Video Marketing Guide

There is much more that goes into designing a website than what meets the eye. As the primary mode of communicating messages to a target audience, websites are typically constructed to engage the visitor through three distinct aesthetic elements; visual, aural, and conceptual. The visual element is created with CSS styling and images, aural is created with audio including music or voice overs, and conceptual is established with text.

All three of these aesthetic concepts optimally work together because they directly mirror the foundation of creative expression including paintings and sculptures, vocal and instrumental music, as well as literature and poetry.

In its most basic form, Video is the culmination of all of the aesthetic concepts. The visual image, auditory music, and conceptual story all combine to deeper engage viewers conceptually and perceptually. This is why video is such a powerful tool in terms of engaging a larger audience.

The value of video can be broken down into three basic aspects:

1) Brand Awareness
2) Search Engine Optimization
3) Improved User Engagement

Brand Awareness

While watching a video, viewers have a closer experience to being face to face versus reading text, looking at an image, or listening to audio on their own. Through the production of a video, a business has the ability to precisely display who they are through the use of physical, verbal, and audio expression. This is extremely important for branding because it gives businesses the opportunity to display a *human* side more efficiently than through a few paragraphs of web content or an ad logo.

Online videos also have the ability to indicate the level of professionalism and brand quality of a company if the video is well thought out and produced with care. A proficient video demonstrates the legitimacy of a company and assists them in being perceived as a serious business with an authentic dedication to providing the highest quality of service.

Search Engine Optimization

Search engine ranking plays a huge role in a company's visibility. It does so in a number of ways:

1) **Generates increased traffic through "rich snippets"**
   On search engine results pages also known as SERPs, thumbnail sized images are sometimes included with the results indicating that the page features a video. Search results that feature rich snippets typically have a much higher click through rate than standard results. Essentially what this means is that websites ranking with video rich snippets have a much better chance at increasing their traffic.

2) **Improving Conversions**

By featuring a video on your site and utilizing the proper technical mark-up, your augmented search results can yield excellent benefits. Increased consumer trust and engagement through a video can be a superior way to drive word of mouth especially in terms of commercial pages. This is the primary reason behind the increased usage of product videos in the online marketplace as "click here" to purchase now.

3) **Link Building**

Videos are also a great tool in link building. The rankings of search results are based on the relevancy and authority of a link. Relevancy is determined by the content and terms of the page while authority is determined by the amount of referring links and shares through social media. Studies have shown that web pages featuring a mixture of media types and forms (in particular those with video content) tend to generate a higher number of inbound links when compared to plain pages with just images and text.

4) **Video Search Engine Presence**

After Google, YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world. There is only one way to establish a presence on YouTube and that is to have a channel and video content which lands you on the ranking of both YouTube and Google. Not only will a YouTube presence drive brand awareness but it will also increase referrals and sales.

Improved User Engagement

Videos offer companies more involvement in their viewers experience and take away than any other tool on the web. For instance, as you read this article, you're able to pause and re-read or consider the information presented to you. Reading alone allows the reader to steer the perception of the information, appraise and evaluate meaning, as well as determine the emotional response.

As a medium of information, video lends very little freedom in regards to the terms of consumption. It may be easy for a reader to skim and skip text deciding what they will or will not read while video doesn't offer that. A viewer will either watch the video completely or until they lose interest.

Watching a video is a passive experience, by clicking play, the viewer is expecting to be shown something versus researching the answers on their own. The amount of information that can be conveyed through five seconds of video far surpasses the amount of information that can be read via text alone. This means that the "kneejerk reaction" or emotional response usually occurs before the comprehension of meaning sets in.

Video allows the creator to generate an instant emotional bond with the audience. This helps to establish "influencers" quickly and efficiently, however, it can also work the opposite way. Any video a business creates must engage an instant emotional connection otherwise they risk turning off potential clientele and influencers. A wise person once said, "If a picture is worth 1,000 words, then a video is worth 1,000 words 25 times a second."

Creating a Video that Works

The most common misstep made by companies and individuals who create a video is to handle video content similarly to interactive graphics or a blog post rather than a media type. Video equals form, not content.

Good video content will always lead the audience to become active, and bad video content will always lead to the audience to be passive. Video is not always appropriate for every story or idea. Should you ever find yourself attempting to transform some content into a video versus organically developing the video idea, that's often a huge red flag indicating that you're off the right path of creative process.

Fortunately, there are two simple ways to determine whether or not your idea will work well as a video:

First, ask yourself: "Is there anything that would be lost if this content were displayed as text and image only?"

For example, a video of a car crash is much more effective in conveying the need for car insurance versus a picture of a car and a quote saying "get insurance, you might need it!"

Second, ask yourself: "Does this idea need a physical expression in addition to conceptual engagement?"

If your video idea needs a visual and audio element in order to be attention grabbing, chances are that it will work well as a video. On the flipside, if you catch yourself scrounging up visuals just to have it make sense, it's very clear that the idea won't work out well as a video.

Generating Ideas

The key to generating exceptional video concepts, aside from style or goal, is to stick to a creative process that allows the story, rather than the story-telling medium to drive the respective results.

Consider the following when at your drawing board:

1) **Content Gap Analysis:**
   What works for your niche? What's already been done before?

2) **Form Gap Analysis:**
   What kind of content is appropriate for your video concept? Is video truly the right medium for delivery?

3) **Define Your Purpose:**

What is the core purpose of your video? Does your video need to build up to the end point through bits of content or can it be revealed right away?

4) **Develop your idea further:**

Who exactly is your video's target audience? Be as specific as you can, once you know your audience you can identify what style of content will work best in achieving your goals.

Content Gap Analysis

Video is an extremely valuable tool for businesses that have an online presence, but it isn't always effective for every type of content and every type of business.

The typical downfalls of the creative process surface when a business decides to create a video prior to establishing whether or not their idea is relevant or appropriate for the content it will contain.

Unfortunately the common practice for video creation starts with the thought *"we need a video, what can we say?"* Rather than *"we need an effective way to deliver tutorial content".*

Core content gaps are typically easy to identify. Usually they're determined by the needs and desires of the target audience compared to the expertise and ability within your entity.

An excellent example of an abridged content gap is a demonstration video for a new beauty product. Most consumers want to know if a product works that they've never tried before. By producing a demonstrative video, consumers will feel confident purchasing this new product as well as excited to get their hands on it.

Content gaps can be found using the following methods:

Keyword Research

Utilizing the Google *keyword research tool*, you have the ability to find demands for informational and commercial content within your concept. To find content demands, select "broad match" results and enter a selection of keywords. Sift through and explore the ideas Google provides along with the relative search volume to delineate the possible gaps.

Competitor Cross-reference

What have your competitors already done? What, if any, are the clear knowledge gaps that have yet to be filled by competitors both off and online?

Analyze Successful Campaigns

Take a look at some successful content of other industries and hone in on the basics of why their videos work. Is there anything supremely excellent about them that can be applied to a topic in your industry?

Form Gap Analysis

After you've identified the content gap you will be focusing on, you should have a video idea in the making. This is the turning point at which you will decide whether or not your idea is going to be best served as a video or another medium. Quite often you might begin the creative process imagining a video or blog post and later on decide that another method of delivery is more appropriate.

