A Five-Step Guide to Creating a Great Tech Web Video

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What do you need to know to shoot, produce and share online videos that successfully promote your technology and products?

Online video is rapidly becoming one of the most popular and most effective ways to market your products and services. Not only is video exciting and engaging to the viewer but it is becoming an expected component of leading tech sites. If your site does not offer video and multimedia, your customers may wonder if your products and technologies are also one step behind.

Here are the five things to remember when producing a video for your company.

1. You need to keep your video short and concise. Long half hour epics about your company's products and technologies are not effective. Keep it short - maybe between three to six minutes. If you need more time to fully explore a topic, make several series of videos that lead naturally into one another.

How to you keep your videos concise? Pre planning. Write out what the audience will see and what the audience will hear. You don't have to use a standard industrial video script but it wouldn't hurt. Have your talent practice a few times. The better they are at doing the script, the less editing you will have to do to fix mistakes. Hopefully you can get through it in a single take and just add in a few close ups and titles to get a finished video. Keep you video concentrated on a single aspect or topic. For example, what is one of the major problems that your product solves? Spotlight the ONE feature that really sets your product apart from the competition.

It is simpler and more effective to do a series of short videos than one long, complicated video with lots of sections and elements.

2. Make it look good. You don't need Hollywood style lighting and cinematography. However, the video needs to look good. This means using a

sufficient amount of light to make the mages look sharp. Yes, modern camcorders can create a relatively good-looking image in most lighting situations. However, the more light you can add to the shoot, the better and sharper your images will be. In addition, by adding more light, you will be reducing the level of electronic gain which the camcorder has to use to create an image in the dark - which in return reduces the amount of electronic noise in the signal. You may not be able to see it when you are shooting, but later, when the video has been compressed and posted online, you may wonder how come the colors don't pop, how come everything seems a bit muted.

You don't need a big, fancy lighting kit. A couple large reflectors - soft fill lights can do the job just fine, especially if you are just shooting a small area like a worktable or desk. If you can't afford lights, then at least turn on all the lights in the room and maybe aim a lamp at your subject.

Keep it steady, Jumpy, jiggling video looks awful. Buy a tripod and use it. It does not have to be fancy, just strong enough to hold your camera steady.

3. Make it sound good. Maybe even more important than making your video look good, is making it sound good. In many ways, the eye is a lot more tolerant of mistakes and quality lapses than the ear. When you are shooting your video, make sure you use a good microphone. It can be a tiny lavaliere mike attached via a cable to the camcorder, or a shotgun mike aimed at your talent. If the location is relatively RF noise free, you can use a wireless microphone to give your talent more flexibility and freedom to move around.

Unless you have no choice, don't use the internal mike embedded in your camcorder. In most instances, these tiny embedded mikes are of poor quality and don't offer the narrower audio pick up zone that your production requires. Also if possible, have someone listening in on headphones while your talent speaks. By monitoring the recorded audio, with their eyes shut, they will be able to pick up on verbal flubs as well as any crackles, noise, or audio dropouts. It is always better to catch audio problems during the recording session, rather than trying to fix them later.

If your talent and experts have a hard time remembering their lines, you might want to invest in a small portable teleprompter and that slips over your camcorder. Similar to the professional teleprompters used by newscasters, these are a lot less expensive.

4. KISS works here as well as in almost every other aspect of our lives. Keep the production simple and basic. You don't need fancy effects, flashy and colorful backgrounds, or complex productions in order to convey a simple and direct story. Actually, visual complexity is often a negative - for two reasons. One - the message may get lost. Instead of understanding why they should buy your product, the viewer may be wondering how you did create that great effect. Number two, the video compression process, necessary for broadcasting video over the web, is not tolerant of complexity. Lots of movement, overlapping images, complex and colorful backgrounds, all of these tax the video compression process, reducing video image

quality and adding noise to the final video file.

Keep it simple. A nice pastel background, maybe with your company's logo works fine. Keep the demo stage area clean and uncluttered. Just show what you have to show. Don't have unnecessary gear, components or signage in the frame. Use Close Ups. Video is all about close ups. If the video is all about how the product is assembled, stay tight on the product. If the video is all about the words coming out of your talent's mouth, stay with medium shot or a close up of them. We don't need to see the whole room.

Fancy video effects are cool but unneeded. To transition between scenes, stay with straight cuts and very quick dissolves.

If possible, keep your talent from moving. Rocking back and forth is disconcerting and adds the stress on the video compression process. If your talent has to move, have them move to and from the camera, in and out, not sideways.

5. Finally, make it easy to understand. You might want to superimpose a few lines of text to explain what your viewers are seeing. Remember, they might be watching your videos on small portable device like a smartphone so make the font size big and san serif. Bold and clean colors that contrast against whatever pastel background you are using.

Also, by using a customized video player you can add additional text and information, as well as preserving your web sites look and feel and branding identity. By using a custom player and professional business video hosting service like vzaar.com, you can also custom control for your player, hot links to various product and data sheet pages on your pages, as well as options to protect your video and to require the viewer to register before your video starts playing online.

Remember, online video markets your web site, your products and services. Not only is video hip and cool, video is becoming an essential to show that your company is an industry and thought leader. If you need help with your business's video needs, or have any questions about how online video can help your business grow and prosper, feel free to contact the vzaar.com team at http://www.vzaar.com [1] by calling 1-877-831-7110.

Also see How to Use Web Video to Promote Your Tech Business [2] at http://www.ecnmag.com/blog/2011/07/soapbox/Use-Web-Video-to-Promote-Your-Tech-Business.aspx [2]

About vzaar

vzaar is the leading online video hosting platform for online businesses of all sizes and market segments. The vzaar service provides a cost effective and highly

scalable video hosting service to thousands of companies worldwide. The easy to use online video management dashboard and a highly experienced sales support team allow businesses to publish video online fast. Founded in 2007, vzaar has its Headquarters in London, United Kingdom

Ian Snead leads vzaar's marketing strategy and product focus. The founding principle behind vzaar is that online video provides potential buyers with a rich product understanding far beyond what static photos can offer: www.vzaar.com

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