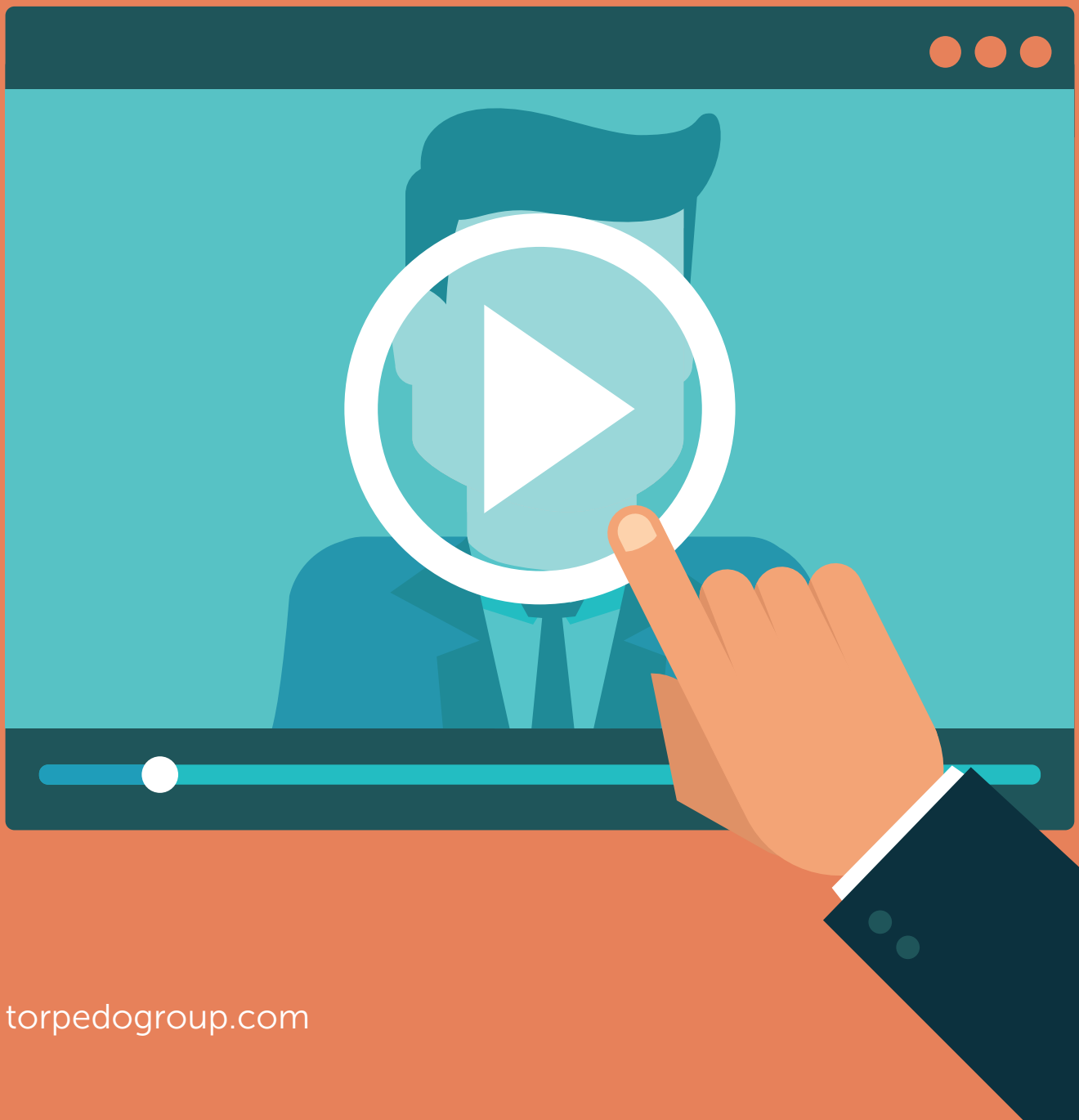
torpedo

Practical tips for optimising your B2B video marketing strategy



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Introduction

Video is an ever-growing element of a successful content strategy, but achieving great results with your video content is more than just about making an engaging video. It's about getting your audience to watch it and take action.

This eBook offers practical tips that will help you create stand-out and improve your bottom line.

If a picture is worth 1,000 words, then one minute of video is worth 1.8 million of them. So says Dr James McQuivey, Principal Analyst at Forrester Research. He should know.