Be sure to ask yourself; *"Would this information lose anything if it were only an image and some text?"*

If your honest answer is no, a video is likely not the right medium for the information at hand. However, if you absolutely cannot picture your idea having an impact on your audience in any other form aside from video, then continue to develop it. If combining all of the artistic aspects of a video feels integral to conveying the concept, move forward with confidence in your choice of creating a video.

Once you've decided that your idea is best told through video, you can begin to narrow your focus on the tiny details that go into creating one. Will it be a single linear piece or an episodic series? What kind of graphic techniques will be used, and where will the video be hosted? Is the audience expected to have relevant knowledge?

Define Your Purpose

Your next step is to formalize your goals based on the previously mentioned values that can be achieved through video.

1) Brand Awareness
2) Search Engine Optimization
3) Improved User Engagement
    a) Generate increased traffic via content signals and rich snippets
    b) Improve conversations
    c) Build links
    d) Have a presence on video search engines

If more than one of the values listed above are goals that you wish to achieve, you should also begin thinking about whether those goals can separately be achieved with one piece of content alone, or whether you would have an increased level of success by splitting up each goal and targeting them with a different video. The decisions you make at this stage will determine what the appropriate technical and implementation will be for your video and the indicators at which you will track its success.

Develop Your Idea Further

All successful marketing videos are organically developed in terms of their style and type based on the core goals the creator has defined.

1) Brand Awareness
   In order to improve brand awareness, your video needs to be memorably engaging. Meaning it needs to be extremely creative and fantastic enough to generate a buzz as a result of the content's creative or informational value to the target audience. Featuring your video on social media sharing sites as well as YouTube will promote your video's visibility tenfold. It is important to take into consideration what kind of content your audience will like enough to share it.

   In regards to a more advertorial approach to video content, it works well to feature interviews with staff members. This approach builds brand trust and approachability especially if your entity is relatively new or re-branding in some way. If interviews can be combined with animation, slideshows, or informational content, then you can very simply create excellent content that works well in expressing brand identity and drawing in a new customer base. Your video may be subversive, humorous, serious, or even somber. No matter what tone your video will convey, it needs to emotionally engage with the target audience instantly in order to generate momentum. This is specifically true of paid placement ads such as "in-stream" or "pre-roll" that are time restricted and have a very short amount of time to work with. Ideally, the core message of a video should be played out within 30 seconds.

2) Search Engine Optimization
   a) Rich snippets and/or Conversions
      Videos created specifically for commercial landing pages are used to assist consumers in their choices in regards to purchasing or taking the next step. What is important here is the intention to enrich an already existing page or section of a site that provides easily palatable information or entertainment.

      When a video is created to back up the virtue or effectiveness of a product or service it can work very well. However promotional ads do not. Ads can be invasive to customers and are essentially designed to attract the attention of consumer to a particular product or service. If a consumer has already made their way to the website their attention is already partially attracted to your company in the very least and perhaps they want to know more. Hard-selling your product or services is un-necessary in this case, that can actually turn away a consumer that might otherwise be captivated.

      Google is basically impartial in regards to the style of the videos which are rewarded with rich snippets on their ranking. Pages that are linked to some sort of monetary value are best served with a product video as the rich snippets assist in improved rankings as well as click through rates.

b) Building Links

In order to build links, the content needs to be relevant to the target audience demographic who has control over a wide web presence. It has to engage this particular community in such a way that they will see a specific value in promoting it by embedding it on their site or sharing links.

To achieve the goal of building links over any other goal it is absolutely important that the video to be exceptionally impeccable. Nobody shares or embeds a video that's content it just *alright*. When someone embeds a video, it essentially represents a part of who they are. By creating a video intended to build links you're taking on the responsibility of representing your video viewers.

For your video to be exceptionally impeccable it doesn't necessarily mean it has to be glitteringly flashy or exciting. It just means that it has to be meaningful, well thought out, engaging, and pertinent to the content gap you are seeking to fill.

Video news releases can be a wonderfully effective method of taking links from top authority news sites and using them as the new media element of a page. This assists in ensuring that your press release will be at the very top of a journalist's pile. A video news release can be relatively simple and low in cost to produce. VNR's are typically a combination of interviews and testimonials with footage clips of the subject matter at hand.

c) Presence on Video Search Engines

Videos hosted on both the YouTube and Vimeo communities cover a vast amount of content. From DIY or music videos to learning tools and comedy, anything and everything that is captured on video can be hosted there.
No matter what kind of content is in a video, there is a reliable pattern for success. A truly successful video will always entertain, instruct, or provide useful/interesting information. Sometimes a well done video may cover one, two, or all three of those categories.

Entertaining videos are typically aesthetically appealing and are possibly humorous or have an impressive display of skill. Videos that are humorous are usually simple in structure and follow a traditional aural joke, show a repeated gag in many different circumstances, or have a build-up to a punchline.

Instructional videos can come in the form of lectures, tutorials, tips, or visual guides which aren't necessarily meant for a target audience alone, for example, a video recipe. Videos with useful or interesting information exist to serve or support a specific interest group or community.

In order to achieve success with these sites, you need to take into consideration what kind of people will actually be watching your video. Also consider that most of the people who will view your videos via video sharing sites are unlikely to have any prior knowledge of your brand or marketing efforts. That means that you will need to diligently work for their attention, ensuring every video creation is individually entertaining on it's own.

3) Improving User Engagement

To improve user engagement your content will need to be thought provoking and provide further creative value to invite additional action after the viewer watches the video. A key factor of improving user engagement is to figure out exactly where to place the video on a page and how to optimize the users experience through the page design. Well place layouts encourage people to watch and respond to a video. Also, when launching the video content it's important to leave space for comments so that viewers can comfortably interact with you- the host.

Technically Implementing Your Video

The three main aspects that need to be considered in regards to technical implementation are:

1) Hosting (The platform for your video)
2) On-site integration (How and where the video is placed on a web page)
3) Embedding (Where the video will be placed and what is around it)

Decisions in regards to technically implementing your video, should always be made with the style of the video content and your business goals in mind. A typical failure in video strategy is to think of embedding and hosting after creating and launching your video. The best practice is to figure out where it's going and who the audience is before creating the content.

Hosting

There are two fundamental options for hosting your video, seeding it into a community such as YouTube, Vimeo, and other community sites, or securing the content on your site. Hosting your video on a community site will yield a greater increase in views and sharing while hosting it yourself will result in traffic directed through a search engine and shares linking directly to your site.

YouTube is primarily an option for building reputation, branding, and notoriety. It can help your video go "viral" and make your brand stand up and out. Constantly creating new content for YouTube is a great way to keep viewers engaged and "tuned in" to your channel. While YouTube is overall an effective video host, your brand should be creating content for other hosting options.

There are some distinct advantages and disadvantages to hosting with YouTube.

Advantages:

- Content is seen by the greatest number of viewers
- Content is indexed quickly and typically is ranked well
- Content is often shared; resulting in "viral" videos and increased return to branded homepage links
- Embedding the YouTube video on your page may rank your site with a video rich snippet

Disadvantages:

- Content cannot be secured
- Social shares and embedded links will lead to YouTube not your landing page
- YouTube may rank instead of your website, particularly if the content is extremely successful

Vimeo functions almost exactly the same as YouTube and has similar advantages and disadvantages. These communities support creative content and not heavy elements of commercial branding.

Hosting using third party services such as Vzaar, Wistia, or Brightcove are a more secure options for hosting video content that don't require the resource of a player or cloud delivery system for the content.

