AN INTRODUCTION TO

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

B2B VIDEO MARKETING



B2B Marketing

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Introduction

Danielle Howe

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Although the use of video isn't new in B2B marketing, it still hasn't been that widely adopted by many B2B brands. This is understandable, to an extent; it's a hard medium to get right, and bad videos can damage your brand rather than enhance it. But it's certainly worth making the effort – according to 2015 research from software provider HighQ, 80 per cent of senior execs watch more online video than they did a year ago (in 2014) and 75 per cent of B2B audiences watch work-related videos at least once a week. Furthermore, these numbers are only going to increase in the coming months and years.

The purpose of this guide is to help B2B marketers get started with video, so it becomes a meaningful part of their marketing strategy. It focuses on how to tell compelling stories via video that will engage your audience and enhance their customer journey.

In the following pages you'll find the 'recipe' to creating a successful video story, how to make video work for your brand, five ways to ensure video ties into every stage of the buying cycle, a run-down of the top B2B brands using video (so you can learn from the best) and finally a summary of the key takeaways.



Simon Baker

Head of
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ITN Productions

How to make a compelling corporate video story

Best Practice Guide © B2B Marketing 2015

The storytelling power of video has long been established as a means to change perceptions, behaviour and attitudes. Since the birth of TV, broadcast news organisations have used video to inform, educate and provide a channel through which these stories can be disseminated. In the digital age, companies are increasingly harnessing the power of video to provide deeper engagement with employees, customers and shareholders. Platforms such as YouTube make it easier than ever to 'broadcast yourself', and as brands become broadcasters and media owners in their own right, it is vital they are as consistently represented through the moving image as in other forms of communication.

What are the key ingredients of a successful video story?

We asked storytellers from across ITN Productions to recommend the key components of effective storytelling, and how it relates to the production of corporate films. Here's what they said:

» Always look for the human dimension when creating any kind of film, a story that the viewer can personally relate to, however dry or difficult the subject matter. This helps the message to resonate with the viewer and makes them more likely to own and share it with others. «

Chris Shaw, editorial director, ITN Productions

» Corporate messaging such as facts, figures and statistics can sometimes come across as slightly dry. By connecting with the viewer emotionally we engage their imagination and that helps with the absorption of core ideas. «

Grant Fulton, creative director, ITN Productions

» Building your brand in the video space allows you to tell the overarching story. To declare its ownership and give it personality. «

Marc Ortmans, brand director, ITN Productions

To make video work for your brand you need to consider relevance, reach and resonance.

Best Practice Guide © B2B Marketing 2015

Relevance

Focus on creating content that your target audience truly values. By adopting an insight-led approach to content creation, you will ensure you develop content that is relevant for your audience. It's great to produce content that is fresh and up to date, but if that is your strategy then ensure you get to market quickly or risk being perceived as off the pace. Similarly, it's important to consider the desired 'shelf life' of your content and strike the balance between being not so topical that it's out of date next week but neither so anodyne that it can stay on your homepage all year. Finally, pick some 'white space', away from your competitors' content. Have something truly unique to say, if not about what you do then how you do it.

Reach

Plan the most effective channels to get your content in front of your target audience. Integrating your content into email and search marketing campaigns can help your content to be found and viewed by your target audience. Video should be planned alongside all other forms of content to provide an integrated cross platform content plan. Experimentation with 'long tail' search terms should be encouraged in order to find the prospects currently searching for solutions to a problem (e.g. 'How do I…'). Once viewed by your target audience, you need to make it as easy as possible for them to share it with colleagues internally and externally through the integration of 'share' functionality across all key social media platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter. A 'forward to a colleague' option should also be included to help the viewer to build the internal case for your product/service by making it easier for them to share the content with their professional peers. YouTube is now the world's second most popular search engine after Google, and each week over 100 million people take a 'social action' such as a like, share, or comment. As well as your own website, establishing a channel on YouTube as the hub of your video content is a common way for brands to manage their video assets in a single place.