Just imagine writing 1.8 million words. Worse still, imagine reading them. Glaciers could form in this time. Yet ours is a world where everyone wants everything served hot and fast – and that includes content.

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The rise of video marketing

There's no denying that the power of video is growing alongside society's love of it.

- 75% of executives watch business-related videos at least once a week, with 65% of these visiting the marketer's website after viewing (Source: Forbes Insights).
- 75% more videos are being posted to Facebook than a year ago, the site says.
- 69% of all internet traffic by 2017 will be video related (Source: Cisco).
- 45.4% of internet users view at least one video per month, with 100 million watching online video every day (Source: comScore).

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When to use video marketing

Power is nothing without control, which is why knowing *when* to include video is as crucial as how. The following have been proven to work really well in a video format.

E-learning & product demos

Your audience will prefer watching a 3-minute how-to video than wading through a 20-page manual.

Telling a story

Whether it's a showreel, product ad or a sales campaign, a well-crafted video can spark interest, evoke emotion and trigger the right response.

Complex material

Online videos can explain new methodologies, concepts and processes far better than dreary slabs of text on static web pages.

Case Studies & interviews

Video is great for getting a message across through the form of face-to-face interviews and promoting thought leadership. Video case studies also engage with prospects and encourage them to see themselves as your next happy customer.

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How to develop a video strategy

Successful videos begin with strategic thinking. Without this, everything else – production, optimisation and distribution – is a waste of resource and time. To prevent your video disappearing into the background, you need a strategy checklist.

Know your company

Video must reflect your brand and be consistent with your other marketing efforts. If you're not salesy, then nor should your videos be. If your tone of voice is formal, your videos should reflect this.

Know your audience

Always consider the audience you are trying to reach, the value you offer them, and ensure the content of the video is relevant to them. After all, each audience has different needs, and you may even need a video to target your different markets. A one-size-fits-all production simply doesn't stretch anymore.

Know your message

Distil your message to a single, simple 'So what?' idea. All else will flow from this, including secondary messages and calls to action. Messages are revealed by questions, questions, questions:

- What should people remember?
- What should they think and feel?
- What do we want them to do? When? How?

Plan carefully

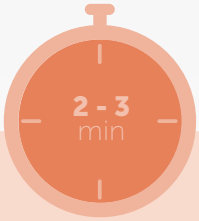
On-site shoots can be expensive if they are not planned with precision. If you are planning an on-site shoot, make sure you script and plan carefully. The time will go very quickly on location and it takes a lot of planning and organisation to get the desired results. Even if you are creating motion graphics you will still need to plan a script and storyboard before starting the process.

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Practical tips

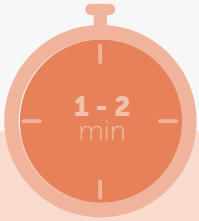
Keep it quick and relevant

With marketing videos, less is more. Aim for no more than three minutes, the last thing you want to do is turn viewers off and for them to miss the crucial call to action – plus long run-times can deter many from even opening videos. Here's a quick guide to optimum video length, depending on content.



VIRAL VIDEO
2-3 minutes

As a general rule, the longer the video, the less likely viewers will stay with it. But as long as people enjoy it, they will share it, and length has almost no bearing whatsoever.



CASE STUDY
1-2 minutes

The usual format is one or more talking heads, mixed with narration and annotations. Key messages, such as ROI, should be communicated quickly. Plus, far better to feature four evangelising clients for 15 seconds apiece than one, for a minute.



TUTORIAL
45 seconds-1.5 minutes

The best tutorials communicate the simplicity of a product or service. Simple means short.

Hit the thumbnail on the head

Every online video is packaged behind a thumbnail image. Don't hide your video behind a weak thumbnail. It's what prompts people to click 'play'. What, then, is the secret to a great thumb?

- Think 'movie poster'. To sell their products, movie marketers sink time and effort into typography, photography, colour palettes and words. Whatever the product, so should you.
- Focus on faces. People prefer looking at people than products. We relate to people better and seeing someone using (and enjoying) your products may well mean the difference between a click and a bounce.
- Be a drama queen. Make your thumbnail as eye-catching and intriguing as possible to achieve standout.
- Be emotive. There are only 7 humans emotions – wonder, sadness, happiness, anger, fear, disgust and surprise. Your thumb should evoke at least one of them.
- Word perfect. You'll need some carefully chosen words to sell your video. Give yourself enough time and task the correct person with this – it's always good to get a fresh set of eyes on the copy.
- Picture perfect. If you're shooting a video on location, hire a professional photographer to take pictures for your thumb as you go along. If there's no shoot involved, you ought still hire a photographer. A thumbnail captured on a mobile device is very 'You've Been Framed', if you are aiming for purposely amateur, you will need to spend some time achieving this effect.

