

cedar

**CEDAR
SMART
THINKING**

8 principles for better video content marketing

**Cedar
85 Strand
London
WC2R 0DW**

+44 (0)20 7550 8000
hello@cedarcom.co.uk
www.cedar.agency/CedarConsult





Cedar Smart Thinking

Cedar Communications © July 2015

Contents

4	Introduction
6	The 8 principles of video content marketing
8	Principle 1: Great content is born from one sentence
12	Principle 2: Take your audience to heart
16	Principle 3: Think long term
20	Principle 4: Be found to be seen
24	Principle 5: Video creation is story craft
28	Principle 6: Substance is nothing without style
32	Principle 7: It pays to pay attention to detail
36	Principle 8: Measure what matters
40	The next wave of video: Hot topics of the moment
44	Final word
45	Meet the team
46	Sources

Introduction

Why read this paper?

Video content marketing has officially exploded. According to YouTube, some 300 hours of video are uploaded to the platform every minute, while Facebook tells us that there are now four billion video views on the social network every day. By 2019, video will account for 80% of all internet traffic (source: *Cisco VNI visual networking index, May 2015*).

Video is a powerful tool for brands. It's a rich medium for communicating ideas and information in an engaging way in just a short timeframe. It's innately shareable, and can adapt easily across devices, particularly mobile. All this makes it one of the most valuable parts of a marketer's toolkit.

So, why is it that out of the top 5,000 channels on YouTube only 2% are owned by brands (source: *TouchStorm Video Index*)?

At the start of this year Cedar undertook a [UK-wide survey](#) to understand the attitudes and behaviours towards branded video.

Nearly three quarters of respondents agreed, and only 5% disagreed, that they would watch a useful and/or entertaining video on YouTube regardless of whether it was produced by a brand or not. This statistic went up to 82% for those who had watched branded content in the last three months. What's more, nearly 60% agreed, and only 8% disagreed, that producing video on subjects they care about is a good way for brands to connect with them.

The research shows that people are positive about engaging with entertaining video content originating from brands.

And yet, when asked whether they subscribed to any of the branded YouTube channels only 20% claimed that they did.

So why aren't more brands keeping audiences engaged? Right now, many brands just aren't doing video content very well.

The video media landscape is more sophisticated than ever, with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Vine revolutionising rich content discovery. The time has come for branded video to raise its game.

How can we help?

As one of the pioneers of content marketing, Cedar has 40 years of experience transforming brands into successful media owners. Last year alone we created over 300 videos for some of the world's biggest brands, growing audiences and deepening loyalty.

Our philosophy is simple. By encouraging brands to think less about product push, and more about customer-pull, we help them create compelling and entertaining video content strategies that earn an audience over the long term.

About this paper

Over the past few months we have brought together video industry leaders, commissioned our own original research, and analysed a raft of best practice case studies to understand what it is that makes a successful video content marketing strategy.

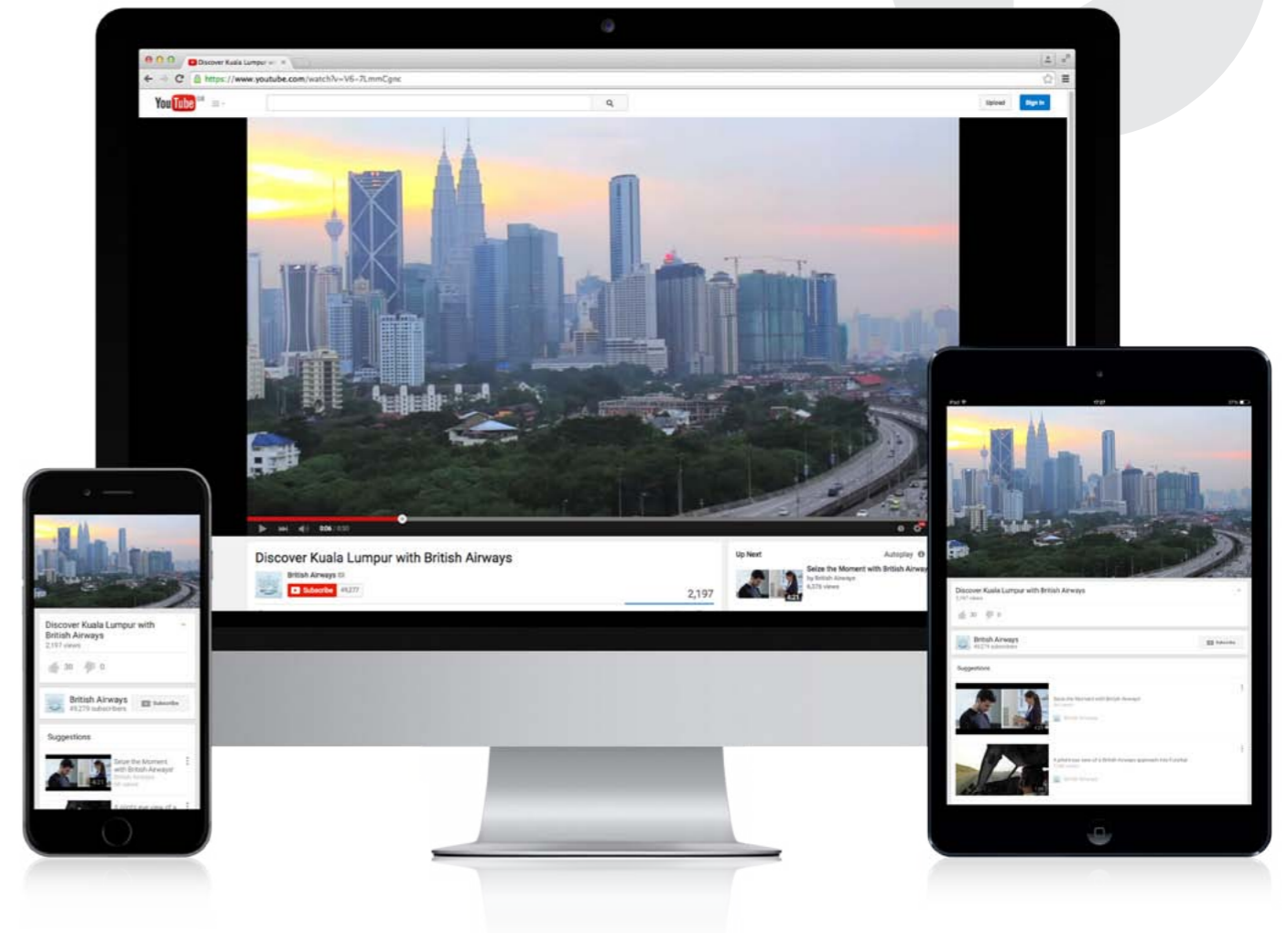
This paper shares the results of that work. It reveals eight principles of video content marketing, which together form the backbone of a successful brand video strategy. Our aim is to guide you through each step, so that together we are able to produce better, more successful content.

If there are any questions left unanswered, just get in touch.

The Cedar Team
hello@cedarcom.co.uk

cedar BIG IDEAS.
SMART CONTENT.
COMMERCIAL SUCCESS.

Video is emotive, innately sharable, and can adapt easily across devices, making it one of the most valuable parts of a marketer's toolkit



The 8 principles of video content marketing



Principle 1: Great content is born from one sentence

What do you want to achieve? Videos with no purpose are like cakes with no taste. They look great but what's the point. The purpose is the guiding principle that will influence every strategic decision you make in order to move your viewer from one stage in the customer journey to the next. Allow time to define this one sentence and the results will show.



Principle 2: Take your audience to heart

How do you create videos your customers will care about? As with all content strategies the art of engagement is in finding the common ground between brand and consumer that creates an authentic value exchange. Taking a customer-centric approach is essential to turn viewers into brand advocates.



Principle 3: Think long term

How do you plan to grow your audience? To keep viewers engaged, a variety of content should be produced and regularly released that supports every step in their customer journey. By attracting and retaining audiences this way, distribution strategies will be less reliant on paid channels and become self-propagating. Planning your content calendar like a broadcaster will build reach over the long term.



