

You Made Easy.



**Using Web Video & YouTube To Get More Traffic,
More Customers & Make More Money.**

Lights. Camera. Profit!

Like it or not, we live in an age where people prefer to watch the movie rather than read the book, and the Internet is not immune to this phenomenon. Far from being a short-lived gimmick, online video is now considered to be a standard feature of a commercial website.

In fact, whisper it, but if you don't feature video on your website, then you could be perceived as being out of touch.



That isn't to say that using video to promote your business is purely about one-upmanship. Simply put: video is extremely profitable.

You may already be aware of case studies that demonstrate the power of online video. The Old Spice commercials (www.oldspice.com/videos/), for example, are reported to have doubled product sales. However, it isn't necessary to create something as glossy and ambitious as those produced by multi-million dollar campaigns.

Online video works primarily because people like to do business with a person, rather than a faceless corporation. Using video to put a face on your website allows you to add personality to your business, and create a level of trust that just can't be matched by a page of text.

The Perfect Marketing Solution?

This is positive news for business owners with an online presence because we now have access to a reliable, effective and inexpensive advertising mechanism. In fact, research firm Forrester has reported that businesses can double their chances of obtaining a high ranking in the major search engines if they use video to promote their services rather than text alone.

But the benefits of using video to promote your business go deeper than that. Think of the way in which television is regarded globally. In every living room across the world, people sit for hours in front of a television and accept advertising as a standard element of the programming. Rightly or wrongly, we've come to assume that any business that advertises on television is some kind of major player in its field. That assumption of expertise, and the trust that goes along with that, is hardwired into our brains and carries over into online video.

Let's say, for example, that you own a dental practice. If your homepage features a video showing patients sitting comfortably in the waiting area, a clean, professional-looking treatment room, and a forecourt with ample parking, the positive impression made upon potential new clients will be far greater than a handful of images that, as far as your website visitors are concerned, could easily have been taken from a stock photo website.

In a similar vein, a business that manufactures handbags can showcase its products through video (opening them up, showing how they look when they're held, demonstrating their size and capacity, etc.) far better than simply using images and text.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a video is worth an entire novel... read to you by Morgan Freeman... on a beach... while you quaff expensive cocktails.

Think I'm exaggerating? When you break it down, video is a simple sales technique, but it can easily double (or triple, or even more) the level of trust that you generate with your visitors.



The point I'm really trying to express here is that video is not just about more traffic; it's about providing an extra dimension to your marketing that cannot be achieved through the kind of static website upon which most of your competitors rely.

Video marketing will enable you to reproduce the best aspects of your sales pitch in an engaging and memorable fashion, communicating key messages with a hefty dose of personality and presence.

Relax... I'll Help You Get Started

There is no denying that video marketing is a crucial method for obtaining a competitive advantage in your marketplace. So the real question is how do we tap into this platform of potential, and engage the power of video for ourselves?

If you're nervous about moving into this area of marketing, take comfort from the fact that you're not alone. General objections vary from fears about expense, to lack of expertise, to simple camera shyness, but the power of videos to increase sales is an argument that is too powerful to ignore, and the ubiquitous nature of video recording devices means that adding video to your marketing arsenal is well within your grasp.

Step 1: Learn by Doing



Creating video is an exercise that is best learned by doing it. Grab a camera, sit in front of it, and start talking about your business. What makes your business special? Why are you enthusiastic about your field of expertise? What kind of experience can you offer to your customers? Find the elements of your business that stoke your passion and make these the subjects of your videos.

There are any number of video styles that you can aim for, and you'll want to select the one that best suits your market. That said, in my experience, the best three styles to begin with are:

- **Time Saver** (question and answer sessions)
- **Raving Fan** (client testimonials)
- **Your Story** (connecting with your customers)

Time Saver

Make a list of your top ten most frequently raised queries and make a short video clip that answers each one. Keep them short and to the point, and don't be afraid to give away some of your best advice. If visitors find your videos genuinely useful, they're more likely to regard you as an expert and you'll be a huge step closer to turning them into clients.

But the real benefit of this type of video is indicated in the name. By recording the answers to your most frequently asked questions, you're saving yourself the vast amounts of time that are required to repeatedly answer these questions on an individual basis. If you record the right videos and make them easy for your visitors to find, you'll see a measurable drop in support queries.

And even if these questions do come through your support system, there's nothing classier than being able to point your customers to a ready-made video on the subject.

Raving Fan

These videos are the proof of the pudding; they're about getting your best clients to share their experiences of working with you and your company. This style of video will speak to your visitors loudly and more clearly than anything you can say about your own business.

The only real challenge is getting your clients to sit in front of a camera. If your best clients are local, then simply ask them if you can drop by for ten minutes to record a short testimonial.