Resonance

Build video that has a lasting impact. It's important not to embark upon any kind of content marketing journey without having a plan. Consider how video will sit alongside your other content forms and how it will build over time into a body of work. As we discuss later, the consistent approach to on-screen look and feel can be achieved through the development of video brand guidelines. Building content that is relevant at each stage of the buying cycle is key and will ensure it has a lasting impact on the viewer. Defining objective measures of success will help maintain a focus on ROI. Views and click-throughs are easy to measure, but how far through the funnel are you following these leads? Where to take them after the end frame? Where do you want your customer/prospect to go next to harness the engagement and convert into an action that moves them further through the sales funnel? At the very least, you should take your viewer somewhere you can help them. Create, test and refine a number of journeys for different scenarios and ensure you measure the effectiveness of various calls-to-action (contact us/download a whitepaper etc).

Five ways to tie your videos to the buying cycle

1. Problem recognition

Building content that addresses the problems faced by your target audience can work well in building awareness. Editorial in tone, with minimal 'sales' messaging, the purpose of this type of content is to demonstrate that you understand their business issues and that you have expertise in this area.

2. Information search

Over recent years, Google has become synonymous with search. Even among very senior 'c-suite' audiences, it is the go-to place for information in solving business-related problems. The advent of 'blended search' (where video features alongside text links in search engine results pages) has made it even more important to have high-quality video tagged with key search terms when your customers are searching for information online.

3. Evaluation of alternatives

This is especially relevant for service brands, as video can help bring your proposition to life by providing a degree of 'physical evidence' of the quality of the service you provide. For example, allowing the customer to 'virtually' meet the key players from your business through video allows you to build rapport early in the buying process.

4. Purchase

In businesses where online purchases can be made, these can be captured by the use of a strong call-to-action and embedding a clickable link into the final frame[s] of the video. For more complex sales, a range of calls-to-action can be incorporated to drive response in the most appropriate way ('book an appointment'/'submit an RFP'/'call us now').

5. Post-purchase evaluation

Make sure you include ongoing and value-added communications with your clients that positively reinforce their purchase decision. This could be a variety of topics, from updates on best practice and commentary on industry developments through to more formal, research-led 'thought leadership' and personalised video communications.

