think are the best techniques that have proved to yield excellent results:

Where to begin? *The Pareto Principle*

The [Pareto principle](#), also known as the 80-20 Rule, applies to most businesses. Simply put it means that you're probably making much of your revenue with a well defined group of top selling items. You'll probably get the most from using online video by boosting these items' product pages with video content first. Most online retailers have hundreds of items in their catalog. Choosing to follow the Pareto Principle serves as an excellent guideline for where to begin with video enhancements.

You don't need long videos – Keep them short and sweet

The truth is that in the online world your audience has a very short attention span. This issue is compounded by the less-than-ideal objective qualities of most online video: download times, small player windows, although the quality is improving all the time (youtube now has resolution options that got all the way up to HD). Ideally you should keep product videos as short as is reasonable or possible. If your product is especially complicated or expensive (a premium product) you might want to extend the running time of the video for instance. Testing variations is important to determine what works best in each case.

If you don't conduct A/B tests from the start you may regret it later

Obviously different types of videos will work better for different types of products and different types of clients. The problem is we don't know which type of video performs best for our products and client base until we've tested a few versions – failing to test early on can mean leaving substantial conversion potentials untapped. The simplest way to do this is by creating and uploading a couple of versions of the video for a limited group to watch and comment on. By monitoring their performance, in terms of conversion rates and purchasing behavior, this will allow you to determine which gives the best results. Once you feel you've accumulated the data you need, pick the best formats and apply these techniques for the rest of your site's video content, as it pertains to each product.

What everybody should know about captions

Captions within your videos have a surprising effect on click through rates and conversions. Take a look at the illustration taken from two identical videos.



Although the only difference between both versions is the red captions in the version on the right, there was an 8% difference in their conversion rates. That's right – just by adding captions to the original video (left) improved its online conversions (direct action) by 8 percent.

Add user reviews to increase trust

User reviews and testimonials are popular in e-commerce because people tend to trust ratings and recommendations from their peers. You can increase the ROI from any existing user's reviews you have by adding them to your videos, as shown in this example from [England's leading online Golf's retail site](#) (click the "View Video Showreel" beneath the product images).

Include video in your on-site search results to increase sales

Research shows people searching your site are twice to three times more likely to make a purchase than those merely browsing. The reason this is so is because searching visitors usually have a clear intent, while browsers are more likely to be casual traffic. A good way to use video to capitalize on the quality traffic using your site's search engine is by indicating the availability of video within every item's search results. Indicating an item has video increases the likelihood a user will click to view it, and then buy it.

Are you getting the most out of your videos?

Once you've invested in creating a few videos you can maximize the ROI on them by including them in all your online marketing activities. Link to them from your email marketing campaigns, upload them to your social media profiles and use them to push your SEO campaigns via proper tagging and deep back links.

So, how can you actually profit from this?

So how does using video contribute to a significant jump in sales? Well, it's because 65% of people watch online videos to completion (less than 10% will read a text-only site to completion). The longer you can keep people glued to your sales message, the better your sales will be!

If you're interested in how long people stay on a site with video vs. a text-only site, here are some findings. The average length of time, per visitor, spent on text-only sites is 60 seconds....and sites with video? **It's 6 minutes!**

But wait. I know what you must be thinking at this stage...aren't the majority of people watching videos online just young or teenage users? **NO!** As much as 68% of the people viewing videos online are between the ages of 25 and 64 with 67% of those earning a middle to a high annual income.....

How many of those people are in your market, how many are visiting and spending time your site?

While the statistics clearly illustrate the benefits of using video on your site, the question still remains...how exactly should you go about using it? The answer to that question comes down to **3 proven techniques**.

1. Use video on your web site to market or promote your products or services.
2. Use video to grab the viewers attention and state your benefits.
3. Use it to build credibility and urge people to take action.

The problem is, a lot of business owners still think that their product or service can't be promoted through video, this just simply isn't the case!

Lets use jigsaw puzzles as an example. How would you create a video to market jigsaw puzzles? Trish Barker of [connectionsuzzles.com](#) based in Hawaii decided to use video on her site. She embedded the finished video using the hosting network [Vimeo](#). She reported that her sales immediately increased once she'd added video to her site. Trish's big video secret? Featuring major benefits that most people aren't aware of with jigsaw puzzles!

Another way online video can be used by any size business, is to create new products or supplement existing products. For example, lets say you have a product that requires a lot of customer support which could be automated through the use of an online video! You could create a set of videos that customers could watch instead of phoning for help, similar to mini tutorials.

Perhaps the most powerful way to utilise online video is through the new media approach. This is where you build a loyal audience by providing them with free, useful content on a regular basis. Video podcasts are a perfect example. With video podcasts, literally anyone, in any market, has the opportunity to grow a large, responsive following through the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Linked in, Bebo and MySpace, to name the most recognisable.

Cali Lewis is proof of this. About 2 years ago, Cali and her husband Neil decided to start a video podcast covering technology news. They had no experience...and really...no idea what they were doing. They just figured things out as they went along. Today, their little video podcast is a full-time business...with 300,000 people downloading their 5 minute shows daily. And as Cali would tell you, there's no reason why anyone else can't accomplish the same thing.

The bottom line? Online video is not out of your reach.....online or web video is still in it's infancy and you haven't *missed the boat*...at least not yet. But it is moving at an **amazingly fast rate**. And if there ever was the perfect time to get involved, **that time is now!**

Get in touch with Ballistic, to make a big difference to your business today!

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