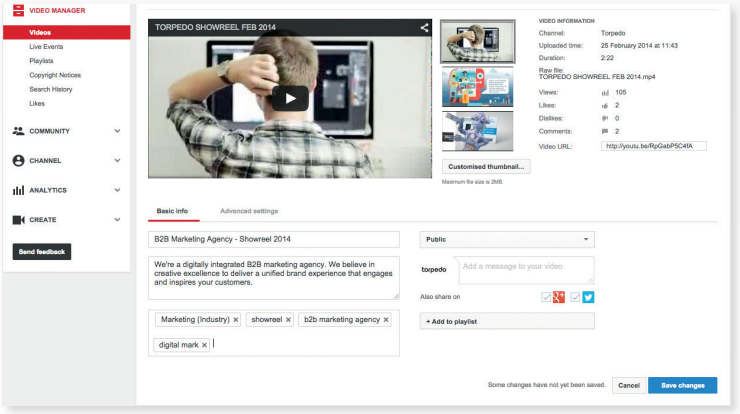
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Optimising for search

Video is a three-step process: planning, production and distribution. Distribution itself is a two-step deal: where to place the video, and how to draw eyeballs to it. The latter is all about optimisation, especially with content destined for YouTube. So how's it done? Here's how the optimisation process might look.

Title

This must be built from keywords that describe your content. Keywords should be long-tail, not short-tail. That is, rather than, 'Big data solution', go for, 'Big data solution for tech companies'. Keep it under 70 characters, or the title will be truncated in search results.



Description

Only the first 15-20 words of a video description will appear in search results. This is the part that counts. Craft two concise sentences from a mix of your strongest long-tail and short-tail keywords.

Tags & categories

Do include a mix of video-specific tags, plus more-general tags descriptive of your YouTube channel. YouTube content categories are very broad. Pick the one that best describes your business and the video you're promoting.

Closed captions

This is viewer-activated text, such as sub-titles, that appear within your video. Google offers advice on how to create accurate captions for your videos that Google will index, and give them the best chance of performing well in search engines.