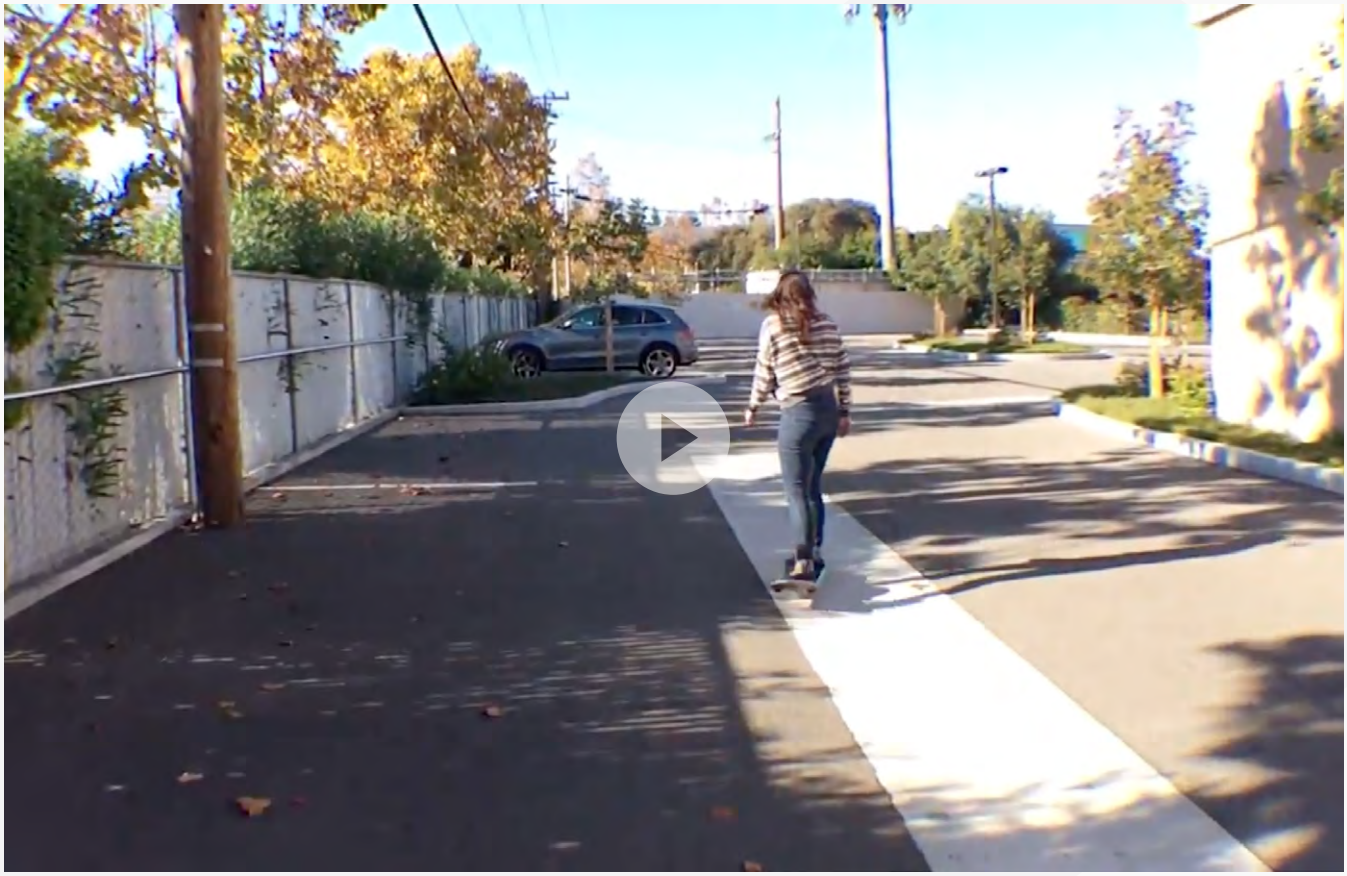
Top five B2B brands using video

A number of brands are using B2B video to great effect, so why not learn from some of the best examples of B2B video marketing out there?

We've selected five organisations who are using video to make themselves stand out from the competition. →

1. General Electric (GE)

General Electric is well known for its excellent content across the board, and its videos are no different. Of course its budget for video production is likely to be high, but there are still lessons to be learnt here. Its videos are engaging and don't take themselves too seriously; take a look at its 'Masterclass' series for a taster of the interesting but fun tone the brand adopts.



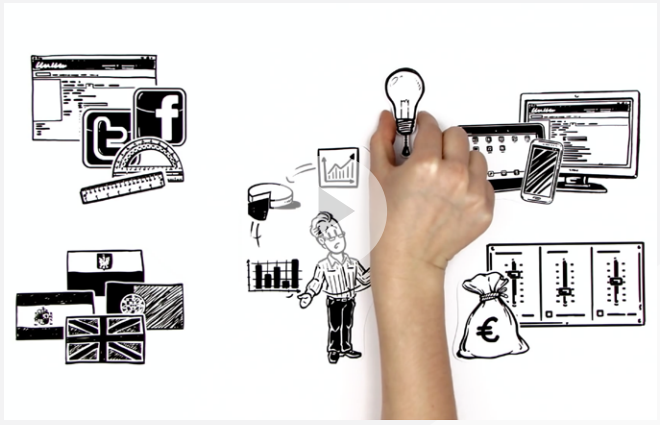




2. Adobe Marketing Cloud

Adobe Marketing Cloud creates videos that you'd want to watch, whether you're likely to be a customer or not. Its campaign, 'Do you know what your marketing is doing?' is a fantastic example of B2B advertising that creates an impact – its latest video 'The launch' has had almost two million YouTube views in two months. The brand also creates useful and engaging product demonstration videos, and clearly signposts all its different content across its YouTube channel.