Nothing beats a genuine customer talking into a camera. So if you don't mind spending a little bit of money on this exercise, try sending a Flip MinoHD camcorder and an SD card to your favourite customers. Invite them to record a testimonial, send you back just the SD card containing the video, and as a "thank you" tell them to keep the camcorder.

This may sound extravagant, but you can pick up a Flip MinoHD for as little as \$70 (US). In other words, you can pick up half a dozen, HD-quality video testimonials, for less than \$500, and as a bonus, your unexpected gift will further endear you to your clients. This is definitely a worthwhile investment.

Your Story

This third technique is ideal because it brings your company to life, giving background and context to what would otherwise be just another website amongst millions. Think about key subjects such as how and why you started up your business, what motivates you and what makes you stand out from your competitors. What will allow clients to connect with you? What will persuade them that you care about providing them with a first-class consumer experience?

The above are just a few video ideas to get you started. I've found them to be highly effective in my business and they also seem to work well for many other businesses across a variety of sectors.

Just imagine how effective they will be in your business when you start to feature them on your website, in your emails and in your marketing. Video marketing is like having your best sales person working for you for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Now that's smart marketing!

Step 2: Writing the Perfect Script



No matter how comfortable you become in front of the camera, it's always worthwhile to work from a script to keep you focused on your key points. Without advance planning, your video can become muddled or filled with pauses and gaps as you think through what you need to say. Word whiskers ("erms" and "ahs") may be normal in everyday conversation, but they'll be all too noticeable on film.

Try and write a script that sounds like natural speech, and then practice it until you can deliver it with confidence. Even if you just create an outline with a series of key points, this will support you in keeping your speech in a logical order and ensuring you don't miss out anything important.

Once you're ready to record, it isn't necessary to shoot your entire clip in one sitting. If you make a mistake, a simple trick is to change the camera angle or zoom length and then go again from the last natural pause. Later on, you can edit the footage together so it has the appearance of one seamless piece.

Simplicity is the Key

Some of the best brands in the world have achieved huge recognition by using the "less is more" philosophy, and this works equally well when it comes to creating video.

Apple, for example, are leaders in sparse marketing, understanding that clean images, sharp lines and a little bit of text can work wonders in generating an eye-catching and memorable brand.



If a customer visits your store to discuss your products and services, they don't expect fireworks to go off when they open the door (although if you want to try this, please make sure you record it and send me the video – it'll be comedy gold); a sit down and a friendly chat over a cup of coffee will more than suffice.

Similarly, you don't need to produce a Hollywood blockbuster to achieve success through online video. Simply standing in front of a black sheet and talking to your customers will allow you to produce clean, informative and engaging video that is as effective as spending thousands of pounds on staging, lighting, screenwriting and equipment.

When you're editing your video, the structure should be similar to that of creating a sales page. Instead of simply inserting a headline, try to come up with an attention-grabbing title graphic or opening statement that will draw your viewer in and make them want to keep watching.

Rather than just listing the features of your product or service, take the time to discuss the benefits of what you're offering, and allow yourself to be enthusiastic about what you're promoting – after all, this is your business, and you're in the best possible position to wax lyrical about it.

Conclude the video with a "call to action", encouraging your customers to make a purchase or get in touch. If you have a Web address to promote, then include it in a graphic that displays at the bottom throughout the video.

Motivate Your Viewers

If at any point you find yourself getting bogged down in the process, take a step back and remember exactly why you're producing a video in the first place. Generally speaking, you want more customers, a brand that has a memorable personality, and more revenue. But strip away the outer layer and think instead about the specific action that you want each viewer to take at the end of your video.

If you want people to visit your site, make sure that you give them a good reason to do so. If you want to increase purchases, focus on the benefits of your product and give your viewer a motive to purchase today, rather than at some undetermined point in the future.

If you want people to subscribe to your mailing list, make sure you offer them a worthwhile incentive, and remove the risk factor by reassuring them that they can unsubscribe at any time.



You don't have to be an aggressive marketer in your videos, and unless you're a skilled actor, don't try to be something you're not. Be yourself, be enthusiastic about your subject matter and offer your viewers something of value.

Step 3: Getting the Essential Equipment

You don't need to create a fully-equipped recording studio to make effective videos, but the items that I would consider to be essential are a camera, a tripod, a microphone and video-editing software.



When you start out, the camera and microphone on your smartphone is more than good enough to capture your first video clips and experiment with different styles, but when you're ready to step things up a notch, then invest in a higher-end camcorder with a microphone port to capture the best possible video and audio. A tripod simply makes it easier to shoot from different angles without having to worry about shaky recordings.

You can spend anything from \$200 to \$1500 on a good quality camera, and it really comes down to how much you're willing and able to invest. Experiment first, try things out and then make a decision once you're familiar with how to create video that works.