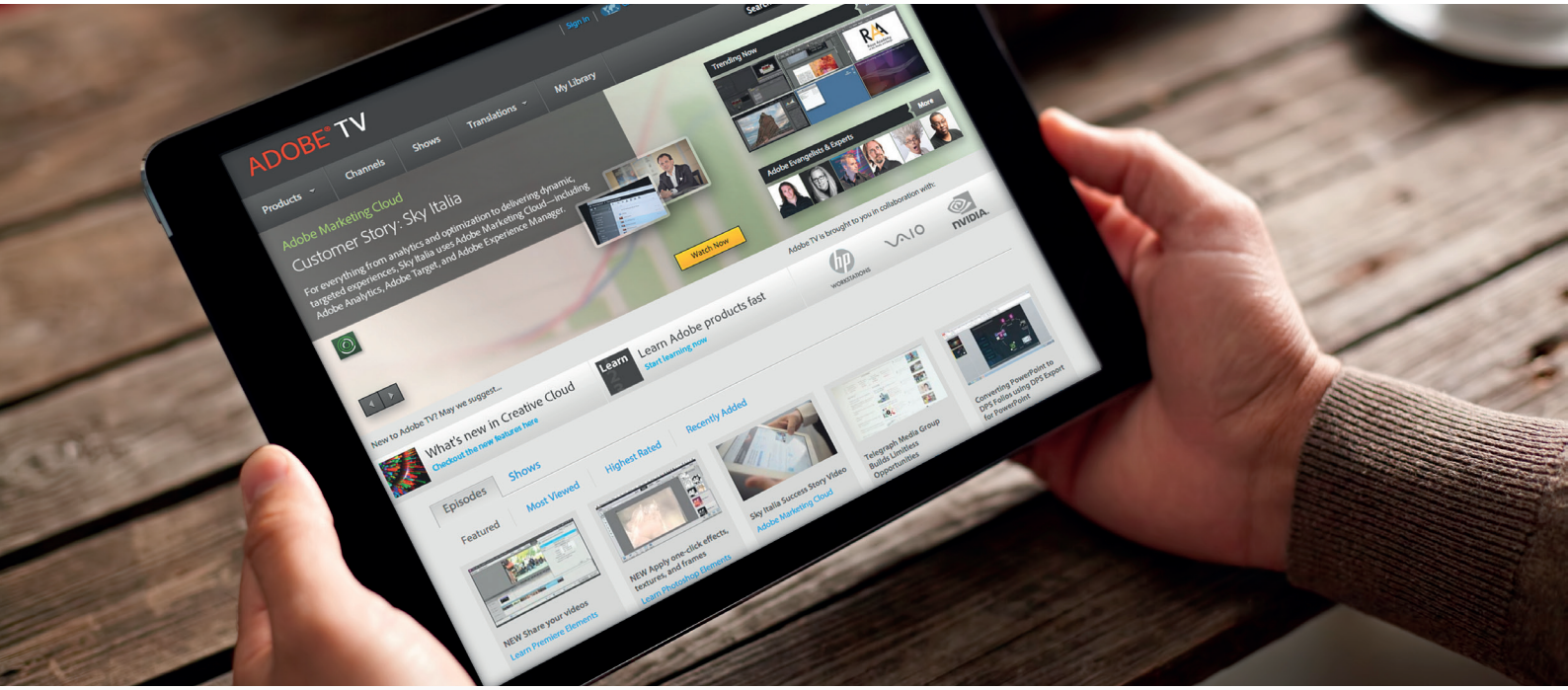
XML sitemap

A video XML site map helps search engines discover all the video content on your website. This matters greatly if your channel houses multiple videos.

Rich snippets

This is where your video's thumbnail appears in search results, which boosts click-through rates. To achieve this, label your video using schema.org markup code. The more you can markup your videos using rich snippets, the easier it will be for search engines to understand what really matters in your video and then index it in search engines accordingly.

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Distribution channels

There's an ever-growing range of video hosting options. For many businesses, a YouTube channel is the way to go. It's easy to see why: it has more than 1 billion users and also reigns supreme in Google results.

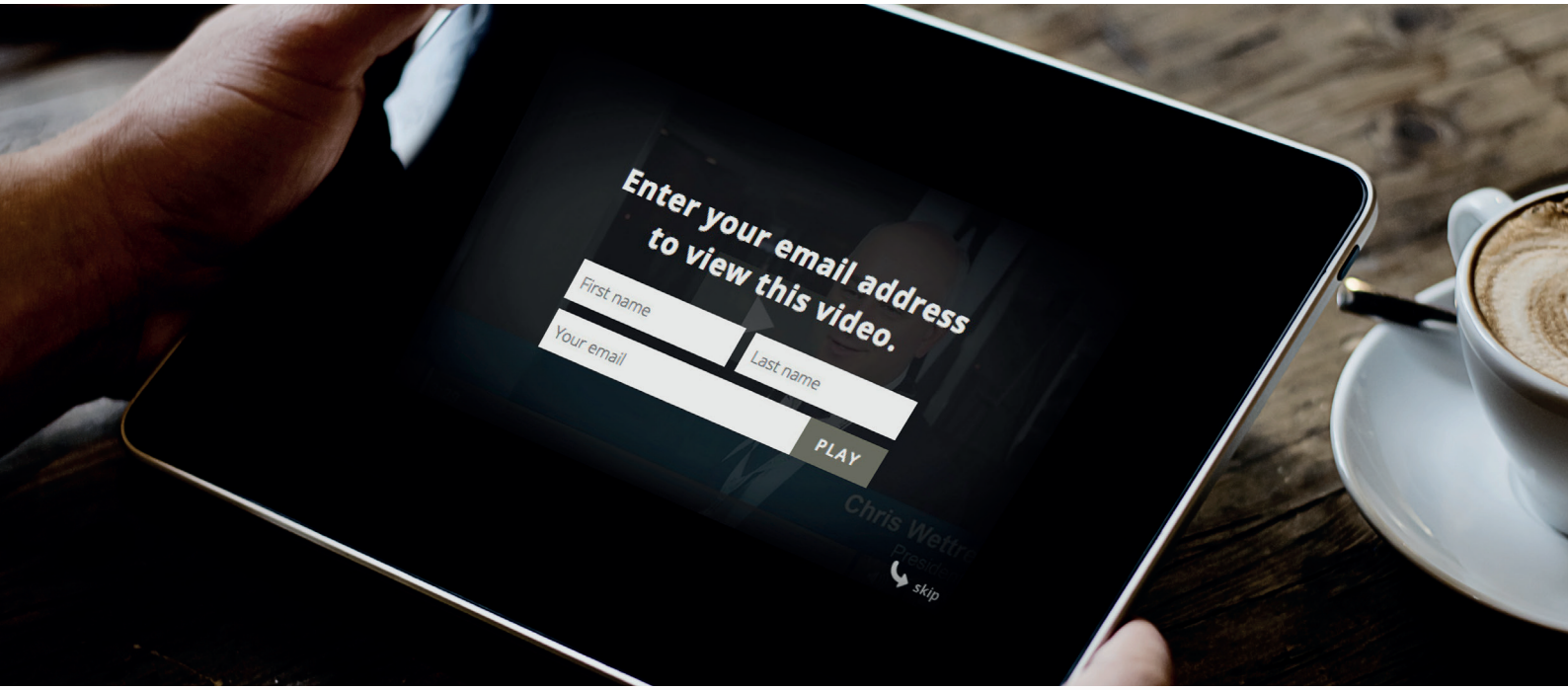
But one downside with YouTube is it drops to low res when bandwidth is narrow. If a guaranteed high-quality stream is important, maybe consider Vimeo, which never falls below 720p HD.