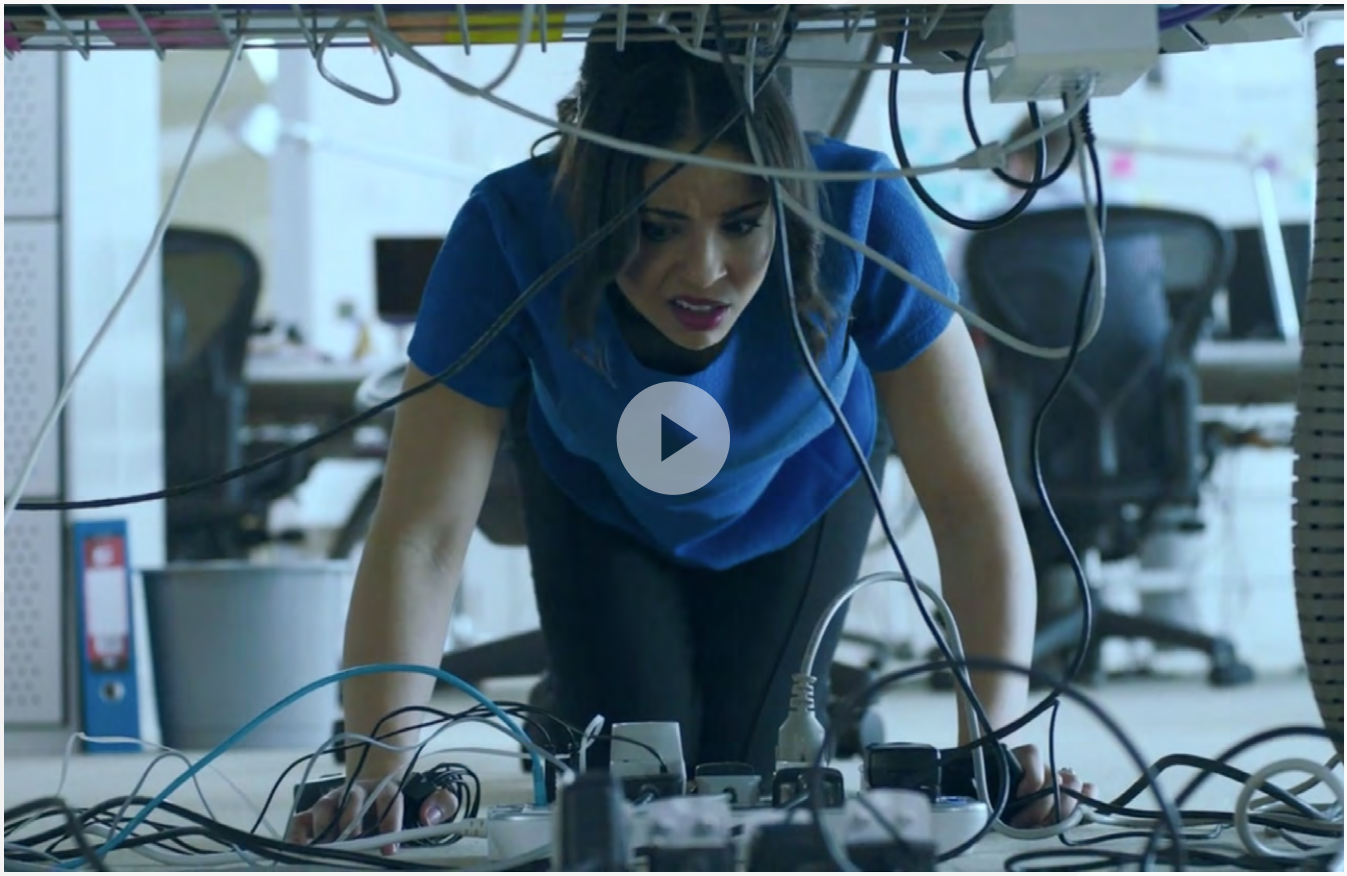






3. Brother

Printer and business solutions supplier Brother has a popular channel for its label printers. It has produced comical videos that showcase its products' capabilities as well as useful 'how to' videos clearly explaining the different features of its products.





