



INSIDE THE MAGIC BOX

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4 ADVANTAGES TO MAKING PRODUCT VIDEOS



Over 84% of internet users are watching online video. This trend indicates that people's preference for video can be a major contributor to increased sales, competitive advantages, greater visibility, and a consumer's bond with your brand. People research products they're looking to buy online (read in-depth on this subject here in Google's "Zero Moment of Truth") and each year, more and more people are making their purchases on the web, too (U.S. retail e-commerce sales are expected to reach \$262.3 billion in 2013. Nearly a quarter of that spending will happen in the last two months of the year.) These trends indicate that not only should you have more information about your offerings, but you should have product videos as well. Here are four advantages to having product videos on your website for this holiday season and beyond

1) Competitive Advantage

You need to assume that your competition is already using video (or at least still images) to bring the customer closer to the in-person buying experience. When your customers are looking for information about what they want to purchase, they will come to your site over your competitors' if you have more in-depth information or tools about that product for their research. Even customers who are looking for the cheapest price are researching first, and you need to establish yourself as a reliable source of information. Doing that will bring more people to your site, thus creating an opportunity for the sale. So what is your return on investment? Value for the customer, and a positive increase in perception of your brand; win-win.

2) Branding Advantage

In today's online landscape, there are now blogs and reviewers for every major product and service category, and many of them are posting online video reviews of newly released products (as well as product un-boxing videos, group discussions, etc.) and **90% of consumers say online reviews impact buying decisions**. Do you want reviewers defining your product for you, or would you rather have your own online video highlighting what you prefer to show about your product? Don't let others define your brand. Your product videos should be taken to the next level by adding some brand personality. And you also have the ability to use video to respond to questions and comments quickly and effectively and if you can be even a little creative it'll be an excellent and engaging customer service experience for your audience!

3) Traffic Advantage

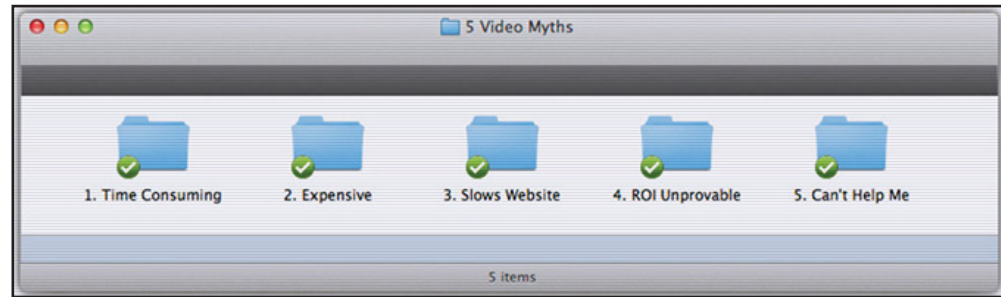
Search engines like video, which gives you an SEO advantage. As mentioned above, your customers are looking for information on your product, and if you have videos on your site, Google, et al. will take notice. We've established that your customers are looking for information on your product and the search engines aim to connect them to the best source of information. Using a strategy that incorporates simple video should be part of any penetration or growth strategy whether you sell online or not. Start slow, make a video that answers a question you hear a lot. Make it simple and clear, and then work your way up to online branding nirvana. One company that has seen tremendous benefit with this strategy is **Blendtec**. They started the "Will It Blend?" campaign, which entertained millions by simply blending everything under the sun. Nothing was off limits, including anything from smart phones to lawn ornaments, and posting the videos online to exhibit their product, entertain and grow their audience, directed more traffic to their site.

4) Sales Advantage

Having online product videos also provides a sales advantage. It is easier to sell people on the benefits, features, and uses of your product with video. Video can show more elements and variables about your product than still images. You can demonstrate its benefits, answer questions about scale, colors, size, usage, or any important aspects you want your customers to notice about your product. This leads to trust-building for your brand. Video equals better engagement, and better engagement typically leads to faster easier sales.