Advantages:

- You have the choice of where content is embedded; this restricts the domains featuring the video, thereby ensuring any shared links go directly to your site
- Content will appear as unique content to Google and will make the page seem richer, therefore ranking higher
- Social shares and traffic can be driven to pages deeper within your website

Disadvantages:

- Your video will most likely not go "viral"
- Flash based embed codes are often required for indexing by Google, however these video hosts
- are often no mobile site friendly

Self-hosting is ideal for any business with the budget and time that wants to create videos for links or conversions. When self-hosted video content is seamlessly integrated with the rest of the page it appears as comfortably placed as one's own left hand. It is time consuming and potentially expensive but it also allows for added creativity.

Advantages:

- You have the choice of where content is embedded; this restricts the domains featuring the video, thereby ensuring any shared links go directly to your site
- Social shares and traffic can be driven to pages deeper within your website

- You can put in place a video sitemap and schema ensuring pages are ranked with video rich snippets
- You are able to ensure content is mobile friendly
- Content will appear as unique content to Google and will make the page seem richer, therefore ranking higher
- You have the ability to add unique HTML5 elements including page actions triggered by point in the video

Disadvantages:

- Your video will most likely not go "viral"

Making the decision about where your video will be hosted should be primarily based on where the content will perform its best and meet your individual goals. Product videos with a dry tone, for example, will do poorly on YouTube. In turn, hosting a creatively fun video on your own site wouldn't go "viral" like you would want it to. The way your content is embedded and promoted should essentially depend on your end goals for the content.

Technical Implementation for the Generation of Rich Snippets and Conversations

Integrating Video on Your Page

1) Only embed one video per page you want the rich snippet for.
   When there is only one video on a page it clearly indicates to Google the image they should use as their thumbnail. Spreading your content across multiple pages also allows you to rank for several keywords.
2) Place videos on the pages which rank relatively well in organic search results.
   Do some research to determine which of your pages would really benefit from the addition of video content.
3) Make sure that the page you want to host your video is an appropriate entrance point for your conversion funnel.
   This varies based on your site structure and business type, but typically an entrance that works would be a product page with a clear "add to cart" icon on the page.
4) Make sure the page is targeting a relevant keyword that's likely to receive a video rich snippet.
   Logon to Google and input the phrase or keyword you're considering targeting in the search bar to see if any video snippets are currently ranking for the term. If any video results pop up, you can be certain that the video on your page does indeed have the potential to generate a rich snippet for that term in particular.

   If no video results are returned, it doesn't necessarily mean that your page wouldn't rank with a rich snippet, especially if your targeted term is unsaturated or uncompetitive. In this case, thoroughly appraise the nature of your targeted term, your competition, and make a judgement as to the value of the keyword to figure out if it's worth targeting.

As you're brainstorming your possible keywords, consider framing your keyword with the following phrases around it. All of these typically will provide video results:

- What is___?
- Explanation of ___
- Video
- How to ___?
- Review of ____
- Test_____
- Demonstration____

After you've come up with a shortlist of relevant terms you may be able to get ranked with a rich snippet, input the terms into Google and choose the phrases with the highest search volume.

5) Prominently place the video on your page

Make sure that your video will be placed prominently on the desired page, with a frame size of at least 320 pixels wide, and ideally above the fold.

Hosting

You may choose to self-host or use a paid secure hosting solution. If you choose to self-host, you will need to either use your own servers or utilize a cloud storage solution. Either will suffice and this choice comes down to preference.

Embedding for Success

1) Ensure your content cannot be embedded outside of your domain

Your site pages always have the best chance of ranking with rich snippets if you can keep the video content unique to your site. That gives Google only one single option of which page can rank for your video. On the same token, keeping your content exclusive to your site will also ensure that viewers whom wish to watch your video are forced to visit your domain which makes it easier to convert into a conversation.

The widely popular hosting solutions will allow you to delegate where your content can be embedded. Also make sure that your video player won't display an *embed* button or code beneath the video so your content stays secure.

2) Embed your content with Flash and/or HTML5 and *not* an iframe.

Google is unfortunately not very skilled at indexing or crawling content delivered with Javascript or content in iframes. What that means is that if you want your videos to be indexed, it is best to make sure you are embedding content only in an HTML5 player with Flash fallback or a Flash player alone.

In order to achieve this, double check the features of your paid hosting site. If you are self-hosting you may use a number of player options or alternatively build your own HTML5 and Jquery.

3) Esnure your video file or player is linked with the HTML of it's source and not hidden behind Javascript.

Unfortunately, Google also fails to index videos if content is dynamically delivered by way of a JavaScript trigger rather than within an embedded HTML5 player or flash.
 In the case that you do need to hide the frame of the video and deliver it only upon request, do so with CSS rather than JavaScript and that will ensure the video file will still be indexed and crawled.

Technical Implementation for Building Links

The technical approach to building links does not vary greatly from that of improving rankings and conversions, but rather it is more an augmentation of that same implementation – however it is suitable for content that is likely to be shared and embedded.

Integrating Video onto Your Page

Video content that is tucked away in a corner is likely going to be ignored and be unseen. In the case of link building or any video marketing goal, that is the opposite of what you want to happen. Just as with any piece of link bait, the content needs to be placed somewhere visible with a good internal linking structure. For example, a large frame on the page (640px by 360px) will normally suffice and perform well.

If the video(s) you are creating are intended specifically for social shares and links, the content will generally have to be the primary (if not the sole) focus of the page they are on. It is good practice to build a page specifically for the link bait video.
The link bait page will also need to be well connected to the rest of the site through a good internal linking structure so that all links built to the video will also provide value to the site as a whole. All links pass Google's system measuring value and authority, PageRank, so the better your site pages are connected to each other, the more internal PageRank they pass.

Hosting

Similarly to the hosting approach for generating conversions and rich snippets, link building is significantly more successful when you self-host or use a third party solution. It is extremely important in this instance to not put the content on a video sharing community site like YouTube or Vimeo. Embedded and shared videos will only link back to the Vimeo/YouTube domain if shared through these platforms.

Embedding

1) Let your video be embedded anywhere and everywhere

   In order to build links through embedding and sharing, you'll need to allow your video to be viewed as many places as possible around the internet. This means you'll have to remove any and all domain restrictions from your hosting service.

2) Come up with a custom CNAME for your video files

   You've probably already done this if you're self-hosting, but if you're using a third party hosting solution they sometimes allow you to "white label" your files and create a CNAME "alias" that can be used to ensure every link to a video file will reference a branded subdomain in an embedded code. This will ensure that any content of yours that is embedded will link back to you twice. Once in reference to your video file, and once with a subsequent link to a specified page of your choice.

3) Always include social share buttons next to the video player

   With a goal of link building, this is an especially important step. When your video viewers are not given the option to share they must take extra measures to share making it far less likely that they will follow through. Be sure to include sharing buttons that are relevant to your target audience, always including the "big three" Twitter, Facebook, and Google+.

Technical Implementation for Branding and Notoriety

If your end goal is to get your company and services as much exposure as possible, essentially making your video go "viral"; this approach is the one you should be taking.

Hosting

Host the content on Vimeo and YouTube, and also upload the content to Vimeo, YouTube, Daily Motion, and any other video sharing site out there on the world-wide-web. Your goal in this case is to get your content viewed by as many people as humanly possible. This essentially foregoes the SEO benefits to

your domain, so in turn duplicate content should not be viewed as an issue. Establishing a presence on some video sharing sites can also help you gain referring links so be sure to take advantage of that whenever possible.