Principle 4: Be found to be seen

How will you ensure your content is found? With so many different video platforms now available, distribution plans can no longer be considered post-production. Audience behaviours, distribution channels and creative executions must be considered in equal weighting to ensure effective discovery and distribution of video content. Taking a distribution-led approach to content creation will ensure your videos are fit for purpose.



Principle 5: Video creation is story craft

How will your content work wonders? Anyone can make videos, but producing great content is an art. Powerful storytelling is the key to persuading your audience to take an action. Good content creates an emotional response that causes your audience to share, click-through, subscribe or even buy. Learning the basics of storytelling is good, but understanding the craft will take your video content to new levels.



Principle 6: There is no substance without style

What will make your content memorable? Building a story is the first part in the creative process. The style treatment will then bring the video to life, giving it the right personality. Developing a clear style for your brand can provide a distinctive advantage in how viewers perceive your content, helping them recognise your trademark touch.



Principle 7: It pays to pay attention to detail

How do you make sure your video content is not only found but also engages viewers? With YouTube now the second largest search engine in the world, it pays to optimise your videos for search. But there are several other key steps that must be taken to persuade viewers to watch your content, whether it sits on Facebook, Vine or Instagram, so that they go on to discover more.



Principle 8: Measure what matters

How will you assess the performance of your video content? Identifying a clear purpose at the start of your strategy will help define your KPIs. However, in the fast-developing world of video, deciding which metrics to use can be challenging. Understand how to track the way you're building deeper engagements over time to see the long-term ROI.



Great content is born from one sentence

Video content, like all content marketing, is only as powerful as the purpose behind it...

Content with purpose can truly 'move' an audience. It can stimulate them to think differently, feel inspired and act in a new way.

Conversely, ill thought through content that's without clearly defined objectives only serves to clog up Facebook, Vine and YouTube, languishing with double digit views.

Formulating a purpose isn't always easy, but it is essential for success.

How to formulate your purpose

To formulate a powerful purpose in one sentence, we identify three things through a model called **MOVE – TO – THROUGH**.

The purpose of this content is to **MOVE** [the audience] at [stage in purchase journey] **TO** [think/feel/do] **THROUGH** [top-line video strategy].

Creating this sentence means defining four things:

- 1. The audience**
Who is it for? Be as specific as possible.
- 2. Stage in purchase journey**
At what stage in the purchase journey are we targeting them?
- 3. Think/feel/do**
What do we want the audience to think/feel/do as a result of watching?
- 4. Top-line video strategy**
What is it that the video specifically needs to do to achieve this aim?

Purpose in practice

Here are just a couple of examples of purpose statements that use this model. A retail brand might say:

"The purpose of this video strategy is to move more 18-22 year olds who aren't aware of the brand to think positively about the brand, feel inspired and visit our online store through an entertaining video series relevant to their passions."

Or alternatively, a hotel brand might say:

"The purpose of this video strategy is to move first-time Chinese visitors to the UK who have booked a room with us to think we are helpful, feel more inspired and prepared for their trip, and book with us again through a video strategy that helps them explore the local area."

Spend time honing this sentence to give your video strategy a clear purpose, and results will follow. Not to mention it makes it much easier to measure success (for more on this, see **Principle 8: Measure what matters**).

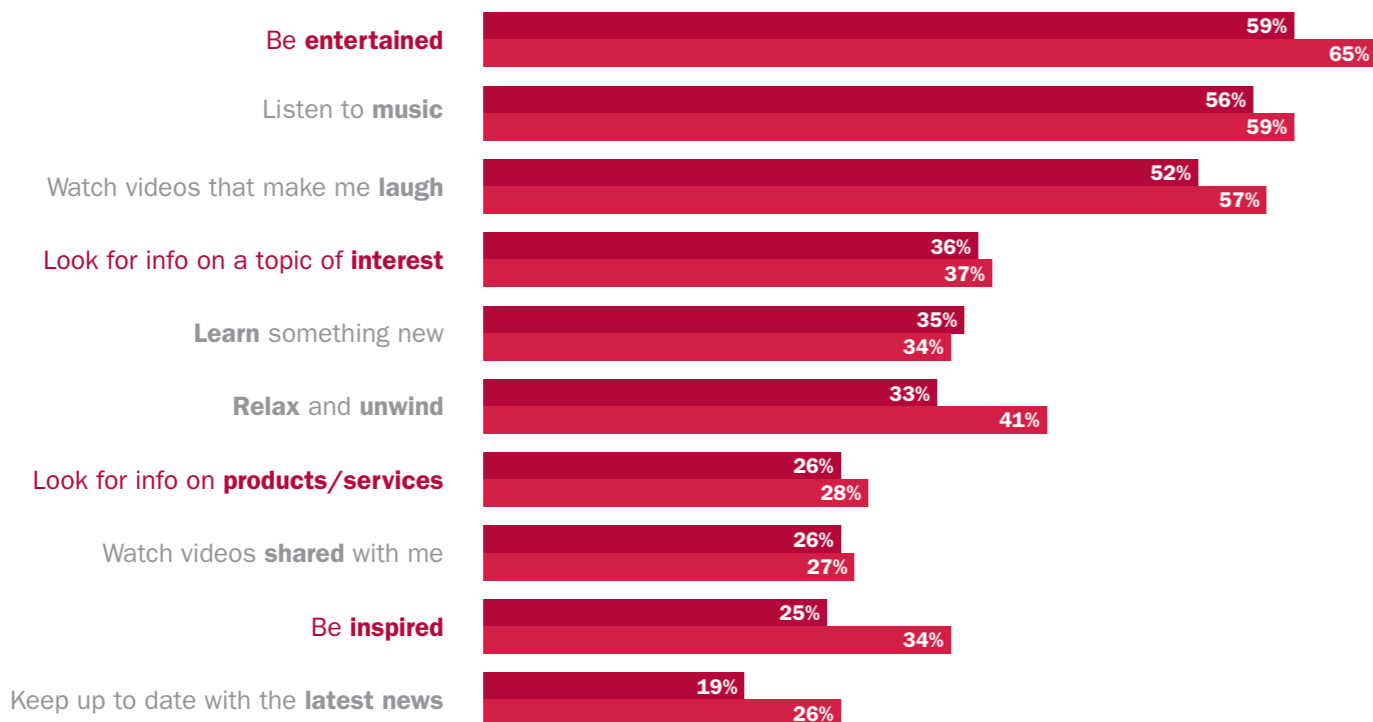
Customer-first: What's in it for the viewer?

The 'feel' part of think/feel/do is vital with video. To be a success, your video needs to make the viewer feel **entertained, inspired** or **informed**. If it doesn't deliver a rational or emotional benefit, then they certainly won't bother watching beyond the first few seconds.

Eliciting a strong emotional response is even more important now that social sharing is such a powerful distribution model – check out the social sharing approach of video adtech company Unruly below.

Top 10 reasons to use YouTube
(Source: YouTube Audience Refresh 2014)

■ All ages
■ 16-34 yrs



INDUSTRY VOICES: Unruly and social sharing

Eliciting a strong emotional response is one sure-fire way of helping to make your content shareable. As sharing is deemed the digital word of mouth, building advocacy and reach, it is no wonder that the art of creating shareable video content has become the preoccupation of many agencies. So how do you create video content that is share-worthy?

[Unruly's ShareRank Score Card](#) lists the key psychological responses and social motivations that affect shareability. According to their data, brands need to elicit a strong viewer response against at least one psychological trigger (happiness, guilt, shock...) and multiple social motivations (shared passions, self-expression...) to achieve a high share rate and have viral potential.