Movie editing software can be very expensive, but all you really need is the ability to cut and splice the content together, and add some music and text. Windows Movie Maker (or iMovie if you're an Apple fan) will suffice. For real video flair, purchase royalty-free stock footage and motion graphics from www.videohive.net.

Although I wouldn't go so far as to list this as an essential, it's also worth thinking about the way in which you light your videos. If you're fortunate enough to live in a part of the world with clement weather, then recording outside is an easy way to produce a video that has good quality, natural light.

Failing that, pick up two or three decorator's lamps, and you'll have all the light you need. You can set up a decent background by using a simple black sheet, or consider the aspect of your business that you're promoting and then sit or stand in front of it.

Have Realistic Expectations

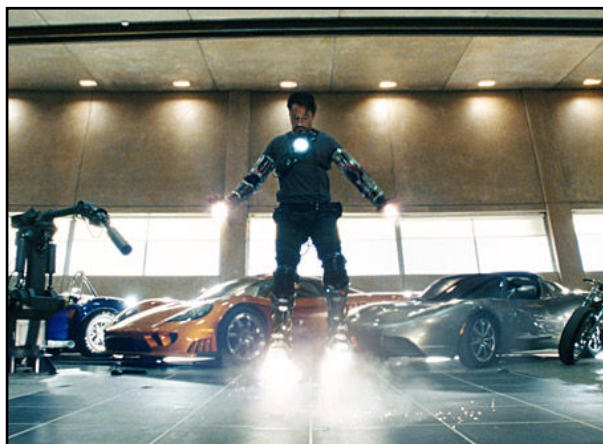
The chances are, when you first set about creating video, the quality, content and staging won't be completely polished. Don't be concerned. Every time you create a video you'll learn a little bit more about what works and what doesn't. It won't be long before you're turning out professional, polished videos.

The most important aspect of your video, however, isn't the background, sound or picture quality, but rather the authenticity of what you produce. Simply standing in front of your camera and enthusing about your business is the best way to exude authenticity and engage with your customers.

People don't necessarily want tricks, witticisms or Hollywood-style productions when they search for a company to fulfil their needs. They simply want to find a business that is professional and, crucially, has a trustworthy demeanour. Don't obsess about every detail of your video, because the more natural you are, the more authentic your content will be.



Step 4: How to Launch Your Videos



Now you have a video that you're ready to share with the world, the best place to launch it is on the part of your website that matches the content. I strongly encourage you to have a video on the homepage of your website. A good video for this position is one that describes a problem your visitors have and that then offers a solution. Keep the content short to ensure your customers don't lose interest halfway through the clip.

If you want to go into more detail about your business, you can add a longer "Your Story" style video to your "About" page. This is an ideal place to relate the background story to your firm and help potential customers to feel as if they are getting to know the person behind the company brand.

If you've successfully persuaded some of your clients to record a testimonial on your behalf, post these on your sales page. There are few marketing tools more powerful than satisfied customers speaking positively about you and your services.

Every video you produce should have some sort of value for your customer. If you stopped by a website and settled down to watch a video clip, how would you feel if that clip turned out to be nothing more than self-promotion on behalf of the business that produced it? It's likely you would feel a little cheated, and also slightly resentful of the firm that had just taken some of your time, without delivering any discernible value.

Videos tend to lose their power when they're solely used as a vehicle for marketing, so always try to include something in each clip that leaves your customers feeling more knowledgeable than when they started.

How Many Videos Should You Create?

Now you have the basics covered, you can start to broaden your video topics. Take a look at the pages on your site that are visited most frequently, and consider adding video to each one that is tailored to the specific content of that page. Your videos could be purely informative, or you could discuss individual products or services that you provide. When in doubt, the "Frequently Asked Questions" format is almost always an effective approach.

Getting it out there.

Looking beyond your own site, YouTube is the undisputed leader of online video. It's free to use, and the process is surprisingly intuitive. Once you've created an account you can have a video clip uploaded and "live" within minutes.



YouTube is, without doubt, one of the best ways to get more viewers and attract greater numbers of people to your website as a result. YouTube marketing is a subject that could fill a book on its own, but the main thing to remember is to take special care when completing the upload form. Make sure you use your main keywords in the title, description and tags.

It's also sensible to use your Web address at the very beginning of your description so that it's visible even if the viewer doesn't expand this section of the page. Beyond these simple tips, the site is simple to use and provides a substantial amount of guidance to make your uploading experience safe, straightforward and efficient.

People go to YouTube for thousands of different clips, ranging from music videos through to movies of cute kittens.

However, one of the most popular video types people search for on YouTube is the "How to" clip. People like to be able to see visual guides to completing tasks, and you can take advantage of the popularity of these searches by creating videos specifically of this type.



Demonstrate how to do something related to your business and close the video with an invitation to visit your website for more assistance. If you want to be really smart, demonstrate something extremely complex, and then close the video by explaining that you offer a product or service that will allow your viewers to easily complete this task for themselves.