Do you have any videos for your products online now? Would you like to create some? We'd be more than happy to answer any questions you may have about it, so please **contact us** to learn more.

5 MYTHS ABOUT VIDEO



People seem hesitant to embrace videos for their marketing, yet they are more than willing to watch them. Below are 5 myths about video that I hear most frequently. I'm pleased to debunk these myths for you and hope it will inspire you to add more video to your strategic marketing plan.

1) Too Time-Consuming

For who? For what? This sounds more like hesitation than an effective argument. I would spelunk into Mammoth Cave, despite my fear of heights (okay, the dark) for a potential client meeting, but that's because I'm already making **videos** for my business. You invest in solutions that help you to sell more products and services. People like to receive messages via channels that excite them. So exactly how much time is too much time? If it gets you the attention you're looking for, do you think you'll be complaining then? Now get a smart phone, a quiet room, write a target-focused script, and explain what you do with energy. Then when you're ready to take your video to the next level, hire an **agency** to help you get there.

2) Too Expensive

You should always put quality into any communication, but that doesn't always translate into additional costs. The two most important things to remember to get the most out of your videos are preparation and self-criticism. While recently advising a friend's company on some internal training videos, I was shocked at how satisfied they were with such a useless video. The productions were well lit and in-focus, but they were boring and lifeless. The employees who were tasked with watching the video were not engaged. This is a waste of resources no business should abide. The goal of the video was to engage and transmit vital information to the employee and this goal was not being met. When this was pointed out to the manager in charge of the videos, the response was that there is something wrong with the quality of the new employees. The person in charge was consumed by his own ego instead of the critical problem for which they were hired. This reminds me of a saying popular in the military: "the beatings will continue until morale

improves.” The highest cost of video is the price you pay not having a goal-oriented plan.

3) **Slows Down Your Website**

This was true 10 years ago, but not anymore. Thanks to a process called transcoding, you can upload the original video one time and have it converted into various sizes. Visitors will get the right size of video sent automatically to their device. It's not magic, it's logic. The same logic that is evident when you observe the weather outside your window and then dressing accordingly. [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#) do this automatically, and video hosting companies like [Wistia](#) and [VidYard](#) are worth checking out too, for these features and more.

4) **Can't Prove Its ROI**

Can you recoup the money you spend on video? Video is a force to be reckoned with when it comes to generating useful metrics and data. Most videos sport their own analytics such as click rates and heat maps. These data collection methods can help to establish the effectiveness of your video marketing. Being able to see when your viewer has stopped watching is a huge advantage that our predecessors would envy. You cannot tell where the effectiveness of your white paper may have waned; you can only know that it was downloaded (I'm pro-whitepaper, but my enthusiasm has a shelf life, I usually watch videos immediately or not at all).

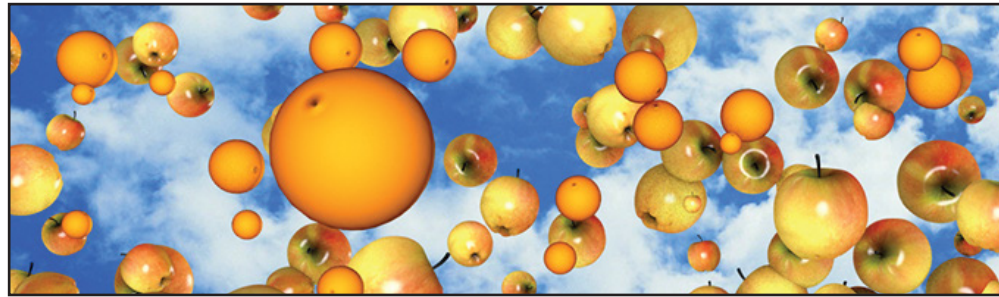
While there are some excellent opportunities the internet and modern technology will produce, currently there are no channels that combine engagement and measurable results like video. I like video as a companion. I think it stands alone fine, but its greatest use is in combination with other methods. Add it to an email campaign, an 'about us' page, or in addition to text to let the strengths of each tactic shine.