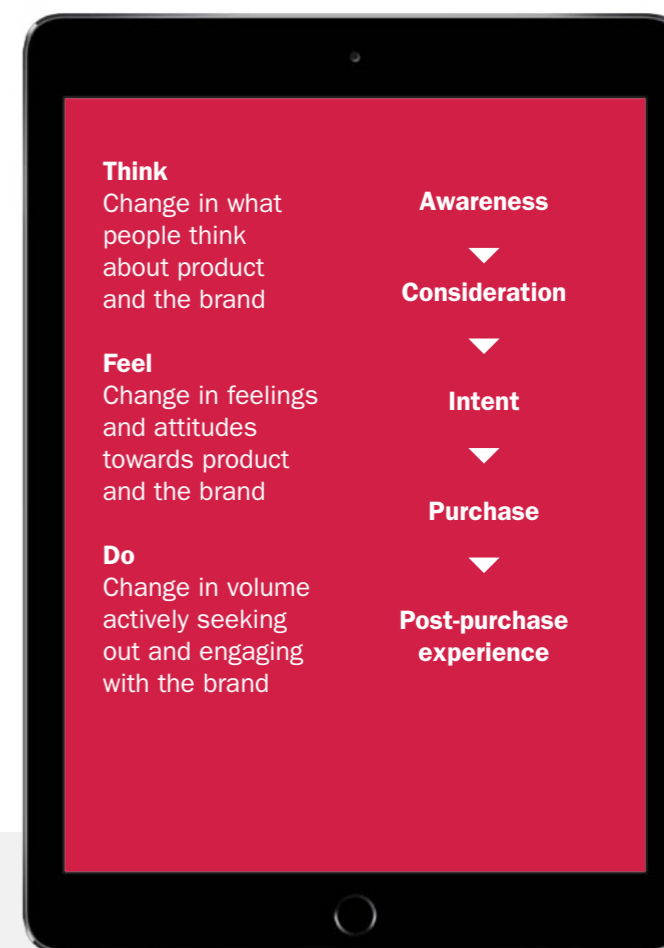
If shareability is an important KPI for your video content, then remember the following three things during the creative process:

1. **Make viewers feel something strongly**
2. **Give them reasons to share**
3. **Give them a clear way to share**



Cedar research

49% of UK YouTube users say brand-produced video has helped them make a decision about a technology purchase.



EDITORS' PICK: Cedar research on video and the purchase journey

Our latest research reveals that video content is used by customers at all stages of the customer purchase journey from awareness to experience.

But there are particularities within different sectors. In travel, video is used primarily for inspiration and when evaluating different destinations and activities. In fashion, video is also influential

at the final purchase stage. While in tech, video plays a big role in the post-purchase experience.

Knowing how people use video within your sector is therefore essential, not least because a video strategy that is designed to raise awareness (such as [Volvo's famous Van film](#)) will be very different to one designed to improve post-purchase experience (for example, the [Tesco how-to recipe videos](#)).

Be sure to read [our research paper](#) for more on video and the purchase journey. And to understand more about which video metrics are best suited for measuring different parts of the journey, see **Principle 8: Measure what matters.**



Take your audience to heart

What separates content marketing from traditional advertising is customer-centricity. It's not product push, but customer-pull. It is content with which your customers will want to engage freely.

This principle means that it's more important to talk about what your customers care about than what the brand cares about. Your content just won't cut through in the increasingly competitive content landscape otherwise. Which is why you need to take your audience to the heart of your strategy, know who they are as people, and create video content on topics that both matter to them, and in which they see your brand as a credible voice.

Who are your target audience?

In a post-demographic world, 360° audience insight has never been more important. We need to build a picture of our audiences based not only on age and gender, but also on what they love, how they behave, and how they perceive your brand. By knowing these things, you can be confident about choosing topics,

stories and themes for your video content that will really resonate, as well as ensuring they're a solid brand fit.

Research and customer data are the foundations here – you can no longer get by without them. It goes beyond building an audience pen portrait (although that's a great start). It's about developing an editor's instinct for who your viewer is, what really matters to them, and what you have the credibility to talk to them about.

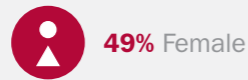
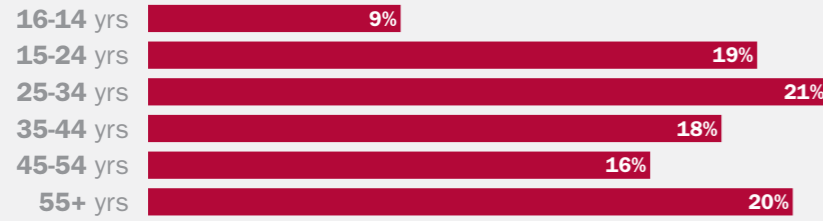


Cedar research

73% of UK YouTube users will watch a YouTube video if it looks entertaining or useful, regardless of whether it's from a brand or not.

Who is watching YouTube? YouTube audience composition

(Source: comScore Media Metrix, Desktop and Mobile, UK, January 2015)



EDITORS' PICK: Post-demographic video

Traditionally, YouTube has been the haunt of 16-34 years olds, which has led to a misplaced assumption that video is a young person's medium. But that is changing. Data from ComScore shows that the second biggest demographic group in the UK is over 55, while newer video innovations, such as Facebook's newsfeed autoplay, is exposing video content to a far wider demographic.

Choosing the right content territory for your audience

Choosing the right content territory for your video strategy will depend on two key things: what your customers are passionate about, and how they perceive your brand's authority within that territory. As with all content strategies the art of engagement is in finding that common ground for an authentic value exchange.

To find this sweet spot, we have a long-established framework that helps brands choose the right content territory for their audiences.

It works by listing potential content topics such as food, fashion, art, travel, music, film – and using research to map them against audience interest and brand authority. This is how you find rich territories for a successful brand video content strategy.



Cedar research

Nearly 60% of UK YouTube users claim that producing video on subjects they care about is a good way for brands to connect with them.

How you approach the different content topics will depend on which quadrant they sit in

Create

The strongest content strategies home in on a content territory your customers both care about and in which they see you as an authority. This is where you and your audience are a match. For a forward-thinking fashion brand, for example, a content territory to create in might be 'style trends', while for a high-end restaurant brand, a core territory could be 'haute cuisine'.

Invest/Avoid

Some content territories might just not be a good brand fit, so the brand will need to decide whether it's a territory they want to build credibility in, or avoid entirely. *Note – it is possible to build credibility through great video content. After all, Red Bull wasn't always an authority on extreme sports.*

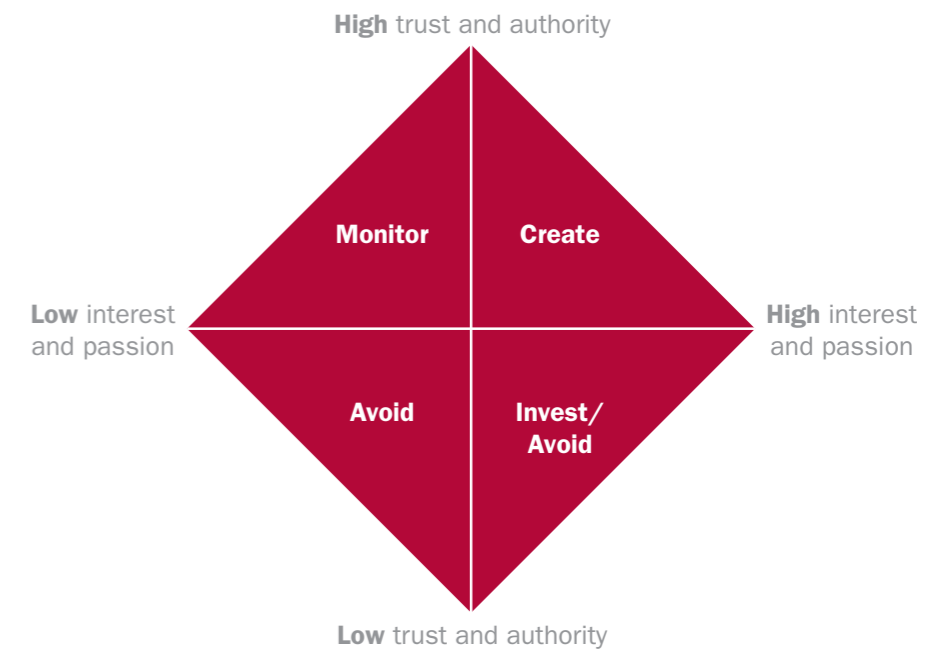
Monitor

There will be topics in which your brand has authority in, but that are less interesting to your audience. For instance, a mobile phone brand might have a strong authority in nano-technology, but unless this is of interest to their target audience, it is rarely a good starting point for video content. However, we don't need to write off these topics entirely. You never know when, and for whom, they might become of interest.

Avoid

It doesn't matter for your customers and you have no authority in it anyway? Avoid. It's just not worth it.

By homing in on a territory your customers actually care about, and in which they see you as a credible voice, you dramatically increase your chances of creating a strategy that will pull in audiences for the long haul.