Maybe stream quality *and* branding control over channel appearance is key. If so, Brightcove is a good option. Wistia is another. It is strongly customisable and offers a suite of analytic tools.

For blog-friendly videos shot on mobile devices, try Instagram's video sharing feature. (We're seeing more and more of so-called 'social selling', as businesses encourage their staff to promote them on social media).

All of the above are off-site options, and they have one problem in common: traffic leakage to competitor videos. Because of this, some businesses prefer to host video on their own sites. Yet video is well-known to scoff bandwidth. This is why many prolific video marketers plump for a stand-alone TV channel. HubSpot and Adobe are among these.

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Call to action on video

Video is like all other marketing: without a call to action (CTA) little or nothing may happen, regardless of content quality. If you've committed to spending time and budget to produce a video, it's important that the call to action is clear.

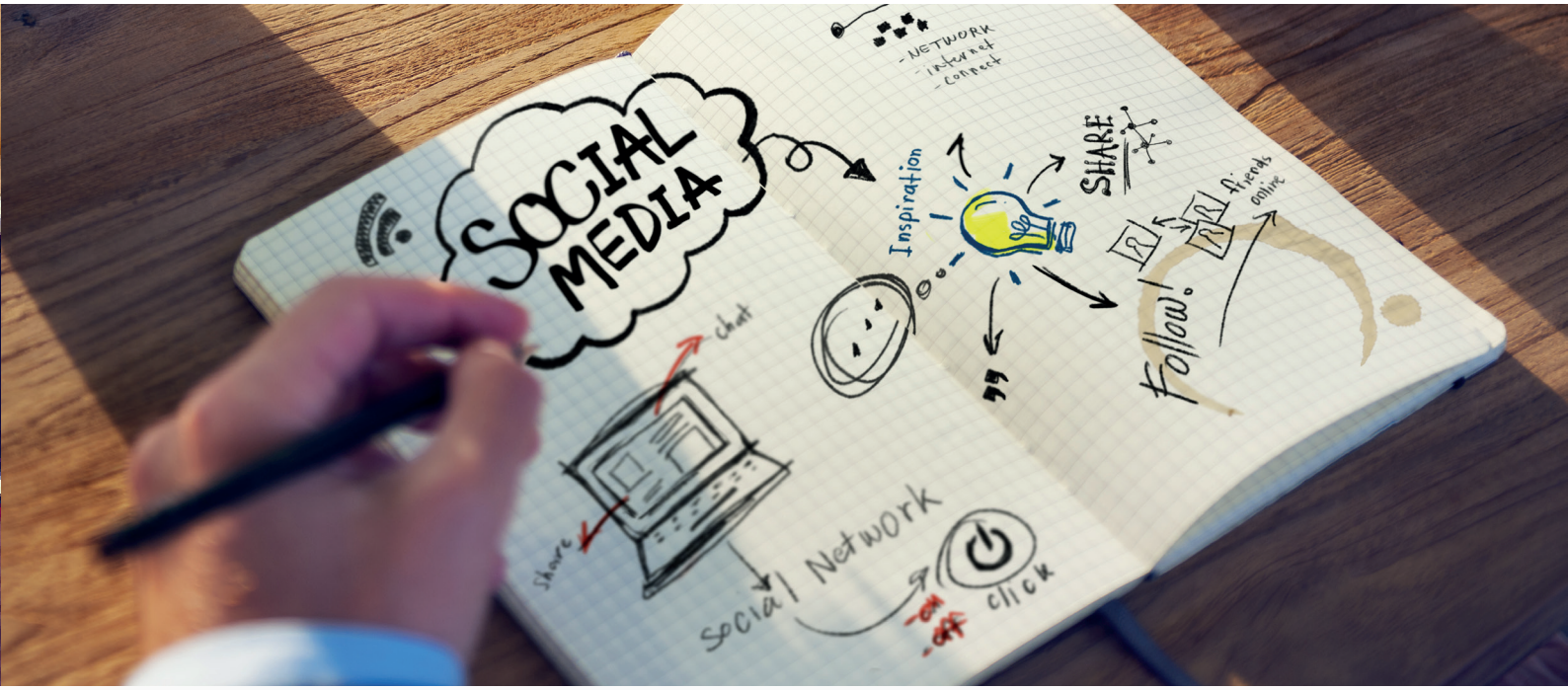
CTAs need to be direct, or they can become intrusive. 'Learn more', or 'Subscribe to our content', is the way to go.

