

Creating Better Video Content

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Learn the key first steps to getting started with creating your videos, with tips from leading marketing video experts.



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CONTENTS

Page 04 ~ **Video is critical for business**
 Page 06 ~ **Know your audience**
 Page 9 ~ **Consistency is key**
 Page 11 ~ **The Roll of Storytelling**
 Page 13 ~ **The Curse of Perfection**
 Page 17 ~ **Audio & Gear concerns**
Page 20 ~ **11 types of videos you can start creating**

Knowing how to create video is critical for businesses

The access and ability to create video content has gotten easier and more cost effective. Many more organizations are using it for everything from creating training content to marketing to sales and beyond. It's a medium that offers many opportunities to convey your messages in a creative and effective way.

Sean Cannell says, "I think that any business that wants to be relevant and actually make sales, and be in business in the next five years, needs to have video as part of their strategy."

According to a report from [HubSpot Research](#), more than 50% of consumers want to see videos from brands ... more than any other type of content. They go on to say that video is for more than just entertainment as well. According to the report video can increase conversion rates by 80%, as well increase email open rates by 19% by including the [word video in the subject](#).¹

If you're new to video or have made a few, but know you want more, there's a number of things to consider to help you both get up to speed and improve the overall effectiveness of what you're creating.

This guide will walk through some basic considerations around video creation, include advice from experts who have learned - from a lot of practice and work - what it takes to make successful videos.

This guide will look at the following:

- Why your audience is so important?
- Help you figure out who you should be creating video for.
- Why storytelling is a critical piece of video creation
- The role of consistency in improving and making better quality content
- The danger of perfectionism
- Types of videos you might consider creating.

1. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/video-marketing>



Amy Landino

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"I personally believe that we're all on the same plane, whether you're a business or whether you're an individual creator. Because, we all start somewhere..."

Know Your Audience

Before you start working on your first script or storyboard, you have an important question that you have to answer: “Who is your audience?”

Knowing who your audience is will guide many decisions you will need to make about your video. Knowing general information is helpful, but thinking about a specific individual - what their problems are, why they will be watching your video, what they like and don't like - will help you make a more focused and detailed video.

But how do you know your audience, and understand what they really need? There are a number of ways and tools you can use, like Google Analytics, surveys, and social media analytics, to get to know who your audience is. It starts with asking yourself a series of questions and doing some research.

You can start with basic demographic information, such as education, age, affiliations (like professional organizations, association with other groups), and other various demographic factors.

- Do they have particular likes or dislikes?
- What are they looking for or trying to accomplish?
- How much do they know about the topic you are going to present?
- Where are they spending their time online?

Knowing the answer to these questions will help guide you as you plan out and create your video.





Nick Nimmin

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"If you don't have an audience for your videos, you don't have a product.

Because your audience for your videos is the same people that you're targeting for your product in the first place. ... [I]f people are buying your product, then people are looking for how to use that product, how to get better at that product.

Things about that product that they might not know initially when they take it out of the box. They're looking for that kind of information.

... [A]ny product can definitely benefit from making video content."

Know Your Audience, continued

As you start looking at what your audience wants and needs there are some things you can do to help you narrow your focus. Owen Video says, "The very first thing we do is run our clients through a questionnaire that helps them to get the biggest topics that the audience would be interested in."

If you're not working with a specific client and have a broad audience that you've already connected with through a newsletter or some other means, Brian Fanzo suggests that you, "Ask them...." and "Send an email out to your audience and say, 'What channels do you like to consume content on?' And you'd be amazed. Most people are thankful that you're willing to ask."

Jeremy Vest suggests that listening is critical because, "If you don't listen to your audience then ... you're not going to serve them very well."

However, it's not all about just seeking what the viewer wants. Tyler Lessard suggests that you think about the intent of the content and "where does it fit in the buyer's journey?"

Once you have a sense of your audience, the content you are creating and going to create needs to match up with the audience profile or persona that you've developed. It doesn't matter if your video doesn't work for other groups or other personas, you want it to be what the individual you're going after wants.

The content needs to be focused on helping the viewer achieve their goals. If you're selling software, you need to make sure your video helps

the viewer, who you've spent time thinking about and trying to understand, and meets their needs.

Fernando Silva emphasizes this need and suggests that we need to "[get] a sense to what you're audience is actually interested in and what they want to keep watching or maybe what doesn't interest them. It ... helps you make better content in the future."

If you're working hard to understand your audience, but unsure of what you should be creating for them, Tyler Lessard stresses that you should, "focus more on the quality of the content and how you deliver it. Making sure it's relevant to your audience, and I think that's a simple way to start."

Consistency Is Key

One of the ideas we heard repeatedly from creators was the need for consistency – across the board. Consistency in creating, publishing, going live, and reaching out to your audience. While there is no one silver bullet, they all were clear that if you want your video strategy to be successful, being consistent is key.

Amy Landino says that “Being consistent is so important.” You don’t have to have large productions or try to make your video into a Hollywood production. Chris Cardos adds to this idea, saying, “I think it starts small and it requires consistency.”