Choosing the right content strategy for your audience



Think long term

One of the biggest video opportunities for brand marketers is to adopt a more strategic, longer-term approach to video, with clear programming formats and a planned content calendar, all designed to build an audience of engaged viewers over time.

Five years ago, few brands were creating video on the scale they are now. Five years later, few still have a clear video strategy, and instead create videos as one offs, usually in response to a distinct campaign need.

While this makes sense for campaigns, the negative results of focusing on 'producing a video' rather than directing a 'video strategy' are now clear to see.

Three negative effects of short term thinking:

- **Brand video channels lack a clear proposition and have become a dumping ground for disparate types of content.**
- **Only 20% of our survey respondents claimed to subscribe to a brand channel – they aren't attracting regular viewers.**
- **Branded video content relies on paid media support to secure views, rather than building a regular audience through organic means.**

Even high-profile brands such as Dove USA are playing out this trend. Despite achieving over 127.3 million channel views to date, almost half of those were paid for (source: Octoly)

and only a small fraction have resulted in subscriptions – their YouTube page has just 67,500 (as of June 2015) subscribers. Instead of working on building up a native audience on the platform, Dove will still have to pay for those views the next time.

Conversely, other kinds of content producers generate nearly all their views organically. Successful vloggers like [Zoella](#) and [Alfie Deyes](#), for instance, have built massive audiences over time through a strategy of creating daily content, using tried and tested formats, and ensuring every piece of video has a clear 'subscribe now' or 'like this page' call to action.

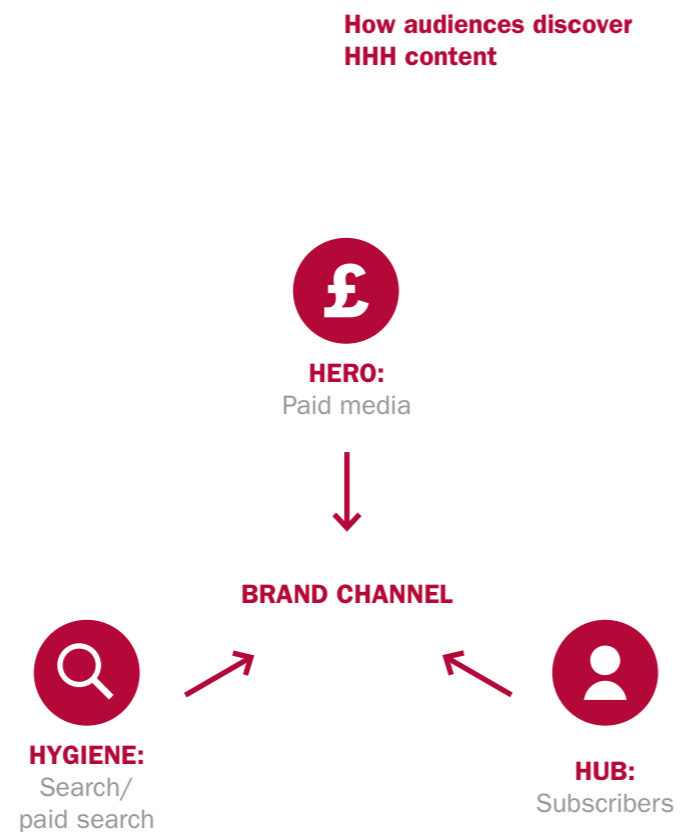
So how can brands build an audience and develop a more successful long-term video strategy?

Hero, hub and hygiene content

To help brands attract more loyal audiences and reduce their reliance on paid media we recommend adopting Google's Hero, Hub and Hygiene approach.

This strategic framework breaks content into three categories – each with a distinct purpose. The categories all play a different role in the consumer journey, helping to move the viewer from one step to the next.

While developed for YouTube, this approach applies for all video content strategies regardless of channel. It is simply a method to guide a more strategic approach to content, to build audience engagement over time.



Content role and purpose

Hero content

Highly shareable, entertaining and emotional storytelling that drives brand awareness. Paid media is placed behind these campaign videos to achieve mass reach, pulling current and new audiences into the brand's channel to discover other content.

Hub content

Regularly released content geared around customers' major passions to drive brand engagement and loyalty. Once pulled to the channel through hero and hygiene content, this quality serialised/episodic content encourages return viewing through likes, subscriptions or follows depending on your platform.

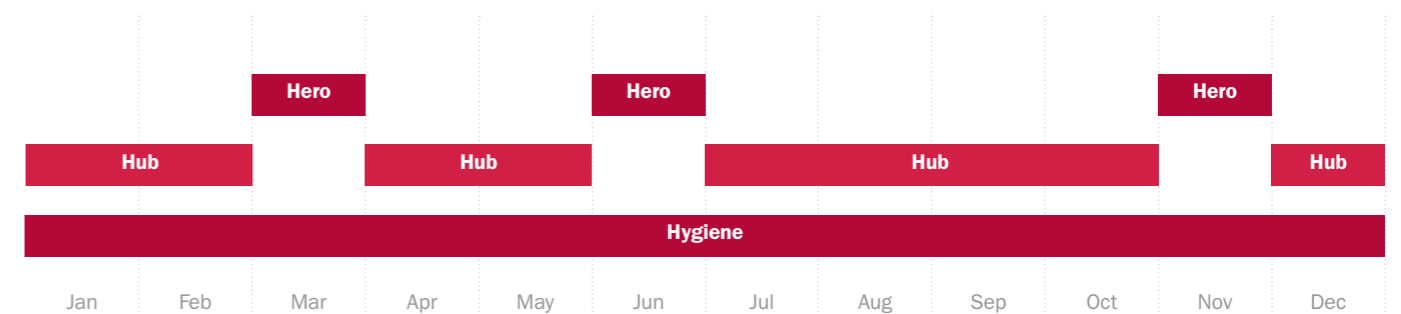
Hygiene content

Provides the best answers to consumer questions to drive loyalty and conversion. Optimised for search, these how-to style videos allow viewers to actively discover content on the brand channel that relates to a specific interest or need.

Plotting a HHH content calendar

Content calendars tell you what content to create, when and why. It shows you which big events are on the horizon and what your customers are interested in at different points in the year, as well as helping you plan and prioritise on an annual basis. It is your masterplan.

Don't have one? Then you don't have a long-term video content strategy. A plan is an essential element in any such video content strategy – building audiences organically through continually creating and releasing compelling and relevant content your audience cares about.



