



How to connect with customers through video storytelling



This webinar, entitled *“Using video storytelling to connect with customers”* was held on December 1, 2016. Hosted by ITWC CIO Jim Love, the session examined why organizations should include video in their content strategies, and how to create videos that will stand out in the crowd. Expert advice was provided by James Roy, President of the video storytelling agency, Digital Reno.

Cutting through the Clutter

Video marketing influences buying decisions, but many companies say it’s a big challenge to create video that cuts through the clutter of online content.

“The sea of video content is growing at an astounding rate,” James Roy from Digital Reno told participants. Three hundred hours worth of video are pushed to YouTube every minute, he said, and, according to Cisco, video will account for 69 per cent of all consumer internet traffic by next year.

Roy also noted one study which found that 44 per cent of companies have created live video in the last year and 20 per cent are planning on doing do within the next year. Similarly, a poll during the webinar found that 45 per cent of companies said they had produced a video as part of their content strategy, while another 45 per cent said they are exploring the idea. Nine per cent said that a video strategy is not on their organization’s radar. None of the participants said that video is the most important piece of their content strategy.

Why your content strategy should include video

“Researchers say that one minute of video is worth 1.8 million words,” said Roy, adding that YouTube receives more than one billion unique visitors every month, exceeded only by Facebook. Despite the clutter, Roy said he believes that businesses have to get into the game.

Roy presented statistics that show that video is an effective way to connect with customers.

- Thirty-nine per cent of executives who viewed a video on a business web site called the vendor afterwards.
- Ninety per cent of users feel that a product video is helpful in decision making

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If a video is enjoyable, the purchase intent increases by 97 per cent and brand association jumps by 139 per cent.

Roy cautioned against rushing in and making poor quality videos. Videos do require some investment, he said, so it's tempting to cut corners. "However, if you don't do the video well enough, it could waste the investment, damage your brand and may give a competitor an edge," said Roy.

Video is about storytelling

"Ninety-two per cent of consumers want brands to tell a story," said Roy. "It's an inherent human need."

He said it's ironic that marketers often forget this and try to "reinvent the wheel." To assist those interested in video as a marketing vehicle, Roy presented a 10-point plan for creating professional quality videos that shine above the clutter. He also showed a number of videos during the webinar to illustrate key points.

His first point emphasized the need for strong planning. "There has to be a strong concept that can be described in one sentence," said Roy. "The more complicated the concept, the more difficult it will be to execute."

As part of the planning process, it's important to make sure the concept fits well with the company's marketing strategy, he said. Companies need to consider the goal of the video, the target audience and the call to action. As well, Roy said the "brand personality" will determine the overall approach, such as whether the video should be serious or funny.

Secondly, Roy said the video has to tell a story with a beginning, a middle and an end. This is how people naturally tell stories, said Roy and is one of the most important factors for a successful video. "Stories engage our brains differently and we're wired to tell them," he said, noting that stories make up 55 per cent of our conversations.

Roy stressed creativity as the third element in making a successful video. He suggested brainstorming ideas with a wide ranging group of people. "If the first idea is to interview an executive, you need to keep brainstorming."

Fourthly, Roy said a good video will engage the viewers' emotions. "Viewers can only remember limited numbers of facts, but we do remember when we feel something."

As a fifth point he said video producers should take risks as part of the storytelling. The best way to engage viewers is to entertain them while passing along a message. "Comedy wins hands-down every time."

Quality counts

The final points in Roy's plan to ensure the video is of the highest quality.

The video should be well written, preferably by an experienced writer. "It needs to be efficient in words, clever, and written in a natural way of speaking."

The best technical resources, such as a high quality camera, good lighting, and creative editing, are also essential. "When you see something that is really well done, it will stand out."

Video producers should use professional voiceovers, urged Roy. "It's more than just reading, it's lifting it off the page and engaging the listener."

A soundtrack with music and sound effects can also add a boost to the video. Roy noted that music is not that expensive, and can greatly enhance the content.

Finally, he said that the video must incorporate a clear call to action.

When it's done well, Roy said that video marketing provides a shortcut for delivering a message that people will remember.

About Digital Reno

Digital Reno is a storytelling agency that uses the power of brand journalism to create content to captivate customers and prospects - and deploys today's most effective targeting techniques to ensure it gets in front of them. Digital Reno's production teams create podcasts, white papers, articles, blogs, digital publications, videos, web sites and social media campaigns - essential parts of the content mix.

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