So what does it mean to be consistent? It starts with showing up, and creating content that your audience can expect. Should they expect a new video once a week, or once a quarter? The timing at first matters less, but what is important is that they know when they can expect it. Brian Fanzo mentions the consistency of Amy Landino as a publisher:

“I cannot preach consistency enough. Consistency on the type of content, on when you go live, or when you're uploading. I think Amy Landino is one of my favorites ... I know when her videos are coming out. And then she delivers every time. If she doesn't, she sends out a blanket email to everybody, letting them know when the time's changed. That level of consistency really builds loyalty, it really builds a following.”

In addition to timing, consider the types of content that you are creating. Are the topics, the

approaches, and generally the content consistent, or is it all over the place? As mentioned in the audience section, you’ll want to make sure that you talk to your audience about topics that fit together and feel consistent, versus jumping all over the place. Remember, not every video has to follow the exact same style, approach, or even be the same content, but it should feel like it fits with the other content, and you should have thought out good reasons for it being different.

If you’re making content to just make content, you may find that you start to lose followers or audience members. Brian Fanzo adds to this idea, “The other thing about frequency is that nobody ever complains if you're helping them too much and you're providing too much value. But if you're posting too much crap, or you're posting just because you feel like you need to post, that's when you start losing people. I would argue all day that losing a subscriber for life is way worse than kind of, 'Hey, Imma peel back and do a little bit less content.' Right?”

The other area of consistency that matters is constantly working to improve your quality. As you make more content, over time, the quality of your video should increase as well. This is not to say that you have to buy more expensive gear or add special effects – you don’t. What you should be doing is working on making sure the message that is delivered and how it’s delivered improves, that you’re working hard to make edits cleaner and more purposeful, or that you’re getting better audio or angles, whatever it is that will make your video more effective.



Chris Kardos

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"I really do feel like consistency is the biggest tip that I have. Keep creating, keep working on the quality of your videos."

Consistency is Key, continued

Amy Landino provides insight on this concept, "... Perfection leads us to not be consistent. And, consistency is the big piece of every point of contention, with video. We can't start because we don't have the right gear. We can't start because we don't have the right person on camera. We can't start. Then, maybe, you do start and you find out how much work it takes to just do one project, or make all the repurpose-able pieces of that one project to make it truly worth the one, and then continuing. Consistency ends up being the hardest thing."

Here are three ideas to help you be more consistent:

1. Set a schedule to publish videos on a regular cadence – whether once a week or once a month. Keep to that schedule.
2. Audit your video content. What fits well together and what seems out of place? What type of content is working and being successful? Focus your next few video projects on content that will align and be consistent with those. Pick one thing to improve in your next video and work on it.
3. Once that video is done, take that same area and work on it more to improve it. Do this over several videos, focusing on the making improvements.

The Role of Storytelling

"[T]he companies that are making the customer the hero of their story are the companies that are winning."



Owen Video, Marketing Consultant, thevideopot.net

The Role of Storytelling

"Depending on what your goal is, knowing [your audience], knowing how they generate the feeling that you're going for, that's where the art of storytelling comes into play; really letting that shine through every aspect of video, both in what you're saying, and where you are, and everything in between."



Amy Landino, Founder, Aftermarq



The Curse of Perfection

One of the concerns expressed by most of the creators was that too many people worry about getting things perfect from the beginning. It is tempting to worry about whether you have all the right equipment, or if every pixel is perfect.

Even if we're not starting with perfect, you also have to understand your audience and what they are willing to tolerate. Some videos are going to need more polish and be closer to perfect, because the audience will demand it. It may need higher quality to appeal to the audience and meet your objectives.

Fernado Silva, puts it this way, *"As I mentioned, I think [the quality] really depends on ... the goal of that video. So, if I want to make the best video I can for my homepage and if this is the video that is going to get a lot of traffic, you want make sure that video is a little bit more polished...."*

But let's say it's a video that you want to use to help with retention or to assist in sales enabling, for example. Those don't necessarily need to be that fine-tuned or refined, just because humans like to connect with you [at a] personal level and things that aren't perfect are human, right?"

As you begin making video, understand what you are and are not willing to make compromises on. Are you okay with jump cuts? Do you mind if the framing wasn't exactly the way you envisioned it? You want to be mindful of all the issues you would like to fix, but consider making adjustments during the next video you create, instead of trying to fix everything this time.



"Quality really depends on ... the goal of that video."

The Curse of Perfection, continued

What to do if you find yourself stuck on making it perfect?

If you find that you're stuck and wanting to make it perfect, ask yourself a few questions:

- Will my audience be affected or not clearly understand the intent and purpose of the video if these changes aren't made?
- Will the video, as is, achieve the stated goal?
- Is there something in the video that would be embarrassing to the organization or me? Does it contain something incorrect that would seriously impact the viewer (i.e. would it cause them harm or to act in a way that would be harmful?)
- What is the worst that will happen if the current version is released as is?
- Can the time that could be spent continuing to edit be put to better use on another project?
- Are the stakeholders okay with the current iteration?



You Don't Have To Be Perfect

"Punch perfectionism in the face. Punch fear in the face, and just hit publish, because you just got to put out your first videos, and the reality, ... is your first videos are going to be your worst videos.