EDITORS' PICK: HHH in action

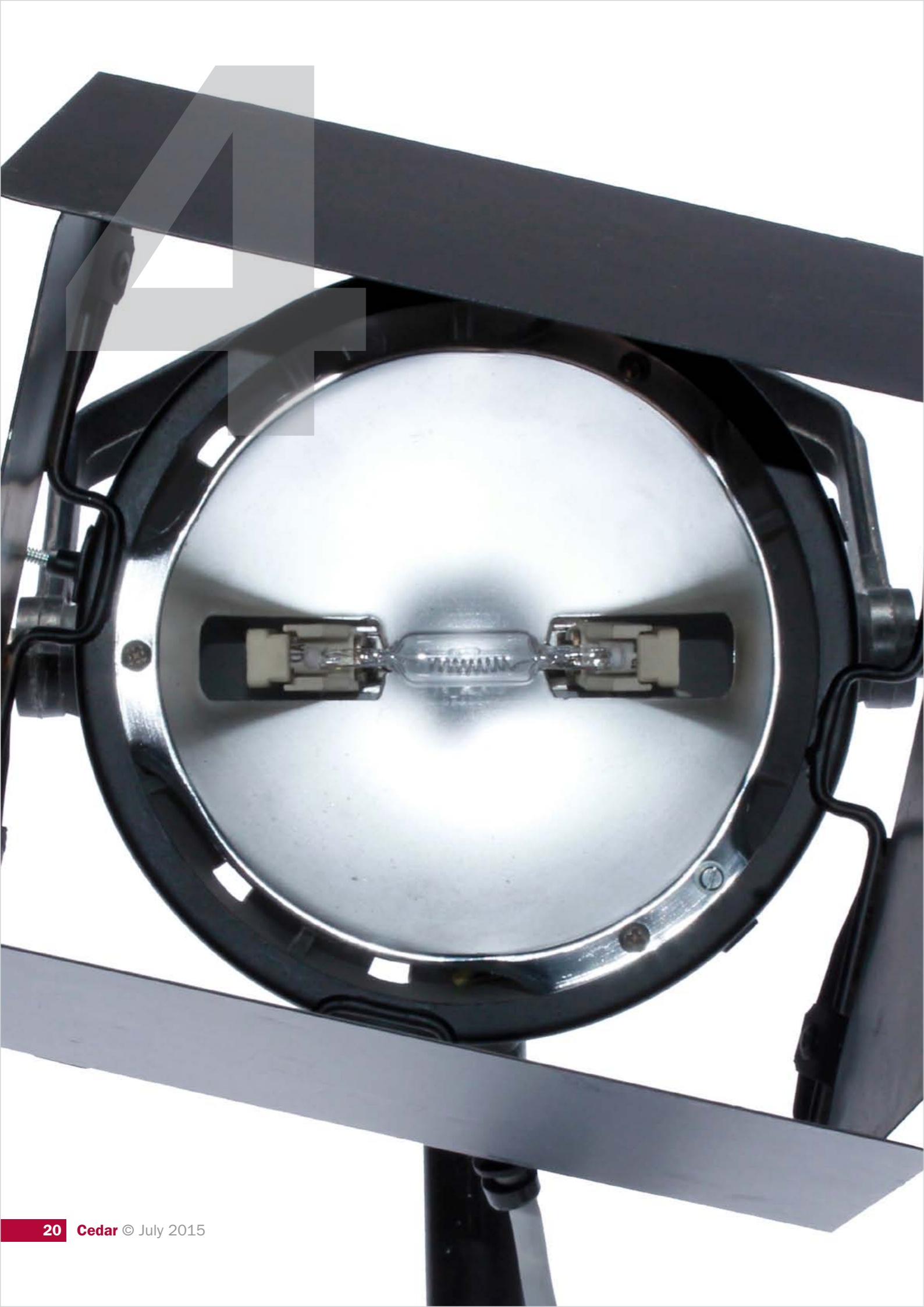
Our favourite video content brand right now has to be ASOS. It really knows its audience, and has invested in a long-term video content strategy to turn itself into a serious player in the fashion and beauty territory.

[ASOS's hygiene content](#) in particular is on-point, with plenty of how-to videos on everything from nail art to make-up tutorials. The hub content is well planned to build an audience over time, with episodic style trends released each season as well as around the big industry events such as fashion week, elevating its big set-piece seasonal look books into hero territory with a paid media buy.

And while its video content is primarily hosted on its YouTube channel, everything is integrated across its social platforms, with topical content for [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) – like first look footage of Kendall Jenner's latest red carpet look – becoming big audience draws.

Lately, we're seeing that fast in-stream video on Facebook and Twitter is taking on more ever-green video hub/search platforms like YouTube. So, for a brand such as ASOS being able to plan video across a range of platforms has never been more important.

Finally, ASOS content is organised well with consistent idents and regular recognisable formats – small details perhaps, but they all add up to a brand that really gets the video medium.



Be found to be seen

For many years distribution has been planned on the back of creative executions. But with the growth in both opportunities and challenges around content discoverability, we need to map out distribution first.

According to comScore, only 25% of video views come through YouTube or YouTube-embedded players. That means a huge 75% of video views are coming from the open web and it's trending even further in that direction. Facebook is of course leading the charge, achieving over four billion video views every day.

The proliferation began last year with the likes of Instagram, Twitter and Facebook evolving to host more video, not to mention the existing plethora of bespoke white label video solutions. Each offers their own unique opportunities for paid promotion; and each has different tech and content format requirements. In terms of length alone, YouTube and Facebook can handle virtually any length of video, while Instagram is on 15 seconds, Vine on 6 seconds, Snapchat on 10 seconds...

At Cedar we have therefore adopted a distribution-led approach, ensuring that every piece of content created is accompanied by a detailed launch and distribution strategy.

This means considering where content will sit and how you intend to reach your audience before finalising the creative. That way you can ensure the end result is fit for purpose in length, format and call to action.

A distribution plan is the connection and the conduit between your target audience and the content that you create for them.

Stuart Stubbs, Cedar Distribution strategy expert



1 2 3

1. Design a distribution ecosystem

To build out a launch strategy, you must first understand the whole distribution ecosystem, looking at both online and off, so that you're able to plan how video content can be seeded throughout it.

Opposite is a list of some of the available channels – although there are many more.

2. Choose the right blend of platforms and channels for your audience and objectives

Where is your audience? Where can your video live? Where will it be trailed and promoted? How can it be seeded in order to build interest and buzz? With more distribution options available to brands than ever before, the choice of blend

will depend on the audience, objectives and budget.

This might mean a launch strategy that consists of seeding content through a blend of owned and earned media to reach existing audiences, as well as dividing paid-media budgets to partner with key influencers and targeted publishers in order to engage new, relevant audiences.

Or it might mean something much simpler and more exclusive – such as regularly emailing a defined target audience with bespoke, episodic video content that only it is able to view.

The important thing is to choose a distribution strategy that will connect your target audience to the content in a way that will meet your objectives.

3. Plan a distribution calendar in advance but optimise in real time

Distribution isn't just about 'where'; it's also about 'when'. Timing can be everything, so a solid launch strategy should include a day-by-day play of how and where the video will be seeded in order to build buzz, perhaps starting with a trailer aimed at loyal customers, PR exclusives and then a blitz across social channels.

Meanwhile, you will be collecting information on how your customers are responding to the content on a daily and even hourly basis. Be prepared to be agile; the best video content distribution strategies are flexible and can be adapted depending on regular reporting and feedback.

Possible distribution channels

Paid

- Pre-roll
- Skippable pre-roll
- In-stream/in-article
- Video ads
- Video banners/display
- Content discovery networks
- Publisher partnerships
- Advertorial/native placements
- Affiliate video networks
- Out of home networks

Earned

- Influencers' social and digital channels: celebrities, vloggers, bloggers and trusted experts
- UGC/audience social content
- PR
- Organic syndication
- Partner channels: emails, social media, websites and apps

Owned

- Brand website: bespoke video hubs, homepages, article pages, landing pages, product pages
- Mobile/tablet: mobile optimised website, apps, magazines
- Email/CRM
- In-store digital signage/displays
- Brand's social channels: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, Vine, Instagram, LinkedIn
- Magazines/digital magazines
- QR codes
- Augmented reality Implementation

INDUSTRY VOICES: Stuart Stubbs on top-notch distribution

Our resident distribution strategy expert shares two of his favourite distribution approaches for tailoring your content to the channel and audience.

1. Publisher-led content partnerships: Partner with publishers who attract your target audiences to co-create content.

Example

[British Airways' Best Summer Ever](#) content campaign worked with vloggers Jimmy Hill and Emily Hartridge to create destination videos that were shared on their YouTube and Instagram feeds.

- **Benefits to the viewer:** Entertaining content from voices they like and trust in an environment they regularly visit.
- **Benefits to the publisher/vlogger:** Gains high-quality content and promotion on the brand's channels without the production costs of creating it by themselves.
- **Benefits to the brand:** Achieves high impact by delivering content directly to its target audience via a neutral and trusted publisher.

2. Self-discovered native formats: Formats that reach audiences on an opt-in basis.

Example

[Tesco Food's 'How to' videos](#) are shared across the brand's social feeds, as well as on their YouTube channel for subscribers and searchers alike.

- **Benefits to the viewer:** Content designed for the platform, which they can choose to watch when it's relevant to them rather than being interrupted and forced to watch as an ad.
- **Benefits to the brand:** Engages with the right audience. Those with no interest in the content will not view it, increasing the efficiency of any media spend.



VIDEO CREATION IS STORY CRAFT

If you want to hook people in, hold their attention and inspire action by the closing frame, you need to know how to create a strong narrative.

The fundamentals of good storycraft apply as much to a brand's video content as they do to a great Hollywood blockbuster or a New York Times' bestseller.