When you upload a new appearance of your video (ex. Uploading to YouTube in addition to Vimeo), make sure you are optimizing for slightly different variations of keywords every time. This allows you to target a broader spectrum of terms in search engines. This helps to ensure you aren't competing with yourself in the search results.

Keyword Research

Using both the Google Keyword tool and YouTube keyword tool, set them to "exact match" to find suitable terms to optimize your video. Measure the search volume in comparison to your competition and determine which phrases you will or will not be able to rank for. Make sure the term you choose in the end is not a keyword you are currently using for ranking your main site. If they match you will run the risk of having your YouTube video compete with your main site on search engine rankings.

Choosing the Location for On-Page Embedding

By embedding the YouTube version of your video on your site in a blogpost or somewhere that drives clicks and views, your ranking on YouTube can improve. Any views of your site automatically raises the total number of views for your video which will in turn raise your ranking.

Also adding supporting content to the site such as a blog post, interviews, or additional videos that will drive your traffic from YouTube to further investigate your site.

Custom Playlists

If your plan is to launch an episodic series of videos, you should consider embedding all of the content in a custom YouTube Playlist. This can be accomplished by building an embedded playlist through YouTube or through YouTube API. By using the YouTube API method, it is possible to make sure that your playlist is only viewable through your own domain. This will drive social shares, links, and traffic to your domain instead of YouTube.

When you don't have much of a budget for video and you're still interested in driving traffic and shares to your site, build a custom playlist that features other people's top videos on YouTube. A couple of great examples would be "world's cutest cat videos" or "cutest baby clips".

Optimize Your Vimeo and YouTube Channels

1) Choosing a Branded Username

   Generally speaking you want your username to identify you as a brand, and you'd also like your channel to rank on both a YouTube and a Google search of your brand name. In the case that you are unable to secure your company name as a username, pick something that is still

identifiable. For example if the username Ydraw was taken perhaps I would name my channel "YdrawCEO".

2) Consider a YouTube Partnership

If you would like to make some money from your YouTube channel, joining their partner program will provide you the opportunity to monetize your video by placing a pop-up or –pre-roll ad over your video.

There are advantages and disadvantages to partnering with YouTube. On the upside, the marketing value is in an increased customization of your channel. This allows for selling your merchandise through a "store" tab on your channel and the ability to upload custom channel backgrounds that can drive traffic to your site through links. The only downside to a partnership is that by becoming a partner, you have to host pre-roll ads which may deter users from finishing your video to the end.

3) Link to Your Domain

Always be sure to add a link from your YouTube channel leading back to your domain. While it won't help your domain rank, it may drive foot traffic back to your site.

The same basic principles of channel optimization apply to profiles on Vimeo

1) Secure your profile URL (ex. http://www.vimeo.com/mybrandXYZ)
2) Name your profile after your company name/brand
3) Include unique and relevant information describing your company in your account's description, be sure to include keywords*
4) Add links to your main domain and YouTube channel as a part of your *on the web* section.
5) If you happen to have a Vimeo Pro account, enable the *"community pass"* . That will allow users to find your account while they are browsing through videos on the main site.

Optimize Your YouTube Videos

1) Upload Each and Every YouTube Video with Keywords in the File Name

According to marketing research this appears to be a factor in ranking.

2) Choose Your Thumbnail Wisely

After uploading and processing a video, YouTube will give you the option to pick one of three images to represent your video in the YouTube and Google ranking results pages. Pick the one that would look the most appealing and would get the highest click-through-rate.

3) Name Your Video

Choosing the title for your video is extremely important. The title should be appealing and spark an interest in the members of your target audience. It also should target the appropriate phrases discovered through keyword research. Above all though, it needs to be honest. Misrepresenting a video with a false title is a surefire way to turn your target audience off and away.

4) Link Your Domain in the Description

Make sure that the description of your YouTube video is keyword focused and relevant to the content. More importantly, however, be sure to include a naked URL link (ex. http://mywebsite123.org). This naked link should be placed within the first three lines of text. It won't have any SEO or PageRank value, but it will give video viewers an avenue to travel directly to you domain after viewing the video.

5) Upload a Closed Caption File

Submitting a closed caption file (transcript) is the most important step in optimizing your YouTube videos. Both YouTube and Google treat closed captions as a transcript of your video. This allows the spoken words of your video content to rank like text would. If you happen to work globally in markets covering different languages, you can upload additional closed caption files for each language and target audience.

Technical Implementation Techniques to Achieve All Three Goals

It is a very rare occurrence in which a video will:

a) Aid in conversations
b) Attract links
c) Go "viral"

In order to achieve all three goals in one video campaign, you will need to have something exceptional selling your service/product, something that is creative with amazing aesthetic displays, and at the same time provide a hook that will generate embeds and links.

On-page Location and Elements

Your video needs to be placed on a page that's easily accessible and targeting a term that is capable of getting a rich snippet. Place the video on the front and center of the page. Also be sure that the page is well linked internally, that will ensure the link equity you will receive can be spread.

Hosting and Embedding

1) First and foremost ensure you get a rich snippet

   If online users can get their "hands" on your video before you have had the chance to get the claim ownership and ranking, you are at risk of others taking the results for the content you worked so hard on.

   Your safest move is to start off by hosting a secure version on your site, embedded in HTML5 or Flash and following the earlier suggested tips for getting conversions and rankings until your rich snippet materializes.

2) Allow others to embed your content

   Place a custom iframe embed code right next to the video on your page in addition to an attribution link outside the iframe code.

3) Place social share buttons next to your video

   These buttons should reference the page as a whole, not the video file alone.

4) Outreach for Links

   Follow the process of outreach and promotion (laid out in detail later in this guide)

5) Aim towards views and impressions

   A month or two later after the link building dries up, submit your content to Vimeo, YouTube, and every other video sharing site. Optimize everything for separate keyword variations that way you won't risk outranking yourself with your own content on Vimeo or YouTube.

6) Clean up your links

   A few months after you've completed the last step, find anyone who has embedded the content from your video marketing campaign, but, who are also linking directly back to Vimeo or YouTube as a result. Reach out to them with an embed code for the secure version that's on your site. Explain to them that this code is the higher quality version and that you would be supremely grateful if they would take the time to switch the codes so you could receive the link referral to your website. The majority of people are happy and willing to do this, and will be excited to hear from your brand.

   The reason you wouldn't want to take the approach of both self-hosting and hosting on YouTube is that by hosting the content on the wildly popular video community, you would

inevitably drive the future links and social shares to YouTube, not your domain. That may not be a problem for your brand, but it's usually not worth sacrificing the traffic to your domain.

Creating Your Amazing Content

For your video content to really succeed, it needs to be truly exceptional in quality and context. As with any creative content including text, imagery, and otherwise, mediocre content will yield mediocre results. No matter what your goal is, your video needs to be truly excellent to achieve your goal.

Keep in mind that high quality video content does not necessarily correlate to a high production cost. It's very clear that only brands with deep pockets can produce a video that meets a "Hollywood" level of standard. It is very possible to create an extremely successful video on a tight budget.

Defining Your Subject and Theme

Video in itself is an emotionally engaging and attention grabbing form, however commercial video is generally ineffective in communicating detailed technical concepts or nuanced literary complexity.