Another good tip for YouTube videos is to hold the end frame of your video with the call to action, for at least twenty seconds. If you don't, YouTube defaults to a screen that suggests other material for the viewer. Simply by holding that final call to action for an extended period of time, you can manipulate the site into promoting your services, rather than that of other people.

Try and make video creation part of your regular marketing routine. Over time your video portfolio will grow and expand into a truly comprehensive guide to all aspects of your company that people can access at any time to obtain relevant information and that will manoeuvre them into a purchasing decision.

Get Started, Before Your Competition Does



The only thing standing between your business and increased marketing advantage is the creation of your very first video clip. Grab a camera, hit the record button and start practicing.

Talk about your business, what you can do to support your customers and how they can benefit from your products or services. If you have premises, take a walk around and give your potential new customers a guided tour. Relax, become familiar with your recording equipment, and see what flows from this first step.

Once you have your recording, all you need to do is import it into movie editing software and start to edit. In a very short space of time you'll be totally familiar with how it works and you can start to add polish through music and text.

Upload your sample video to YouTube and see how it looks. If you're unsure about this step, you can keep the video private on the site until you're ready to share it with the rest of the world.

The past few years have seen a revolution take place in online advertising and marketing strategy. The World Wide Web is all about social interaction and networking, which is proven by the popularity and durability of sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Creating video is the next step in bridging the gap between a computer screen and meeting you face-to-face, enabling your customers to get to know you and what you do in a personal and engaging way.

Your company website needs to be as inviting and approachable as a real store front, encouraging potential customers to step inside and begin browsing. Video is the ideal platform to achieve this. Text-based websites have their place, but nothing can compare to the level of engagement that a strong video clip can bring to you and your business.

Please don't delay. The sooner you get started, the sooner you'll start to see the benefits in terms of time saved and profits earned.

Want Some Help?

At this point you may be wondering if it would just be easier to hire a video production company. Although I'd encourage you to at least have a go at producing your own video, outsourcing your project is a perfectly sound idea.

Because the cost of equipment and software has reduced so much over the last few years, hiring a professional video production company is much more affordable than in the past, whether you're looking for a completely managed service, or just a little extra polish.

To help you select the right provider, here is a quick checklist of qualities to look out for:



1. Ethical and Transparent

This may sound obvious, but you need to be confident that the video production company you select is going to create something that properly represents the standards and ethics that you have for your business. They should be able to explain, in simple terms, the steps that they'll take to understand your business and create suitable video content.

2. Proven Track Record

Don't work with frauds, phonies or wannabes... this is your business, your livelihood, and you don't deserve to settle for second best. Any quality video production company should be able to show you samples of its work and, ideally, the positive effect it had on the client's income.

Look for a company that can demonstrate its ability to create different styles of video, for different types of business, along with a slew of video testimonials from previous clients.

3. Tailored Service

As with most things in life, one size doesn't fit all. Accordingly, any good video production company should start by analysing your current business - including an in-depth look at your company background, target market, current Web presence, objectives, etc. If a company tries to push you into a cookie-cutter template that it reuses for every client, then walk away.

4. End-to-End Project Management

We know you're busier than ever. It never stops, right? If you've chosen to outsource your video production, it's most likely because you're aware that there's not enough time in the day to do everything and the last thing you need are more "to do's". Maybe you want to focus on your core business instead of spending hours trying to master the nuances of video editing software.

If you're looking for a managed service for your video production, make sure it's one that will handle everything, from start to finish.

5. Expert, Professional and Timely

Since you've made the decision to hire a professional, it's not unreasonable to expect a professional service. Don't settle for poor communication, non-transparency or late work. The exception to this, of course, is if you hire solely based on price; don't expect a Rolls Royce treatment if you purchased a Ford Edsel (voted as one of the world's worst cars - Google it).

Make sure you select a company that believes in your products and services and is willing to take the time to understand your passion for what it is that you do. This is the only way that a production company can produce a video that will be truly effective.

6. Is called Melbourne Video Production

Okay, I'm just kidding with this one, but I sincerely hope that you'll at least put us on your shortlist. Visit us at www.MelbourneVideoProduction.com.au and I'm confident that you'll find a company that hits all of the above criteria, and at a price that is manageable for businesses of all sizes.

This report is designed to help you to get started, but if you run into any difficulties along the way, please feel free to contact me @ www.MelbourneVideoProduction.com.au or call (03) 8060 5131. I'm always pleased to help you overcome whatever hurdles are in your way, and if you prefer, Melbourne Video Production can manage every part of the video production process for you.

I wish you every success with your venture into online video production and I'm confident you'll be thrilled with the results.

And remember to check out our YouTube channel for some inspiration: www.youtube.com/melbournevideos



Melbourne Video Production



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