The 7 fundamentals of good storytelling:

1. Create an opener that will grab your audience's attention.
2. Plot out your narrative arc with a beginning, middle and end.
3. Map out the emotional journey you'll take your viewer on – the highs and the lows; the suspense and the revelations.
4. Craft a narrative thread that helps carry the viewer from one scene to the next.
5. Consider the characters who will connect best with the target audience.
6. End in a way that leaves viewers wanting more and then direct them to the next episode or more content.
7. Choose a style and treatment that evokes the right mood.

These choices around narrative arc, character and treatment will all depend on the objectives of the particular piece of content, taking into consideration who it's for and where it's going to be hosted.

While there is no 'one size fits all' story, there is a toolkit of techniques that lends itself to branded video content that sits within the Hero, Hub and Hygiene categories (see **Principle 3**).

Three foolproof narratives for branded video content

The surprise

These stories are structured around the before, during and after a surprise moment and the principle applies to pretty much every Red Bull or GoPro video – focused on an incredible human feat.

But surprise videos don't have to just be about amazement and awe. Surprise moments can also be about unexpected, real life emotional responses such as in the Tesco Mum of the Year film featured below.

Thanks to Unruly's research showcasing how strong emotion and exhilaration are the biggest drivers of sharing, the surprise moment has become a commonly used technique for brands.

But be cautious. There is a danger that audiences start to suffer from 'exhilaration fatigue'. West Jet's Christmas 2013 campaign where it surprised its passengers with gifts was incredibly successful, but the many copycats who followed have left the format overused. Brands should take stock of this and remember to surprise and delight in original ways.

[The surprise story: watch the Tesco Mum of the Year Awards film](#)

The how-to

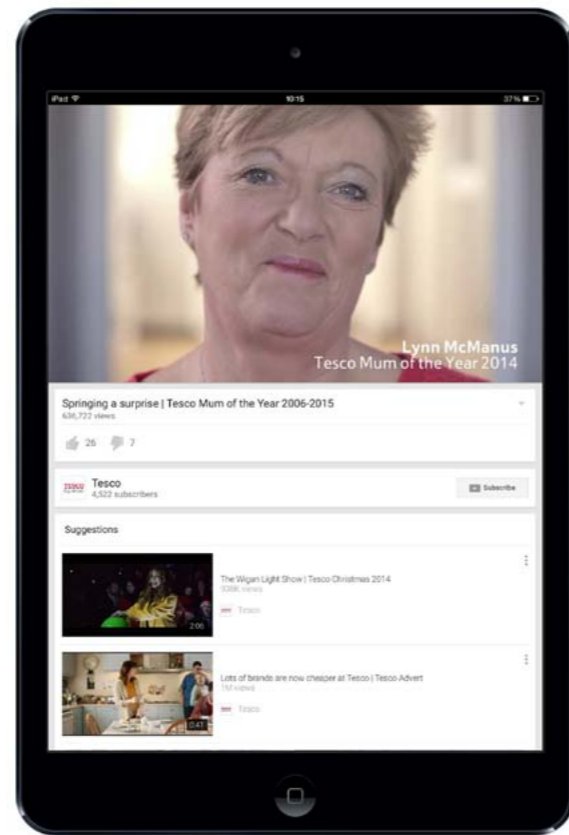
The how-to is a much-loved format for guidance content such as recipe videos and make-up tips. Usually structured in linear, process order, this approach should leave the viewer feeling more confident in taking a particular course of action – whether that's helping people with quick tips for [cleaning your barbeque](#) or mastering new cooking techniques like [how to make courgetti without a spiraliser](#).

Although less likely to be shared because of its targeted nature, the how-to is highly searchable. The key is therefore to leverage your understanding of the target audience to home in on a genuine pain point, creating something of real use.

The series link

Series link narratives usually take a standard set of interview questions, and repeat it in different settings to create a set of videos on the same theme. The questions are designed to explore a topic, usually combining topic expertise (like fashion or film) with personal insights from the interviewee. [Vogue's 73 questions series](#) is a great example of this, as is ['Meet the Makers'](#) from Mr Porter.

One of the great things about this kind of hub approach is that once you have captured an audience, you can easily direct them to the next video in the series, thereby holding their attention and building a deeper level of engagement. It's your hub content that helps you earn an audience over the longer term.



Cedar research

Nearly 50% of UK YouTube brand subscribers say they subscribed because of the quality of content they saw.

EDITORS' PICK:

Tesco Mum of the Year – a surprise hero story

Brief

Create and activate a video content strategy that would raise awareness of the Tesco Mum of the Year Awards in the 10th year of the event.

Objectives

To engage at least 750,000 people to reach the same viewing figures that were achieved in 2014 when the awards were shown on Channel 5.

Hero activation

Cedar leveraged the wealth of emotive stories about ordinary women who do extraordinary things for others which lies at the heart of the Awards. The storyboard and script we produced showed the impact of the awards by asking five

people to tell us about how their lives had been changed by charity work done by Mums of the Year from the past decade. They would all address the camera with the statement: 'Without You I...' before being surprised by the mum who had made a positive difference to them.

The 'Without You I...' mechanic lent itself to a social media campaign that would inspire people to get involved and share the video. We created a suite of three films to satisfy multiple customer journeys; a three-minute hero, a 30-second version for YouTube pre-roll out, and a 90-second behind-the-scenes video.

The result?

There were 8.6m views of the 30-second and three-minute films across all platforms and 40% of viewers carried out a positive action (a click-through, like or share) as a result of watching the film.

Viewer feedback was also positive with comments such as: 'It was a very inspiring film and raises my opinion of Tesco' and 'The video is really moving and I would now love to know more about Tesco Mum of the Year'.



Substance is nothing without style

Building a narrative arc is just the first step in the creative process. A great story can easily be mishandled by the finishing effects and it's the attention to detail which makes it something special.

That's why we have adopted the three Ps framework (Performers, Perspective, Palette) to develop a 'personality' for the branded content we create.



The 3 Ps framework

Performers

Your performers are ambassadors for your brand and should therefore also display the personality traits of your business.

Here are three performer types that will help you tell your story:

The knowing insider: common in informative content. These are trusted experts used to communicate knowledge and build credibility and trust. Our research suggests that the 18-34 cohort have a higher propensity (42%) to think that hiring a celebrity vlogger is a good way for brands to lend themselves credibility in videos.

The human like me: common in emotional content. These are usually real people with real-life stories to which the customer can relate.

The super human: common in entertaining content. These are people with an amazing skill, such as athletes or artists, who are used to inspire an audience to keep dreaming big.

When using performers, there are two ways in which it can go wrong... either by using performers who have no resonance with your brand or by using actors who lack authenticity. Choose from celebrities, employees, experts and real-life customers, taking care to select performers who not only lend credibility to your story but also help create an emotional connection.

Perspective

The choice of which perspective to approach from can be made only when you are clear about the message you wish to convey; the emotions you want your audience to feel, and the action you want the audience to take.

First person: the audience is the camera. The phenomenal success of GoPro has made this approach more common. It can be used to fuel adrenaline, a technique put to good use by Red Bull.

Second person: the audience is the subject. This technique establishes eye contact with the audience and is therefore the most intimate perspective. It is often used in advertising and more recently Vlogging.

Third person: the audience is the observer. The audience watches the action unfold. It doesn't feel as intimate, but if the performer is talking just slightly off camera, it can still feel inclusive. This approach is often used for the knowing insider persona.

Palette

The chosen palette will have a huge bearing on the impact of the video and the mood you want to create. This is the icing on the cake that will give it the quality stamp of approval.

Colour palette: Judicious use of a colour palette within video can create and cement awareness of your brand with your audience. Barclays used a cool palette in films to promote its [Digital Eagles](#). The blue tones and the grading reflects its brand identity and the blue of its logo.

Grading: Lighting will always be important, but much can be altered in post-production grading. This process can change the audience's perception of what it's seeing and provoke a beneficial emotional response. [The House on Pine Street](#) is a great example of how grading can make a piece of film feel 'safe' or 'spooky'.

Audio palette: Human beings are hugely receptive to sound. An effective soundbed will reinforce the narrative arc of your video and can be used to provoke certain emotions in your audience at specific points. A carefully selected music track or sound effect can successfully set the mood and pace. But be careful, a badly selected one can be distracting and inappropriate.