An effective way to deliver CTAs is through annotations (overlain messages and links). You might deploy these, say, to encourage viewers to visit a landing page, or to flag a product, service or idea similar to the one being featured.

Use annotations also to incentivise viewers to enter your sales pipeline. Examples can include discounts, vouchers or free trials. (Note, though, that YouTube annotations can link only to YouTube content).

Depending on content, you may wish to capture email addresses at the end of your video. One way to do this is by using Wistia, a video hosting service that offers a suite of marketing tools. Another is Viewbix. This wraps videos in a custom player that allows you to harvest contact information.

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Boost views through social media

Social media is an inexpensive and effective way to promote your video. One of the biggest strengths of social media is that anyone can connect with anyone - so use this strength to your advantage and reach out to your audience; respond to their comments and build an interactive network that will give your video exposure as well as your brand.

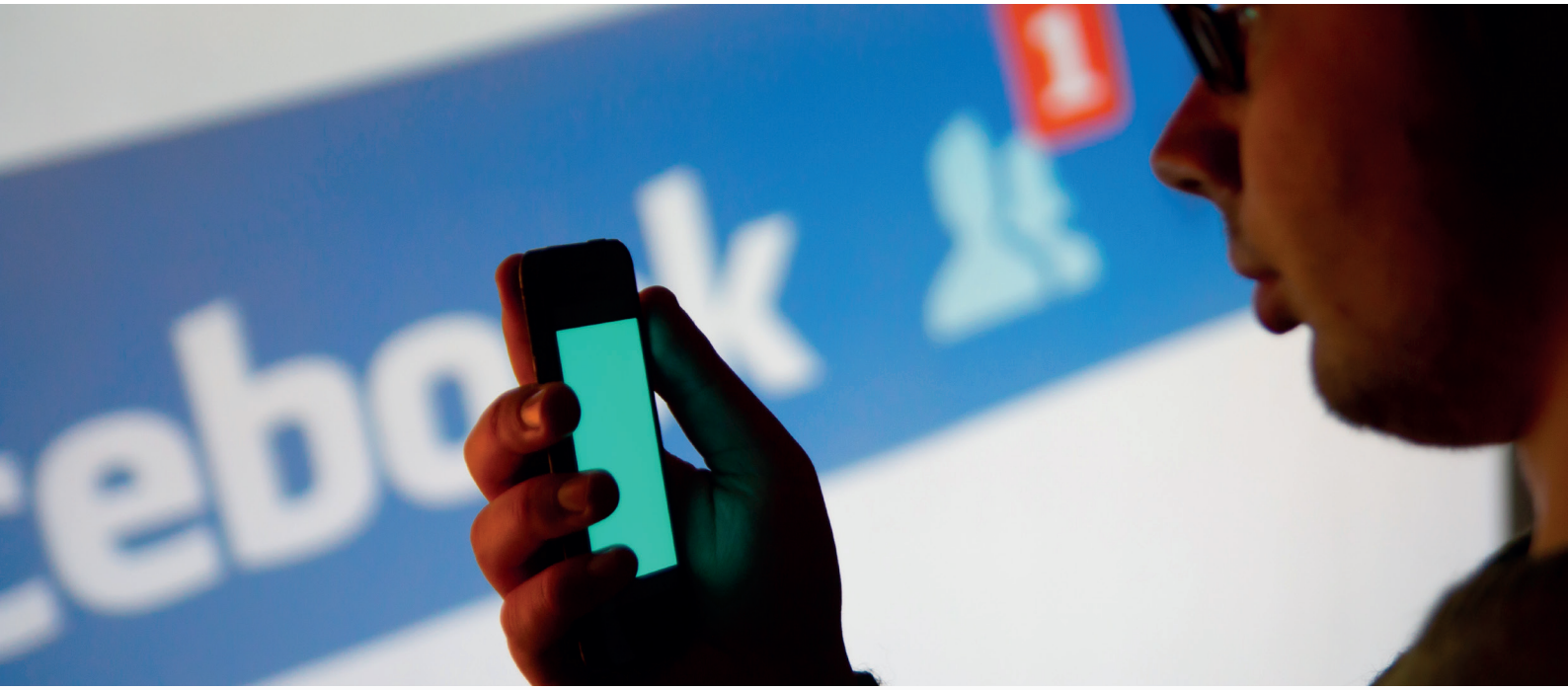
If you're interested in building links (and who isn't?!), integrating some paid social media into your promotion strategy will help you target users by interest, gender, geography or device (and more) - so you can get your video in front of the right people and encourage them to embed the video on their own website.