5) **It Doesn't Work For My Business**

So you have a boring business...hmm, are you sure your customers think so? There is always an angle that will create interest in somebody who would spend money on your product or service. How did you get into the business? How long has it been around? How has it changed? Will it continue to change? Will this change make it more expensive or cheaper? Somewhere in that company of yours there are characters with a story to tell. If you are honest and real in telling that story, viewers, and customers, will appreciate it.

Marketing with video isn't a fad. It's a proven, measurable way to improve your site's performance. If you've got more questions about video, leave me a comment, or [contact us](#) to talk about how you can add the power of video to your marketing plan.

4 TIPS FOR MAKING BETTER PRODUCT VIDEOS



I've filled a lot of online shopping carts in my day. But I've probably abandoned more than half of them without making a purchase. Somewhere between my initial excitement and the moment where I enter my credit card number, I get a sinking feeling in my gut, and start to ask some questions that are tough to answer. How big is it really? Is the color shown accurate? Is the construction of high quality? How does it all fit together? I suspect you (and your customers) may have had a similar experience, so I'm here to offer 4 simple tips for making more helpful product videos that should allay some of those fears.

1) Show The Size

Maybe you've got some text indicating the dimensions of your product. Or are those the dimensions of the product box? It is easy to be confused, and lots of people (like me) don't have an accurate mental tape measure. So make it easy for your users to quickly and clearly determine if your product is the right size. Include an everyday object next to your product for comparison. Let your viewer know how tall your models are. When the shopper is confident, a purchase is more likely.

2) Check Those Colors

I ordered a pair of green pants the other week. Trendy, I know. The photograph online showed them as a dusty lightish green. The color described by the seller? 'Green'. I pulled the trigger, despite already having some green pants, because the price was right, and these appeared to be lighter than my hunter green AGs I had purchased in a store. When they finally arrived and I tore open the package, I was disheartened to find not the dusty green of my dreams, but a shade so much darker as to be indistinguishable from the pants already hanging in the closet. I resolved to never order from that vendor in the future. This in spite of the fact that I'd had several satisfying purchases previously. My one bad experience (with color, specifically) has soured my entire relationship for an online retailer, and I'm likely not alone.



There are a lot of high-tech reasons your product's color may not be represented exactly on-screen. Daylight, lamp-light, fluorescents – these all show color differently. Make sure you indicate what kind of lighting your product is under and if you can, show your product under various light sources. Or juxtapose it with a common object – a can of soda would work well (they spend a lot of money making sure their packaging is consistent,) so viewers can compare colors or account for variations in their own screen.

3) Show It In Action

You don't need to commission an infomercial – but demonstrating your product in action can be a big help for shoppers. Is there a trick to assembling it? How do you access the battery? What does it sound like when it is running? Anticipate questions like these based on your own customers' feedback, and answer them up-front. If you're scared to show some aspect of operation to your customers, that's a bad sign. So fire it up, test it out, show alternate use cases, adaptations, hacks, and any other feature or function that sets your product apart.

4) Go Head-to-head

I've always tried to compare competing brands in a category when making my purchase decision. Some shopping sites allow me to compare product images and lists of functions head-to-head, but I believe there's nothing quite like a full-contact contest to settle the question. So put your product to the test against a competitor's (no need to identify them). Highlight what makes yours different, whether it's price, versatility, durability – don't be obsessed with making the competition look bad – be objective. Maybe a competitor's product is more durable – but perhaps their price point is too high. Consumers value authenticity and transparency, so keep your comparison legitimate.

Producing better product videos can make a big difference in your sales. But you'll never know until you try – so get to it. As always, if you need some help, we're here to [answer your questions](#) (or just do it for you.)