

How to make compelling videos



Garden Time TV has its own YouTube channel. Hosted by Judy Alleruzzo (right) and William McClenathan, the video series features how-to stories, local garden events and the newest in garden tools and plants.



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VIDEO WEBSITES like YouTube and Netflix and social media sites that host video, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, have increased the demand for video greatly in the past decade.

According to the digital marketing service HubSpot, 90 percent of users say product videos are helpful when deciding which products to purchase, and 80 percent of users remember video ads they saw within the last 30 days. Additionally, one-third of all online activity is spent watching video.¹

In other words, video is incredibly important! Which means if you're not taking advantage of the popularity of video, you're probably missing an opportunity.

Here are some things to remember when you're thinking about making a compelling video:

It doesn't have to be expensive.

If your first thought about video is, "Sounds great, but there's no way I can afford it," don't be so sure. More and more businesses, particularly small businesses, are getting by just fine making compelling videos using smartphone cameras.

The latest Apple and Samsung phones shoot in incredible 4K quality, and editing software is inexpensive and comes with many computers. Here again, don't worry — if you don't know how to use it, your nephew or niece does. These cameras also let you do fun things like slow motion or time-lapse video. It has never been easier to make an inexpensive video.

Focus on story.

What stories can you tell about your

products? Don't spend precious video time listing every detail of your products. Instead, show how they change people's lives.

Here's a way to begin: imagine the single-most emotional moment you can imagine that might involve your products. Mother and daughter watching a sunset together underneath a tree? Father and son planting a bush together in honor of a recently deceased relative? Flowers given at a marriage proposal? A good story says far more about your product than technical details ever will.

If you have the budget, consider animation.

Animated "explainer" videos are popular these days, and are a great way to introduce a product without using live footage. Explainer videos tell a story: Why is this product the answer to your customers' problems? Why is it unique? How does it help the world? A punchy animated video can get all of this across, and more.

Brevity is the soul of wit.

It was true when Shakespeare wrote it, and it's still true today. Modern attention spans are short, which means you need to deliver your message clearly and succinctly. The most effective videos are generally about two minutes long, maybe two and a half minutes if you really need it. Any longer, and your audience will begin to lose interest and tune out.

Ready, set, go!

You don't get long to make a first impression. Estimates vary, but it's generally accepted that people will give a video

somewhere between 7–15 seconds before they decide to keep watching or ignore it and turn it off. You need to catch potential viewers' attention immediately. You can do this by introducing your topic quickly or making the video immediately engaging, whether through humor, beauty or in some other way grabbing people's emotions.

Bear the medium in mind.

If your video will be played on Facebook (and it should be!), this is an important one. Facebook begins playing videos automatically when they appear in a person's newsfeed, but the videos have the volume turned off until the user decides to turn it up. Make sure the beginning of your video is interesting enough to capture people's interest, even without sound.

Don't worry — you have a beautiful cast.

If these guidelines have scared you off from ever wanting to try making a video, fear not! Working in the nursery industry, you have the best subjects ever: flowers, plants and trees. With these superstars, it's hard to go wrong. Focus your video on the most aesthetically pleasing parts of what you do, and you'll have a video you are proud to show.

Creating compelling video isn't nearly as hard or expensive as it used to be. With these guidelines, you are well on your way to making a video that will capture people's attention, and maybe even their hearts. ☺

¹Kolowich, L. (2016, June 14). 31 video marketing statistics to inform your 2017 strategy. Retrieved from <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/video-marketing-statistics>.