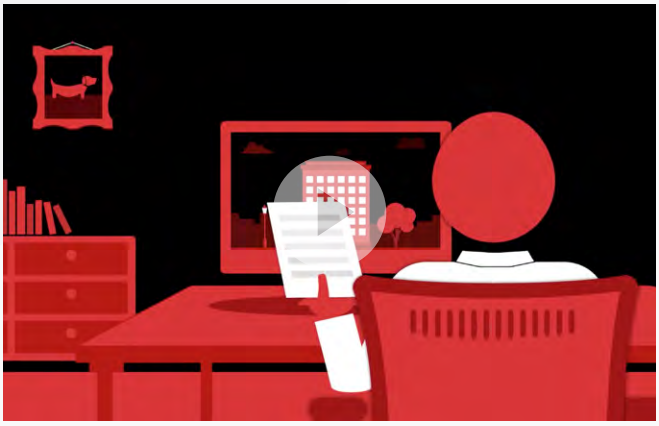


4. Hiscox

As part of its 'Geek to peak' campaign, Hiscox recently produced a series of videos ('If you're trying to be tech, you're trying too hard'), highlighting the fact that so many businesses are now trying to mimick tech start-up culture and ways of working. In addition to a number of more serious interviews, in the past it has also produced fun videos to engage the SME market, which it did with its 'Ode to' series – a look at the small things that make a big difference in the lives of small business owners.



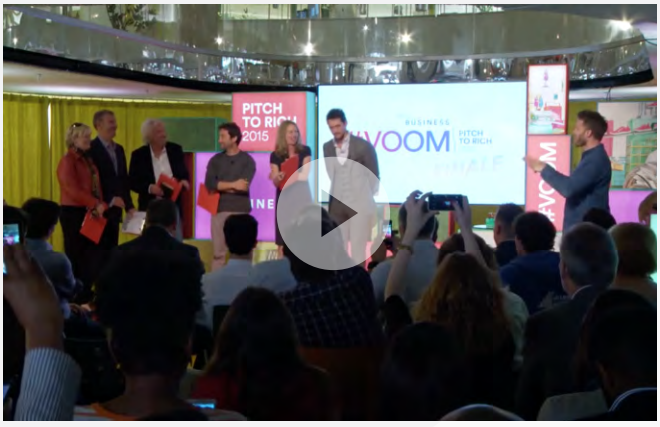




5. Virgin Media Business

Virgin Media Business used video to drive its 'Pitch to Rich' campaign, in which innovative start-ups were able to pitch their ideas to Sir Richard Branson for the chance of winning £1m worth of business and marketing support. While the campaign was launched with TV ads, it has also been heavily driven by online videos, with one of the most recent being a 'follow-up' to see how the winners of the competition are doing 100 days after their win.







Key takeaways

Avoid video at your peril: it's now easier than ever to produce high-quality videos and 'broadcast yourself'. Ignoring video could be detrimental to your brand.

Effective video storytelling is driven by a human dimension and connecting with the viewer emotionally.

You need to consider relevance, reach and resonance to make video work for you:

- **Relevance:** create content that your audience will truly value.
- **Reach:** make sure you use the most effective channels to get your videos in front of your target audience.
- **Resonance:** make sure you have a plan so that video sits alongside your other content and has a lasting impact.

Ensure your video content ties into each stage of the buying cycle by doing the following:

- Address your target audience's challenges in your videos.
- Make sure your videos are tagged with the right search terms.
- Make the most of video to bring your proposition to life.
- Include a strong call-to-action in your videos.
- Produce video content to engage your existing customers.



Author biography

Simon Baker

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Simon joined ITN Productions to launch its branded content offering in 2010, working with major brands on strategy, ideation and development. His mix of creative, production and media skills, plus a focus on spotting future trends, has led to ITN being at the forefront of creative production in the UK. He is also the production lead behind last year's Lego Ad Break, the UK's most awarded ad break.

ITN Productions is ITN's inhouse production business. It produces creative and commercial content for the broadcast, corporate, commercial, and digital sectors. Its branded content and commercials division works with B2B and B2C clients including Samsung, Suzuki, Barclays, Avios, Cadbury's, Ikea, Nescafe and Birdseye specialising in live/near-live production and real-time content. In the past year ITN Productions has won over 30 awards, including two Gold Cannes Lions, a BAFTA and an International Emmy.

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About B2B Marketing



B2B Marketing is the comprehensive information resource for B2B marketers. Its mission is to provide practitioners with the information they need to perform better and achieve more, whatever sector of the B2B space they are operating in.

Launched in 2004 as B2B Marketing magazine, it has since evolved into a multi-faceted resource, delivering a broad range of content in a variety of different forms and formats.

Its key products are:

- Online community
- Magazine
- Awards
- Research and reports
- Training
- Events
- Membership

For more information on any of these products or services go to b2bmarketing.net or call +44 (0)20 7014 4920

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