If you plan on recording anything other than an event, live performance, or happening, you will need to define the simplified message of your video. In essence, what it's about and what about it will make viewers want to be engaged with it. This is called the subject and theme.

Subject: The general area of interest or overall topic.
Theme: The specific message that is intended to be imparted upon the audience.

(ex. **Subject:** Cats   **Theme:** Lifespan)

Or

(ex. **Subject:** My Company   **Theme:** Why my service is better than my competitors)

It is important to define these elements prior to beginning production because the subject and theme will drive your creative process and determine how the video plays out. Setting the theme will give your content a direct purpose that offers a starting point at which your creative decisions will be based upon. This will assist you in maintaining a targeted and coherent narrative.

Most successful video campaigns appear to be created with a clear focus in mind. This results in an instant connection to the audience and a compelling reason for which viewers will want watch the

entire video on the edge of their seat. Most unsuccessful videos fail because there is a breakdown between the content style and the objective of the video. That causes a lack of a clear purpose and will confuse viewers if they make it through the whole video.

Determining the Required Level of Production Quality

The first thing you must consider when determining the required level of production quality, is why would anyone want to care about the content? Does your core theme correlate with anything that is specifically visual or aesthetic? If your content will be tutorial or informational in nature, the quality could be considerably less polished than the quality of a video with a sales focus.

Take into consideration:

1) What brought the viewer to your video?
2) Was it something for them to learn, or get an idea?

If the advice is good, the production doesn't really need to do anything more than convey the information. However if your video is intended to be an ad with a purpose of displaying the professionalism and quality of your company, the content will need to be diligently designed and visuals will need to be impeccable.

Also keep in mind that good quality production cannot replace good quality content. If your video content is based on a weak idea, a high budget won't make that idea any better.

Listed below is a guide of how your budget should be allocated

Style	Visuals	Audio
Promotional/ Ad	Best quality production with a wide variety of angles and shots	Custom professional music and/or professionally recorded voice overs
Design focused content/ Aesthetic imagery	Best possible production value along with heavy editing	Specifically composed with visuals in mind
Creative/ Humorous	Can be very basic or very complicated; Appropriate for the angle	Can be without audio (silent); or highly musical and must be appropriate for the angle
Informational Tutorial	Direct, appropriately placed, explained without too much detail or "busy" images	Simple vocal recording along with any music softly played low in the mix
Interview/ Presentation	Clean well-lit simple background with one to three angles	High quality professional vocal recording with no music
Product Video	One wide angled shot with one close up of the product,	The audio needs to be clear, easy to understand, and music

	works the best when it is simple not overly produced	must not be overbearing

Determining Imagery and the Style of Shots

Your next step is to determine what imagery and style of shots your video will feature based on the previous chart highlighting the best presentation of your theme. There are four basic types of footage that can make up a video:

- Live event recording
- Performed content
- Graphical animation
- Screen recording

Live Event Recording

A live event recording refers to the instance in which a camera will capture an event or happening where the footage captured for your video's use is not the sole purpose. Some examples include wildlife footage, a theatrical performance, a concert, or even a conference.

Performed Content

Performed content is when a performance is directly targeted at the camera for an audience. This might be a musical performance, a demonstration, an acted piece, or a monologue.

Graphical Animation

Graphical animation can be quite a number of things, it's animated material which can be anything from a simple white board video or Pixar level animations.

Screen Recording

Screen recording is generally something like screencasts. This could be a demonstration of how to use a particular tool or software. However, it may also be a captured powerpoint, recorded video game, or keynote presentation.

All four of these elements can be accomplished well on a tight budget or a large one. After you've determined what kind of shots your video will need, you can start storyboarding, finding the perfect talent, and procuring other assets you will need to produce excellent content.

Scripting and Storyboarding

For this step in producing a video, you will either want to begin with a visual storyboard or a script, depending on the style of your video content. Generally informational or narrative content is best

generated starting with the "script-first", while segments with aesthetic appeal are best drawn out before text is added.

Storyboarding/writing is generally a very personal process. Every writer has personal tips or tricks that might help them work effectively. But, if you ever find yourself stuck and in need of inspiration, or if you have too many ideas, there are a few things you can do to get back on track.

1) Clean Out the Clutter: Spend 10-20 minutes writing or drawing anything and everything that comes to mind. This will help you to push out the clutter and narrow your focus, once time is up throw your "clutter page" away. Start fresh with a blank page.

2) Map out Your Video: Make a "map" of your video by bulleting every thought, idea, or point you want to be a part of your video. Your "map" should start by exposing your subject and end by disclosing your theme.

3) Refine your "Map": Take away anything that doesn't flow with your subject and theme. Keep it linear and streamlined.

4) Expand Your Bullet Points: Add to each of your bullet points with imagery, text, or notes. At this stage you are still brainstorming so add anything that comes to mind.

5) Refine Your "Map": Once again take away anything that doesn't flow with your video concept. Trying to add too much information into a short video is confusing and will make production a bigger headache, not to mention less successful.

6) Connect the Dots: Add in correlating text, imagery, notes that will connect all of your bullet points. Your video needs to flow fluidly to be effective as a whole.

7) Ruthlessly Refine: Edit, edit, edit. Fix any and all grammatical, linguistic, or imagery errors, over and over again. Take out anything that is uninteresting or has a poor flow.

8) Show a Friend: Get some feedback from a trusted friend or a colleague. Find out if fresh eyes can pick up on the subject and theme without prompting. Did the video content elicit an emotional response? How about a call to action?

9) Consult with the Performers: If you are hiring performers and other professionals to work with you on your video, go over your script and concept with them. Make sure that everyone is on the same page and the performers are happy with what they are tasked with.

10) Ruthlessly Refine: Once again, edit, edit, edit. However this time, you will be editing with the feedback you received in mind. A successful approach to this tentative "final" edit is to set a time line, and to stop editing the moment you are fairly happy with your content.

11) Send the Script: As soon as your script is ready, send it to all of the relevant parties.

While you're constructing your script it is also important to integrate your keywords into the text. At this point you should already have your targeted keywords picked out for your content. This is especially important if the goal is your video is to improve your domain ranking, getting a rich snippet, or if you're creating content for YouTube. While you shouldn't artificially stuff your keywords where it doesn't make sense, it is essential to include relevant keywords where it is appropriate and makes sense.

Outsourcing

Hiring Your Performers/ Actors

If your content is going to rely on performed elements, you are likely going to need to hire some actors for production. Since the majority of actors are freelancers, its usually pretty easy to hire great talent on short notice and a tight budget. In some cases you may even be able to find actors that want to join in just for the job experience. If you live in a big entertainment hub such as L.A., N.Y.C., or London it is especially easy to find exceptional talent.

The best way to get a relatively decent set of applicants on a tight budget is to directly post an ad on a talent classified site such as GigSalad.com or even on CraigsList.org. If you have a rather large budget and you have a specific actor in mind, you can Google who their agent or PR manager is in order to reach out and make contact. A lot of actors are out of work throughout the year and your project might be a welcomed break.

Sourcing Production Talent

When it comes to filming and editing talent, many excellent professionals work independently and are easily hired for a modest fee. If you don't have the experience, creative expertise, or time to learn how to film and edit, you may want to consider bringing on board a set of professionals. That will significantly reduce your production headaches and time line.