Cedar research

34% of UK YouTube users think that hiring a celebrity vlogger (e.g. Zoella) is a good way for brands to lend themselves credibility in YouTube videos... But 25% disagree.

Substance is nothing without style. In the crowded world of video content, rising above the crowd has never been more important. Video content is an art form and should be treated as such to get the very best impact.



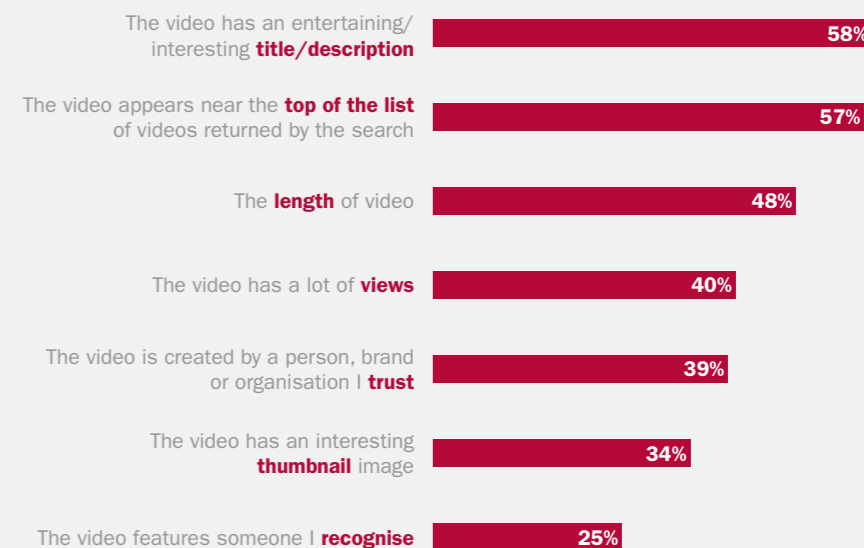


It pays to pay attention to detail

With so much content choice on every channel, audiences need extra convincing to actually watch the branded content they discover. Paying attention to the details will persuade them to take that final step.

EDITORS' PICK: Cedar Research

The most important factors when considering whether to watch a YouTube video from the search results (net ranked in top 3):



Video optimisation checklist

To help your video content to be served and viewed, here's an essential checklist for dealing with the details.



Compelling content from start to end

With YouTube now becoming the second largest search engine in the world (source: *ComScore*), it pays to invest in compelling content as watch time is the biggest factor in determining where your video lands in the YouTube search rankings.

Top titles

Titles must be honest, exciting, emotive and enticing. If the content is part of a series, add an episode number. Use key words first and branding second to help push your video up the search rankings.



Hard working descriptions

- Only the first sentence appears in search results and/or above the fold on the video page.
- Follow a consistent naming convention/structure for all content.
- Link to your channel/ other content and have a description of what your channel contains.
- Add subscribe link.
- Link to interesting chapters in the film with time deeplinks.
- List music/artist/song titles.



Clear calls to action

Drive onwards journeys from content: to purchase, sign up, subscribe, download, additional content, etc.



Engaging endboards

On completion of the content allow the viewer to find more related content.

Release cycle

Ensure that engaged viewers are told when new content will be released.



Thoughtful thumbnails

'Click-to-play' (CTP) thumbnails must accurately depict content, as well as excite and drive the user to initiate play with a CTP icon.

8



Measure what matters

When it comes to evaluating video content, it's easy to be seduced by the big view numbers. But establishing the real impact of your video content strategy means digging a bit deeper.

From the outset, we have said that video strategy should always deliver on a purpose – moving people along the purchase funnel by eliciting an emotional and even a behavioural response.

As a result, measuring impact should be focused on those metrics that evaluate the level of fulfilment on our original purpose – moving our audience to think/feel/do something. This means active engagements are therefore as important, if not more so, as a measure than reach.

EDITORS' PICK: What is the true value of a view?

Across different platforms, the definition of a view can mean very different things. On YouTube views clock up once the viewer watches/clicks to play a film, while on Facebook a view registers after only 3 seconds of autoplay.

Meanwhile, views can be bought reasonably easily. Many of the biggest brand videos have hit the millions not because of organic views, sharing and engagement, but because of a very large paid-media buy.

If moving people from unawareness to awareness is your objective, then genuine views (30 seconds+) are as valuable as television ratings.

But if you want to achieve something more, particularly in an online world where there is a much greater opportunity for engagement and action off the back of your video, then measuring success by view count is just part of the picture.

A guide to video metrics

Here are some examples of video metrics. It must be noted that no single metric should be used in isolation to measure success. True measurement uses multiple metrics to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of video.

Types of Video Content Objectives*			
	Awareness	Engagement	Response (e.g. Conversion, Loyalty, Advocacy)
Metrics of success	Views (organic & paid views)	Comments, likes, retweets etc...	Share rate
	Shares	Click through rate (or CTR)	Growth in subscribers/ followers/fans
	Brand salience (see Editors' Pick)	Average viewing times per viewer	Comments, likes, retweets etc...

**The objectives of your content should be as specific as possible. However, in order to assemble this best-practice guide, we have bucketed the metrics into 'types of objectives'.*

EDITORS' PICK: Top measurement tip

YouTube: Google's new Brand Lift metric uses survey and search data collected from those who were exposed to your video to measure brand awareness, recall and uplift in brand interest through online mentions. This is a complimentary service (as long as you've put paid promotion behind your video), but be warned – Brand Lift has to be set up before your video goes live; it can't be done retrospectively!

Emotional response: Beyond the hard metrics

Hard data gives us an indication of behaviour, but does not explain the impact on attitudes or perceptions at the heart of why your video performed as it did. And understanding the 'why' is key to improving our content.

So how do we evaluate emotional response? Focus groups and testimonials provide methods of capturing those deep-seated considerations underlying our reactions to content. However, what if a viewer didn't watch the full video? With so much content available to consume, viewers are continuously making snap judgements on the view or share worthiness of video within the first five seconds of play. This is where direct response research can play a vital role.

Facial coding, for instance, can capture the audience's immediate reaction and reveal the key emotion driving whether a link is clicked, subscribe ticked, comment made or nothing at all.

Using a mix of hard data, direct responses and research is key to analysing and refining successful video content. Measurement is not the end, but should be seen as a key part of the iterative strategic process to optimise video on the fly.

Redefining marketing ROI

There is no silver bullet for measuring the ROI of content marketing – doing so rests on going back to your specific MOVE – TO – THROUGH purpose, and measuring if the strategy has achieved its goal.

Over the longer term, however, the ROI on content should be measured on the extent to which the content deepens the brand/consumer connection. It should ultimately deliver long-term consumer loyalty. It's a long game, which means when it comes to measuring ROI, we need to take a long view.

An engaged consumer will actively seek out and share the brand content, rather than brands having to pay to find them. What the brand generates therefore as a successful media owner is a captive, targeted audience of receptive consumers, providing the most impactful and cost-effective communication channels for delivering its core messages.

And this is why so many brands have moved from the push advertising approach to the pull of content.