Create a social media content plan that details the frequency and date of each post, as well as the channels you will be using.

Consider variations of the title and thumbnail so it looks fresh every time you post, and include short quotes from the video content to attract social shares.

If you've referenced any experts or brands in your video, mention and tag them when you post the video so that they share it with their audience.

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Paid video amplification

Video can be promoted through Twitter and LinkedIn to those audiences who either have the right job role or are following key trade @handles. This will not only keep the distribution targeted, it will also avoid wasting budget, as a brand will only pay when users actively click on the video. This should be the first place to start because of the opportunity for users to share the content to their peers as 'earned' media exposure.

Alongside this there are more traditional video environments, either as a pre-roll or in video ad format. There are opportunities here to have an enhanced video for further content and engagement, such as a data capture form or the opportunity to download a White Paper at the end of the video to build further on the thought leadership position of the brand. Both of these options can be bought either directly through site specific trade titles or through a real time bidding environment of programmatic buying.

The final key route is the editorial distribution that uses contextual technologies to place a link to the video within relevant editorial on premium publishers. This has proven to drive high quality and engaged traffic through to a website on a cost per click basis.

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Go viral

Viral videos evoke emotion. This has to be the start point. A soundtrack is also a must (just imagine a Hollywood movie with no music).

Once released into the public domain, it's rare for any video to go viral on the strength of its content, however emotive. Rarer still for business videos. To go viral, your content will need to be pushed in the right direction.

Optimisation is crucial, but so too is spreading the word:

- Encourage your people to share the video on social media (social selling).
- Promote it via email to your most relevant audience.
- Plug it on relevant forums.
- Alert relevant third party sites to broaden the reach of your audience.

Most importantly, do all of this pronto, and simultaneously: to go viral, your video needs one great shove, not a series of nudges.

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Measuring success

How do you know if your video gave more than it took?

If boosting your bottom line was the aim, best ask a bean counter if it was a success. If the aim was to generate buzz, then your SEO bods will need to interpret the numbers.

Perhaps success for you is the volume of YouTube views. If the video is on your own site, then number of plays is a sure guide to its popularity.

It's not just about click through rates, but also click quality of leads. To measure this, you must embed a Google Analytics tracking code in your video. This allows you to not only see how often your video is played, but also where your viewers have paused or stopped the video.

Another marker of success is the click-through rate from your CTA. From this, you can also track how far down the sales pipeline these people travelled.

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CONCLUSION



In an age of information overload, 'if you build it, they will come' no longer applies. Instead you've got to take what you've built to them.