Rather than sourcing freelance labor, you may also want to consider working with students to build out your content. The vast majority of film and media students are very talented, however they lack exposure and experience. If your business is able to offer an opportunity to showcase or exhibit a student's work in a professional manner, they will most likely be willing to work with you for a minimal cost.

Most universities will often have a staff member that is dedicated to managing any employment opportunities for students. This individual will promote your opportunity if contacted directly. Outside of these staff member the heads of departments are typically the best people to refer to for hiring students.

Recording Equipment Tips

Camera

Always be sure to film in Full HD resolution (1920x1080) with a frame rate of 25 or 30p. For online media, the codec and form you choose to film is basically a moot point. Eventually it will likely be compressed and encoded for online delivery.

If you need to buy a camera in conjunction with filming a short piece and are on a restricted budget, there are many affordable options on the market.

Lighting

One of the most important factors in producing solid quality footage aside from using the right camera, is setting up appropriate lighting for indoor filming. Your "studio" space needs to be extremely well lit. If you're planning on filming a series of product videos or interviews within one single location, spending a chunk of money on a good quality set of lights can make the difference between excellent and poor quality content.

If you don't have access to or a budget for professional lighting, at least ensure that you are filming in a well-lit space. The main light source should be facing the subject of focus. You should avoid filming in front of windows whenever possible.

Microphone

Perhaps more important than using a high quality camera, is the use of a high quality microphone which minimizes extraneous background noise. A poor quality of footage can still carry great content, but poor quality audio can ruin high quality footage. Essentially, while image is important, solid decipherable audio is crucial. A great way to get quality audio is to use lavalier microphones for vocal recordings and interviews. You may want to also invest in a good quality mic.

If you're finding it difficult to find the right space to record your video without a lot of background noise, keep in mind that it's actually fairly easy to remove extremely low pitched or extremely high pitched noises from your audio mix during post-production editing.

Using Multiple Cameras to Film

If you're planning to use multiple cameras to film a single event, such as an interview or conference, make sure that each camera is going to capture a distinctly different frame and angle. Having the ability to jump from one angle to another will help your video to be dynamic. In order to achieve that, the angles have to be distinctly different.

Performance Tips

Speak Slowly- In a normal conversation we tend to talk faster than someone speaking in a video would. By slowing down the speed of speech, the video viewer can pick up in the nuances of expression and will have more time to let the words set in.

Mark each Session In and Out- When you think of the stereotypical movie producer yelling "scene 1 take 2" what they're doing is marking the footage in and out. This makes it easy to log and mark the footage in editing.

Focus Your Performers- When filming fictional content for TV or movies actors are not supposed to look directly at the camera. This rule of thumb reigns true in all manifestations of "acted" videos. On the other hand, when doing a non-fictional filming for a project such as an interview, the subject's focal point should be just to the side of the camera. The microphone is usually a good point of reference.

Positioning Your Performers within the Frame

Similarly to still photography, keep in mind the *rule of thirds* when positioning the framing for your image. Your performers should always avoid the direct center of your frame because it will generally result in overall uninteresting image.

If your performers will be in front of the camera in a studio setting, consider whether it would be better for them to be sitting, standing, or something in between. Standing stance has a typically more formal feel, while seated performers are appear more relaxed. An excellent example of a "half-way" stance is to have your performer seated on a bar stool in a promotional talk.

Editing

Achieving a professional level of video editing is now easier than ever. The quality of editing software has improved greatly over the past few years, offering those with little to no experience the opportunity to produce a high quality video.

There is a number of editing software programs which can be used by anyone at any level of technological knowledge. The type of software you should use depends on what is compatible with your computer operating system.

If you are creating content specifically for YouTube, the YouTube editor does allow for quick and simple edits after uploading your video, such as a cut or a transition. It is the most basic of editors so it should not be relied on for any other purpose.

Screencasting

If you plan on including screencasts in your video, be sure to not expand the footage past the native recording resolution in the editing process because it will make the images appear pixelated and

rough. Also be sure to add annotations and zooming effects so the footage appears polished and professional.

Length

There really is no *time rule* or optimum length for a video, however it is always suggested that content be kept at short as possible, but no shorter. It doesn't matter what the main goal of your video is, you want your viewers to be engaged. The longer the video the less engagement you'll have.

It's also important to keep in mind that YouTube's algorithm devalues content with poor viewer engagement. Meaning that for this platform particularly it is extremely important your audience stay engaged.

Scaling Content Creation

Create a Branded Sting

An excellent and simple way to brand your video is to create a "sting" or a custom video intro which you can be used on all of your videos similar to an intro in a sitcom. By "stamping" your videos with a brand sting you are able to exude a certain level of professionalism and ownership of the content. You can also brand your videos by overlaying your logo in a small portion of the video content.

Create a Video with a Static Image Library

Image libraries or static design assets can be used to repurpose and create great videos through several types of editing software. Two-dimensional images can be turned into beautiful 3Dvirtual landscapes that make a dynamic narrated video.

Retargeting with Duplicated Content

It's fairly common for businesses to alter the meta-elements of their duplicated content when uploading to their hosting provider in order to target a different location or niche with each video. Unique appearances of the videos can then be presented on different landing pages, and each can be targeted towards a variant of an industry or location. Such as, "Los Angeles Pets" or "Beverly Hills Pets".

However, it is generally inadvisable to duplicate videos across landing pages. The lack of considered targeting in the content will be transparent and may actually fail to assist in improving conversions.

If this is something you are going to attempt to do, all it takes is a simple tweak in editing to make the content appear unique to search engines. You can change the length of the video by just a few seconds and adding a few frames at the beginning and in the end will constitute as two unique versions of the video. You can also use different background music and/or voice over recordings for each version.

Export Settings

After your content has been edited and you are happy with the finished product, use the production template below to figure out the necessary export settings from your editing program.

Self-Hosting

Setting	Value
Codec	h.264
Frame Size	1280 x 720
Key Frames	Automatic
Pixel Aspect	Square
Bit Rate	2014kbps
Audio	ACC/MP3 at 320Kbps

YouTube

Setting	Value
Codec	h.264
Frame Size	1920 x 1080
Key Frames	Automatic
Pixel Aspect	Square
Bit Rate	Unrestricted
Audio	ACC/ MP3 at 256kbps

Vimeo

Setting	Value
Codec	h.264
Frame Size	1280 x 720
Key Frames	Automatic
Pixel Aspect	Square
Bit Rate	5000kbps
Audio	ACC/ MP3 at 320kbps

Launching Your Videos

After you've created, exported, and uploaded your videos, there are a few things you still have left to do in order to launch your video campaign no matter what your overall goals are. If you will be launching your video on your domain based on the goal of ranking with rich snippets and/or boosting conversions and links; adding metadata to your videos is an essential part of sending the right signals to search

engine crawlers. If your video was created for a brand awareness campaign on YouTube, then there are specific steps you can take to have the highest success rate in receiving views and social shares.

Launching Content on Your Own Domain

Create and XML Video Sitemap

Right after you upload your videos to your site, it is wise to submit a video sitemap to Google Webmaster tools. An XML video sitemap of your domain basically offers Google metadata about your video including directions to a thumbnail image appropriate for a rich snippet and the kind of player that is used to embed the content. Every time you upload a new video to your site you should always create and submit a site map, especially if you are working on improving traffic through rich snippets and conversions.

Even in you are only embedding a YouTube video on your domain, a sitemap is worth creating. A sitemap will define the uploader and specify a meta description of the content even though Google does already have access to all of the metadata for YouTube videos.

