

TOP BUSINESS TIPS: EFFECTIVE USE OF WEB VIDEO

If you buy a newspaper you expect to see text and pictures. If you look at a website you expect text, pictures, sound and moving images.

These days if you aren't using video you aren't really using the web.

1. THERE IS NO EXCUSE NOT TO. IT'S EASY.

With sites like Youtube sprouting up every day, adding video to your website has never been simpler. You can upload your digital content and then simply add a short piece of code to your site to make it appear. This is called embedding.

2. IT'S FREE. YOU DON'T EVEN NEED YOUR OWN CONTENT.

You can also add any video that is relevant to your website's audience in this way. If you spend a little time regularly 'curating' interesting content your visitors will come back to your site regularly to see what's new.

Obviously with your own content you can cater to your audience more exactly and get across your own key messages that no-one else's video will.

3. DISTRIBUTE YOUR OWN VIDEO ON OTHER SITES.

Unlike TV advertising distributing a video on the internet is free! If you make your video relevant and exciting to your target audience, brand it and tag it effectively it will drive traffic to your site.

Obviously, there is a lot of stuff out there and unless you market it effectively you won't get seen, but this is now a matter of putting time and effort into creating the right content and niche marketing it rather than throwing a lot of money at "airtime".

4. BE ORIGINAL. TALK TO YOUR AUDIENCE. ENTERTAIN THEM.

You know your audience. You know what they're interested in. You know what will entertain them. On the internet niche marketing is everything.

Creating and curating content is cheap, but nobody will take any notice unless it is showing something new and exciting. Be original.

5. LOOK AT YOUR CONTENT? COULD VIDEO REPLACE OTHER ITEMS?

Think about your audience – how will video enhance their experience of your website? Will it be more effective in relaying key messages?

What content already on your website would be helped by a video element, or could easily be converted into a short video?

6. USE THE WEB'S POSSIBILITIES. COMBINE TEXT, PHOTOS AND VIDEO.

The way people use video on the web is changing all the time. As the means of production and distribution have become more and more accessible, people can experiment and use video in ways that nobody would have predicted.

With webcams in-built in laptops Vlogging (video blogging) is almost easier than standard blogging.

But bear in mind that text, photos and video do different things. In the right combination they are very powerful. In the wrong combination they are just confusing or boring.

7. USE VIDEO TO CONVEY MESSAGES YOU CAN'T CONVEY WITH TEXT.

Text explains things. With text you can give a lot of technical detail, background and talk about subtleties or abstract concepts.

Video demonstrates things. It can show emotions, personality, a process at work, how to do something tangible. It is immediate and very powerful, but it not subtle – it is a blunt instrument.

So if you use video to show talking heads, remember that *the way* they are saying it is as important as *what they say*.

Also next time you want to report something consider whether you should include some video to demonstrate the things you are writing about.

8. IF YOU AREN'T USING VIDEO THEN YOU'RE ALREADY FALLING BEHIND.

How many of your competitors already have video of some kind on their website?

What impression do you think that makes on visitors? What competitive advantage is it giving them?

Does it look great or not that good? What could you do better?

9. WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY'S PERSONALITY? PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS.

What kind of "brand" are you? You already have a logo and a corporate image, but video can tell an audience far more about you than those things. What assets do you have in your company that you can utilize in a video?

Maybe your advantage over a competitor is in your approachability, or in the personalities of your staff.

Maybe Kevin, on the sales desk, is your biggest asset because he is a born performer. Or maybe it's Sandra who is the funniest person you've ever met? Maybe they should be presenting your video ad? Or maybe doing a regular Vlog?

10. WHERE THE PROFESSIONALS COME IN.

Before you decide to make a video for your site take a pause and look at what is out there. Ask yourself questions about what key messages you want to impart and what outcomes you hope for. Think what resources you can allocate to the task.

Once you have decided what you need talk to a professional video producer. Go through your ideas with them – they will make sure that you get what you want and it need not cost the earth.

If you don't get professional help you may end up with a video that you don't end up using or actually detracts from your site.