Video is a great way to bring attention to your business. It's naturally engaging, and it provides content that's easy to digest. However, like all marketing, video is only as effective as the sum of its parts. Investing the time, effort and money in optimising your videos will help grow your online presence and reach the right audience.

Remember that while creating an engaging video is crucial to your success, it's only half the equation. To give your videos the best possible chance of success, you've got to optimise them.

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Case study

Adobe - Creative Cloud Student Voice

In order to further promote Adobe's transition to Creative Cloud amongst students and teachers, Torpedo created a series of videos that used customer advocacy to raise awareness and showcase the product. The aim of the videos was to inspire others by showcasing how some students are already using, and benefiting, from Adobe's industry-leading software.

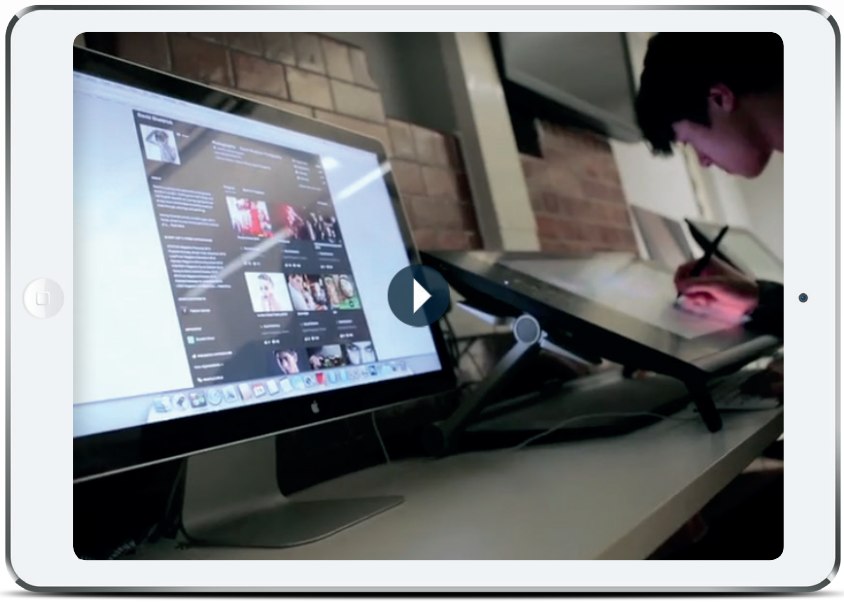
Torpedo carried out two focus groups at key HE institutions specialising in Art and Design courses to gain insight into this niche target market. We then recruited several Art and Design students to take part in the filming, wrote the video storyboards, and then filmed the students on-location.

Video promotion

We devised a comms plan incorporating a social media engagement calendar to promote the videos. This included both paid and organic social media, remarketing targeting and e-DMs. The videos were uploaded on YouTube and we sent out a series of e-DMs through third parties in order to drive traffic to the video landing pages.

What we achieved

- The most popular student video received over 25,000 views.
- The campaign created a great buzz and conversation on social media around what students had achieved using Adobe Creative Cloud software.
- The overall campaign achieved its awareness objective and was successfully run in a number of phases.



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About Torpedo

At Torpedo we create digitally driven, integrated marketing communications. We're the thinkers. The creators. The doers.

We make things happen and we get results. We believe in creative excellence to deliver a unified brand experience that engages and inspires your customers. Highly-visual creative design and digital expertise lie at the heart of Torpedo. We create brands, integrated campaigns, compelling content and cutting edge digital experiences. All underpinned by strategies that have been informed by customer insight, and driven by technology to help businesses challenge the way they market to their customers.

Torpedo has extensive experience working with businesses spanning a wide range of industry sectors, delivering marketing projects within the UK, EMEA and internationally. Our clients include Autodesk, Adobe, Epson, UCB Pharma, Agilent Technologies, Fujitsu, Nominet, Intel, BAE Systems, Novartis, Unipart, Emerson, Travelport, Stryker, PHS Group plc and Transport for London.

Our clients tell us they love our depth of thinking, the way we explore ideas and technologies to achieve the best solution, and our in-house digital team for web and app development which gives us greater project control, a resource that knows your brand and ultimately faster delivery times.

Watch our video at torpedogroup.com or contact our team to find out more.

Sources:

Yoav Hornung, CEO of leading US business-video production company, veed.me.

Dan Greenberg, founder of viral video firm, Comotion Group

Forbes Insights

Lyndsey Best

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