

My organisation
needs video.
What do I do next?



Big
Button

Introduction

You may have noticed the explosion in video recently, and perhaps your competitors seem to be doing very well with it. Maybe you've used video before, but can't shake the nagging feeling that you weren't quite 'doing it properly'.

You may even have no idea at all how your videos performed.

Fear not. This document will tell you:

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When to use video

Nowadays, almost all the time. This can be PR & marketing, customer stories, employee development, internal comms, company updates... the list is enormous, and when video is the right medium for the job, it can be hugely successful. It's also extremely popular, and smartphones now allow your audience to engage with your content anywhere.

But never assume you know what your audience want; some basic research can tell you about their habits when it comes to consuming content, and how they like to receive different types of information. A marketing or video agency can conduct this research for you. It can range from a quick desk exercise to a more significant piece including focus groups. In using research rather than 'gut feeling', you de-risk the entire project and save yourself time and money.



Who to talk to about making your videos, and getting them seen

There a number of people you can approach when it comes to creating your video content:

Man and cam:

And of course, woman and cam, but that doesn't scan as well. There are many freelance camera operators who will be able to film what you need to a decent standard, and probably edit and finish the film for you as well. This can be a very cost-effective approach, and good quality equipment is now within reach of sole traders. The downside is you may end up doing much more work yourself; you may need to be quite prescriptive about the creative approach, and in some cases direct the video. And, a single operator may have resource/capacity challenges that might not suit your deadlines.

It's also unlikely that (wo)man and cam will add any value or expertise when it comes to researching your audience or devising a distribution strategy, and if you're proceeding without a clear idea of how the video will connect with its audience you may be wasting all of your money. But, if you have a simple requirement that needs a cheap solution then you can do worse than some of the good operators who are out there.

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Marketing Agency/Production Company:

These two are lumped together because if you engage your marketing agency for video, the likelihood is that they won't offer it in-house and will hire a production company on your behalf. There's not an awful lot wrong with this approach except that many agencies don't have true expertise in video and video strategy, and the fact that they're outsourcing the service means it can be far more expensive than is necessary. It can also be a challenge if the outsourcing happens 'invisibly' (white labelling), as you may not have direct contact with the people that are actually making your content.

On the plus side, your regular agency will know your brand well already, and should have a high level of creativity at their disposal; this may not always carry through to creative video though, as that's a specialism with very different rules to print and other media.

Strategic Video Agency:

In the interests of full disclosure, this is the category into which Big Button falls, so bias-detectors set to max please. A Strategic Video Agency is a video specialist that brings expertise in creative video and contemporary production techniques, but also adds strategy and delivery expertise to the mix.

Cost-wise, these agencies fall between options 1 and 2 for fairly obvious reasons, but pride themselves on delivering value; there's much more to video than making it look nice, so in addition to a strong creative focus, a Strategic Video Agency will devise a research programme and develop a distribution strategy to help you deliver measurable results and monitor performance.



When you should consider doing it yourself

You and your colleagues have powerful cameras at your disposal in the shape of smartphones, and for certain types of internal communication this 'employee-generated content' (similar to 'user-generated content') can really fit the bill. It's ideal when you need to publish and distribute something quickly, especially where the importance of the messaging outweighs the need for high production values.

Some larger organisations are making such huge use of video for internal purposes that the costs to outsource it to professional video producers would be astronomical; EGC is appropriate in scenarios such as this as it's incredibly quick and easy.

But some cautionary notes: Firstly, you still need a defined purpose and strategy for your content so that you can measure its effectiveness. EGC can also be very costly in terms of human resource, a cost that isn't always factored in when comparisons are made with 'more expensive' third party suppliers. And finally, don't assume that if it's 'just for the internal audience' the rules of brand communication don't apply - workforces need to buy into their own brand values as much as third parties do, so while cheap and cheerful EGC is great for some applications, don't let its apparent lower cost seduce you into using it too widely. The same is especially true for marketing communications, where your customers will usually expect far better than a smartphone video.



Summary

There are a number of ways to get your videos made, and hopefully the options detailed above have cleared the mists somewhat. The golden rule above all others though, is that of serving your audience; think about what they want to see/hear from you, and wherever possible ask them.

Always have clearly defined objectives and a sense of purpose – why are you making the video, and what do you need it to achieve? (If you don't know, don't make it at all!)

And think about what you want to see in videos targeted at you – the chances are you like to be entertained, to learn something useful, experience an emotional response, have a laugh or find a reason to share the video with friends or colleagues. Make sure the video you plan to make will achieve some or all of these things.

Feel free to call Big Button on 0121 309 0340 for some free advice; even if you think you're going to 'do it yourself', we're passionate about good video so we want you to do it well.

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