We all start horrible, and I think that's the fear. We're afraid of putting out some bad videos, ... Just accept the fact they're going to be bad, and get those ones out there."



Sean Cannell, YouTube Creator

Nick Nimmin

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And when you over-do it, or you have that perfection thing going on... you spend so much time on one video, just trying to make everything perfect. You could have made an extra one, two, or three videos in the amount of time that it takes you to put that one video together.

AUDIO & GEAR CONCERNS

As you focus on the creation process, it can be easy to get overwhelmed and feel like you don't have the right tools to create your video. While it can be fun to have high-end equipment, and there is not a question that there can be a quality difference, it is also specialized equipment that can be complex to run, and require a lot of time and training to make it look good. Especially as you're starting out, try not to worry too much about equipment. You should first learn to get good at the content, and learn the basics. (See [TechSmith Academy](#) courses about shooting, lighting, and audio for more information.)

If you're worried about what gear you should use, don't. Brian Fanzo makes a suggestion, "Take baby steps, right? Like if you start with your phone, and then move to a web camera, then move to professional gear...."

A lot can be done with things like screen recording software or a smartphone and a little bit of creativity. These tools can help you learn the basics of video creation, and help you to practice good techniques that will be beneficial when you do upgrade your gear.





Audio & Gear Concerns, continued

However, if you're looking at a path to updating your gear for recording, we would suggest the following order of adding gear:

1. **Microphone** – Whether for your mobile device, input directly into your camera, or even a digital recorder, a microphone will improve the overall quality of your video. A decent mic doesn't have to be expensive, but is well worth it. (See [Basics: Recording Audio In Your Environment](#)).
2. **Lighting** – If recording camera video, lighting will make a big difference in how your onscreen talent looks, and the overall quality. Lights will even improve the look of mobile device videos, and can be a great investment. You don't have to pay a lot of money for lights when starting. Since lighting is a mixture of science and art, a basic set will help you learn what works well and arrangement options. (See [Basics: Lighting Your Video](#)).
3. **Camera** – Cameras can be large investments, ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars. While DSLRs or film cameras can drastically improve the look of your video, they also add a ton of settings and options that need to be managed, increasing the complexity of shooting your video. Don't get too caught up on which camera to use, instead, learn about framing, exposure, color, and other key ideas. Understanding these first will help you to shoot better video, with or without a better camera.



Content Is More Important Than Gear

"So many people focus on I don't have the right gear and I don't have the right camera, but they don't really think about, well, what is my message? What am I trying to get across with my brand? They don't want to just be told, buy my product. If you can make someone feel something, if you can make them relate to what you're doing, that's more important than any piece of gear."






Andrew Kan, Director of Video Production, Aftermarq

11 Types of Videos You Can Start Creating

If you haven't started creating videos yet, or not many, and are wondering what types of videos would be helpful and could potentially fit your audience, we have a few recommendations below.

The type of recording technology needed:

 Screen Capture Software  A Camera  Webinar Software

Difficulty level, including how polished the video needs to be, and effort needed to create it:

● Low ●● Medium ●●● High

Internal Systems Training

Roll out the use of a new analytics system, or some backend software. Internal Systems Training is video that will help your staff understand how a system works, or how they can use it more effectively.

 ● to ●●

Technical Support

Show your customers how to solve a problem that they are having with your product or service. This type can also be used to provide answers to frequently asked questions, creating easy, repeatable answers for customers.

  ●

Webinars and Live Events

Record digital events you're already putting on to be able to share them with those who couldn't make it or different audiences. You're already creating the content, try to repurpose it.

   ●

Information Delivery

Share information. Unlike training videos, information delivery might consist of giving an update, providing context, or explaining important information.

  ● to ●●●

Building Buzz

Create videos that get customers or staff excited about an event, opportunity, or something else. These videos should be high-energy, exciting, and usually contain higher production value.

  ●● to ●●●

Onboarding

Need to get staff up to speed - anything from helping them figure out who's who, to guidance on cultural values, or how to find the lunch room.



Education or How-to Videos

Create guides that provide support to roles and responsibilities, including tutorials that walk viewers through how to do a task or process. This type can even start with showing customers how to do tasks that are asked about frequently.



Reporting Bugs and Errors

Use video to capture when there are errors or problems. This is a great way to not only capture the context of the problem, but also to provide detailed information. Using video to capture bugs and errors can save time for the individual that has to fix it, allowing them to see the steps leading up to the issue, or to see exactly where the problem is.



Capture Knowledge Before It Leaves the Organization

It can be expensive when an employee leaves an organization. Use video to capture key knowledge from employees, whether by inviting them to make a screen video of key systems, or interviewing them on camera.



Meet the Staff

Create a who's who of top leadership, or bring it down and have everyone make a quick introduction video to your staff get to know each other. This can especially be helpful for new employees to get to know the current employees, and vice versa.



Social Media

Video can be an awesome addition to your social media. Video can supplement the content of the message you're sharing and provide richer details. This could include live video, ads, how-to tutorials, and a variety of other types of videos to connect with and help your customers.