Once you've built the sitemap for your domain and submitted it to Google, make sure you upload it as a file on your domain, it will likely look something like this – *http://yourbusinesss.net/vide_sitemap.xml* . This allows search engine crawlers to find it and index all of the elements accordingly.

If you plan on allowing others to embed your video content, make sure your sitemap is submitted abd indexed prior to outreaching your video for links and social shares.

Make the Transcript Available

Either add the transcript on the web page in text or upload a text file containing the transcript in a TTML format (such as .srt). In addition to making your transcript available, it is extremely helpful to utilize Google's data highlighter tool for structured data mark up. This tool allows domain owners to highlight their desired targeted text and then "optimize" it by simply clicking a button. After a few pages it is smart enough to recognize every targeted phrase on your website.

Utilize Facebook Open Graph Mark-up

Facebook Open Graph is another useful mark-up vocabulary that allows third party sites connected to web apps and the Facebook app to connect user activity on Facebook to on-site user activity. The Open Graph allows viewing your videos to be an integral part of Facebook users' activity by placing the activity on their timeline and newsfeed.

Always Include Links and Calls to Action

Most hosting solutions offer the ability for you to place a clickable link at the end of your video content or you may also overlay your links on top of an embedded HTML5 video with Javascript. Unfortunately, these links cannot be indexed by search engine crawlers so they can't provide any optimization benefits

in terms of ranking. However, these links do provide clear calls to action for your viewers. This will allow you to drive traffic to your targeted pages right from your video content.

Outreaching your Video Content

When you outreach for video links, be sure to include a simple iframe embed code (with a link) in your email in addition to a link to the original video on your web page. This allows your target can quickly view your video content prior to making the decision to embed, it is both a practical and considerate action on your part.

In addition to manually outreaching your content, you can pay for your content to be seeded via embedded players around the web, mostly on blogs. Unfortunately this won't provide an SEO value, however, it can be an excellent avenue of getting your content viewed by more people to increase your brand awareness and social media popularity.

Launching Your Video on YouTube

Video rankings for video content on an organic YouTube or Google search are basically determined by the relevancy of the video in correlation to a search query and the authority of the video which is determined by the number of views, viewer engagements, inbound links, and likes and comments activity.

Keep Your Viewer Engaged through to the End

YouTube determines the quality of a video primarily based on viewer engagement. It ranks videos with positively when they have many complete views, and it ranks videos negatively when they have an incomplete bounce back. By encouraging viewers to stick through till the end of the video immediately after launch, your video stands to have the best ranking ability.

Link Your Video to Your Domain and Be Social

Linking your video also helps to boost your overall rankings. Find an excuse to link to the content in a blog post or embed. By sharing the new upload via all your social media outlets you are also seeding your video which can help with your rankings.

Developing an Authoritative YouTube Channel

For new content to habitually rank well on YouTube, you will need to establish an authoritative channel with a lot of subscribers where your content is constantly being viewed and shared socially.

Here are some tips to achieve this:

1) Boost your number of views by using paid advertising

   It doesn't cost a pretty penny to buy views on YouTube. Videos that have a large number of views always appear to be more authoritative to viewers browsing Google and YouTube. This

improves your organic click through rate and the resulting natural views. The views you purchase through in-stream advertising on YouTube do count for your overall *view ticker* on your channel. Essentially it's easy to be authoritative for a low cost.

Keep in mind that content which is "paid advertising" typically does best at a length of 15 to 30 seconds max. If your content is to double as a socially sharable video *and* paid advertising it does need to have some value to the viewer.

2) Take a "cut throat" approach to your channel

   Make sure that all of the content you release will get good impressions and will perform well. It is much better to have 15 videos with millions of views than 60 videos with 500 views. It may not make a big difference from the viewer's perspective, but it does make a big difference in regards to SEO and social algorithms.

3) Include a link to your authoritative channel in the text description of your videos

   By providing viewers with links, you are more likely to ramp up your domain traffic organically.

Making Your Video Go "Viral"

Videos typically go "viral" as a result of a community driven effort fueled by emotional response and a yearning to spread awareness. Going "viral" can either go very good or very bad for a brand depending on the nature of the content that went "viral".

Generally speaking, good "viral" content is intentionally created by marketers or company professionals with wide spread exposure as a goal. Bad "viral" content is when a brand is caught "misbehaving", for example let's say a fast food worker is caught on video scratching themselves then not wearing gloves. The video then goes viral and they lose a huge customer base along with profits.

If your goal is to strengthen your brand by going "viral" here are a few tips to be successful:

1) Tell a story

   Your video content should tell some kind of story that has some kind of branding subtext. Label your video with an attention worthy headline that grabs the audience and tells them why they have to watch it.

2) Outreach, outreach, outreach

   Reach out to big influencers and ask if they are willing to embed your video or share the story. It is most effective to contact both prominent social media influencers and bloggers. Take into

consideration why the story would be appealing to them and convey the reason why they should agree to your request.

3) Seed your content

   Utilize a video advertising service and promote your content. However it can be costly to see returns through this step.

4) Repeat

   Don't give up and keep on going, remember that in order to go "viral" you will need to have the most promotion possible. If this is your goal, stay strong, and carry on.

Integrating with a Wider Marketing Plan

Online videos have the richest value when they are the core element of an overall marketing strategy alongside PR stories, written content, offline marketing efforts, and user generated materials.

TV Ad Campaigns

Consider spending a small portion of your TV advertising budget on additional video content that will be featured exclusively online. This can make the overall campaign more efficient by providing further content for consumers to engage with and share online. You should always upload your TV Ads to your online channels as well.

Public Relations

Video news releases are an excellent way of building strong media links leading back to your domain. They also perform when used in conjunction with PR campaigns, in particular those with "expert interviews" or "sneak peeks" behind the scenes footage.

Social Media

Twitter

Twitter is a great avenue for generating engagement around your campaign and promoting your video. This is because Twitter enables Vimeo videos and YouTube to be embedded in tweets which allows users to view your video directly in their tweet stream. It is extremely important to link your Twitter and YouTube accounts. That will auto-tweet your followers when a new video is uploaded.

Facebook

On Facebook, you're able to upload video content directly from your computer. This means it's possible to post unique content to Facebook making it exclusively accessible there. Also, including a link to your

YouTube video within an FB update will embed the content automatically which allows users to view your video on their FB feed instead of having to click through to YouTube.

Google+

While Google+ is not as popular as YouTube or Facebook, it can prove to be useful to your brand if your particular audience is active on there.

Reddit

Having a presence on Reddit can prove to be very useful. The key to being successful on Reddit is posting interesting videos with interesting titles. You want your title to make Reddit users curious enough to watch the video, and your content needs to keep them engaged. A great example of creating "buzz" on Reddit is to post a behind the scenes video that's humorous.

Paid Advertising

If you decide to take on a PPC advertising campaign with your company or client, consider setting aside some of that budget for video advertising. TrueView ads on Google Display Network and on YouTube are fairly inexpensive and thanks to the concept of CPV or cost per view, you're only charged when a viewer actually watches 30 seconds of a video or its entirety if its less than 30 seconds.

Using your Video to Create Interactive and Moving Display Ads

The Google Display Network supports the .gif of display ads and flash files, this offers the opportunity to take snippets from your videos and turn them into repetitive image sequences that can be placed around the web to accompany a larger scale ad campaign. They can also be utilized as banners to accompany your video ads on YouTube in addition to retargeting audiences that have already seen your videos.

Frame Size	File Type	Max File Size	Max Frame Rate	Max Animation Length
300x250	.GIF, .SWF, .JPG, with back up .JPG/.GIF	50Kb	24	30s

It's very simple to turn snippets into gifs using editing software including Adobe Photoshop.

YouTube Homepage Advertising

Purchasing YouTube homepage advertising is still affordable and will allow you to include a combination of advertising options that all link back to your site.

Measuring Success

Your method of success measurement will vary depending on the goal you initially set for your campaign.

Overall Goal	Appropriate Measurement Method
Brand Awareness	- Brand Recognition Surveys - Branded Search Traffic - Brand Mentions - Google Trends (Large Organizations) - Video Views
User Engagement	- Community Activity - Engagement with Video - Time on Page
Improved On-Site Conversions	- Bounce Rate - Exit Rate - Conversion Tracking - Time on Page - Sales
Increased Traffic	- Search Traffic to the Page from Keywords - Overall Non-paid Traffic to the Page
Links	- Embeds - Social Shares - Overall Site Rankings - Inbound Links
Conversions from Paid Placement Campaigns	- Conversions - Engagement - Clicks and Click Through Rate

Brand Awareness

Measuring your brand's awareness has always been an inexact science however there are many techniques that can help you to mark your standing and the subsequent improvements.

1) Branded Search Traffic

   Directly monitor your improvements in site visits as a result of branded terms, in particular those that are related to your video campaign. A lack of clear improvement from this measurement method doesn't necessarily mean that your campaign wasn't successful.

2) Brand Recognition Surveys

   Typically these surveys are conducted by market research agencies as a means of determining your company's level of brand recognition and/or the perception of your brand based on a list of questions asked to a targeted group of potential consumers. Generally the questions pertain to the recognition of your name and logo.

3) Google Trends

Google Trends provides an overview of the search volume of a specific term or keyword over time. If your organization has a wide reach and a considerable presence online, your name could possibly appear a term recognized in Google Trends. Keep in mind that if your brand name begins with a word found in many popular searches for example, Sports Authority (Sports Therapy, Sports Scores, etc) then Google Trends is of little use.

4) Social Media Statistics

Your presence on social media is a fairly reasonable marker of your overall brand awareness particularly in regards to measuring your engagement with consumers and their affinity towards your brand. There are several tools available to businesses both built into your social media accounts and additional tracker apps for purchase.

5) Video Views

This is the primary method you should be using to determine the success of your ad campaign's reach. To put it simply, more views equals more awareness. It is good practice to regularly track your view counts, and keep in mind that while paid traffic doesn't count as an organic view, any kind of view represents an increase in brand awareness.

Be sure to set reasonable and achievable goals for your campaign. It's all too easy to look at the most popular brands and their success with millions of views, but if you're a new medium sized business expecting a million views in a month just isn't tangible.

Viewer Engagement

Viewer engagement is a generally elusive concept and in turn it can be difficult to measure with a trustworthy level of certainty. However, there are some key indicators that you are successful if you know what to look for.

1) Time Spent on a Page

The time a viewer spends on a specific page in relation to the length of the video and the supporting text can be a good indicator of how engaged viewers are with your material. Compare the length of time spent on the pages with videos to the pages without them. This can help you to see if your videos are in fact increasing viewer engagement.

2) Community Activity

If the comments section on your blog pages are enabled, have there been more comments on posts with videos? Are any of your videos sparking discussion or debate on social networks?

3) Video Engagement

Video viewer engagement is most often tracked with analytics provided by your hosting platform. These analytic trackers are extremely accurate as they are a part of the hosting platform itself. Although each hosting platform is unique in its own right, the analytics operate similarly showing you the number of views, length of viewer drop offs, shares, "likes" and "dislikes" (when applicable).

Improved On-Site Conversations

Tracking conversions through analytics should be the primary way you are measuring your conversion rate improvements, however it is also good practice to be on the lookout for an increase in overall sales and lower exit/bounce rates. An increase in conversions could occur as a result of a multi-touch basis over a longer period of time.

1) Conversion Tracking

Make sure to have goals and conversion funnels properly set up in your analytics package.

2) Sales

Monitor your online sales very closely, this includes cart abandonment levels and product inquiries. On top of improving sales, your video may also assist in reducing the amount of inquiries you receive by simply answering some of the main FAQs.

3) Bounce Rate and Exit Rate

Take a look at the bounce and exit rates of the page before and after adding the video. If your putting into place several different videos be sure to monitor the site as a whole.

Increased Traffic

If one of your goals was to get a video rich snippet when you come up on a search engine results page, you're likely to improve your click through rate, and improve traffic. This can be measured by tracking the traffic yielded through an organic search of your targeted terms.

1) Monitor Traffic from Targeted Keywords

Using Google Analytics you are able to monitor increased traffic as a result of a specific keyword. This will assist you in tracking your relevance as an organic search result.

2) Rich Snippet Testing

It is very simple to use the Google Rich Snippet Testing Tool to see if your page is ranking with a video rich snippet result. Bear in mind that it isn't always accurate and it will not always be relevant for every keyword that your page ranks for. Monitor the site-wide levels are a whole.

Links

The primary indicator of success for a video campaign geared towards link building should ne the number of overall links accrued via both embeds and text references although it is worthwhile to track social shares. Whether they do or do not help to improve your overall ranking, social shares are still valuable referrals and more or less a "link".

1) Inbound Links

   There are a number of great tools online that allow you to explore the links pointing to a specified page. It is important to remember that while using these tools it can take a few days for search engine crawlers to pick up on any new links.

2) Embeds and Social Share

   Depending on your hosting provider, it is possible to track new embedded versions of your video by using the analytic tools they provide. In addition to the tools provided by your hosting provider, you will also be able to track the number of shares and views via social networking.

3) Overall Site Ranking

   The ultimate goal of a link building campaign it to improve rankings, however that should not be the only way you measure success. It is worth it to keep track of your rank as that is your goal, but in most cases you won't become number one over night.

Paid Placement Campaigns

Google provides excellent analytics for their partnered video campaigns. They allow you to track website clicks (from your video to your domain), impressions (people who have been shown your video), click through rate (the percentage of people who watch your video and click through to your site), and the percentage of the video that your viewers watch before moving on.

1) Referrals

   The obvious way to measure the value of your PPC is by monitoring the referrals to your site. Divide the number of clicks through to your site by the total cost of your campaign in order to calculate the average CPC (cost per click). After you calculate the CPC, compare that amount to the value of your average site visitor to determine if the ROI is worth it to you.

2) Engagement

Track how many people your video has been played to in order to determine how engaged your viewers are with your video ad. Generally, the more of people tend to watch through your ad the more engaging the content is. The more engaging your video is, the more viewers will click through to your site.

3) Conversions

Use your analytics tools to determine if site referrals are converting to site traffic. If your conversion rates are lower than usual, it is usually a clear indicator of a gap between the style and quality of your ad compared to your website.

Videos for Brand Success

In today's ever changing marketplace, keeping up with the masses can sometimes seem to be an eternal battle. By producing quality video content for your brand, you are essentially creating an immortal marketing campaign. Once you launch it online it's out there forever. Our technology is always improving and with that so is the ability to stream video. There is one fact about brand videos that remains certain, it is and always will be the foremost method of marketing.