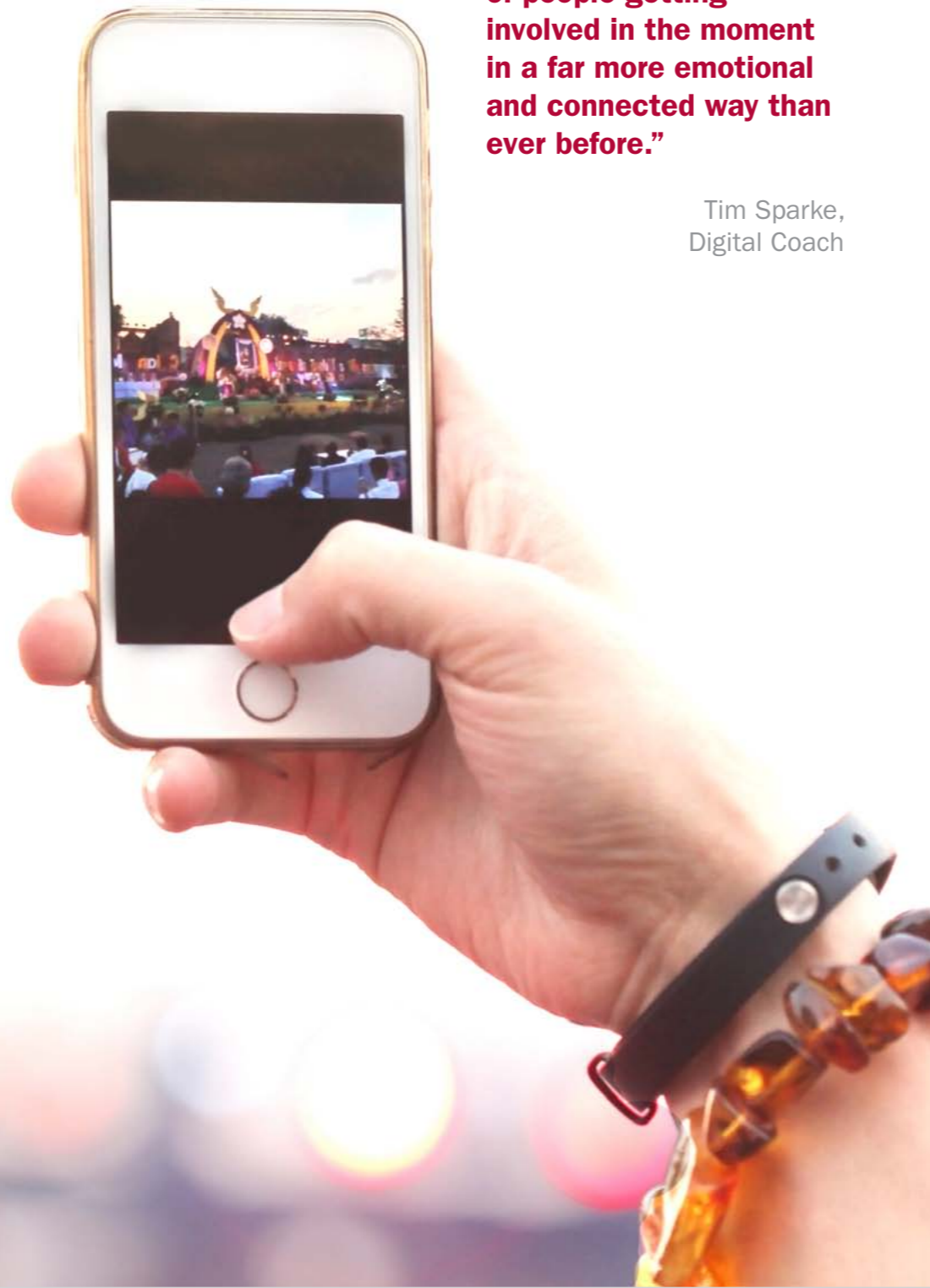
Video done right and well is a highly effective means of building engagement. So while it's important to measure the individual impact it creates, its ROI should be viewed in terms of the way in which it helps to support the wider brand strategy.

The next wave of video

With digital platforms developing new video functionality every day, we looked at the latest trends shaping video content marketing in 2015.

“What we have is a trend for shared live experiences in video, for mass participation, of people getting involved in the moment in a far more emotional and connected way than ever before.”

Tim Sparke,
Digital Coach



EDITORS' PICK: Interactive Video

Entertainment has never really been a passive medium. It's only in the TV-age that we've become used to passively 'watching' entertainment rather than getting involved ourselves.

But that's all changing, as gaming and video converge to deliver a deeper engagement through audience participation.

The car industry is leading the way here.

Skoda's [Fight For Attention](#) uses eye tracking to monitor which car in its video is holding your gaze, for an immersive, exciting experience that demands to be shared.

Honda's [The Other Side](#) video charts two stories with the same character, where the viewer can instantly switch between the two just by pressing the R key.

While for [Infiniti cars](#), the team behind the *Blair Witch Project* designed a story the viewer could influence by telephoning a number and speaking instructions into audio recognition software.

But it's not just a 2D video world anymore. With virtual reality (VR), viewers are actively determining the plot of the story with the nod or shake of the head. The latest VR experiences are capturing live experience in 360°, taking the viewer right into the heart of a live event, like VR Video's coverage of the [Eric Garner protests](#). Look down, and you see the helicopters. Look down, you see the protesters. A very different experience to watching news unfold in boring 2D.

We wonder what the car industry will do with that...

INDUSTRY VOICES: Tim Sparke on live experience broadcasting

Our technology guru shares his predictions for the future of online video.

When looking to the future, we should all obsess less over technologies and more on emerging human behaviours to spot where the next big thing will come from.

And video is no exception.

What interests me is the way in which people are increasingly seeking to share live moments online; trying to re-humanise digital interactions to bring people closer together in real time.

And so what we are seeing in video is a rise in platforms that deliver live experiences.

[Snapchat Stories](#) are doing well because they get this. They understand that for the user it's about sharing the video now, not creating an impression that can be viewed later.

Then there's [Meerkat](#). This app lets you stream live video to your Twitter followers, allowing them to connect into the conversation and ask

questions to build a participatory video experience.

Another similar interactive app is [Periscope](#), which has just been bought by Twitter.

So what we have is a trend for shared live experiences in video, for mass participation, of people getting involved in the moment in a far more emotional and connected way than ever before.

For brands, this opens up opportunities to act as broadcasters and leverage the power of a shared experience to connect directly and interact with their audiences.

**EDITORS' PICK:
Personalised video**

The power of video enhanced by data-led personalisation... a formidable combination. Shareable and emotive, this kind of video makes the customer the star of the show, using them to help deliver the core message, a much more powerful voice than the brand's.

Where we have seen this format work particularly well is in the charity sector. Asking for donations is always difficult, so not-for-profit fundraising-website brands, such as Virgin Money Giving (VMG) and Just Giving, have looked to overcome this by giving each of their London 2015 marathon runners the opportunity to make a real impact with their own creative and shareable video appeals.

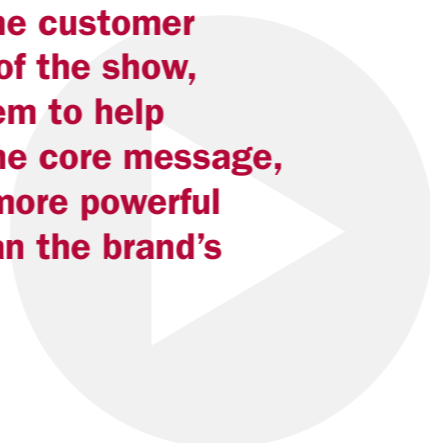
VMG and comedian, actor, writer and presenter, Stephen Fry partnered to create a [humorous video](#) describing the many hardships that the marathon runner in question would face. There is a clear call to action at the end, but even that is funny with Stephen Fry acknowledging people's hesitancy with a frustrated plea to 'seriously just donate!'.

Personalised video is about delivering the most relevant, effective and useful video to individuals at exactly the right time. Two days after the marathon, when a colleague's legs were still in agony, he received a personalised montage film from Just Giving, summarising his achievements. Recognising that many of his friends will have already donated, the CTA was not directly to donate, but to 'help Robin by sharing' to reach those who had yet to show their support.

When considering that including a video in an email can increase click through rates by some 200-300% (source: *Forrester*), then the possibilities for personalised video are enormous.

In future, we expect to see more and more personalised video content as brands realise the power of taking a customer-centric approach to content.

Personalised video makes the customer the star of the show, using them to help deliver the core message, a much more powerful voice than the brand's



**EDITORS' PICK:
YouTube Vs Facebook**

The battleground to become the Number 1 video-hosting platform is hotting up. But which team should you be on? As the two giants continue to update their services and algorithms there really is no right or wrong answer. Your approach should simply be guided by where your audience is and the objectives of the content. We have summarised the strengths and drawbacks of each platform here to help you with your content planning.

Content discovery:

YouTube is a search engine. Users go to the channel with the sole intent of looking for video and once there discover more. This means brands can optimise discoverability through SEO. **Facebook** on the other hand is a video source. Rather than users

choosing what they want to see, the platform curates the content for them, sending relevant video directly to their newsfeed where they are already browsing. And with its new targeting capabilities this can be valuable for brands. Unlike **YouTube**, however, users may scroll past it on their newsfeed and so content creative has to be far more impactful. Think **YouTube** for SEO and **Facebook** for targeting.

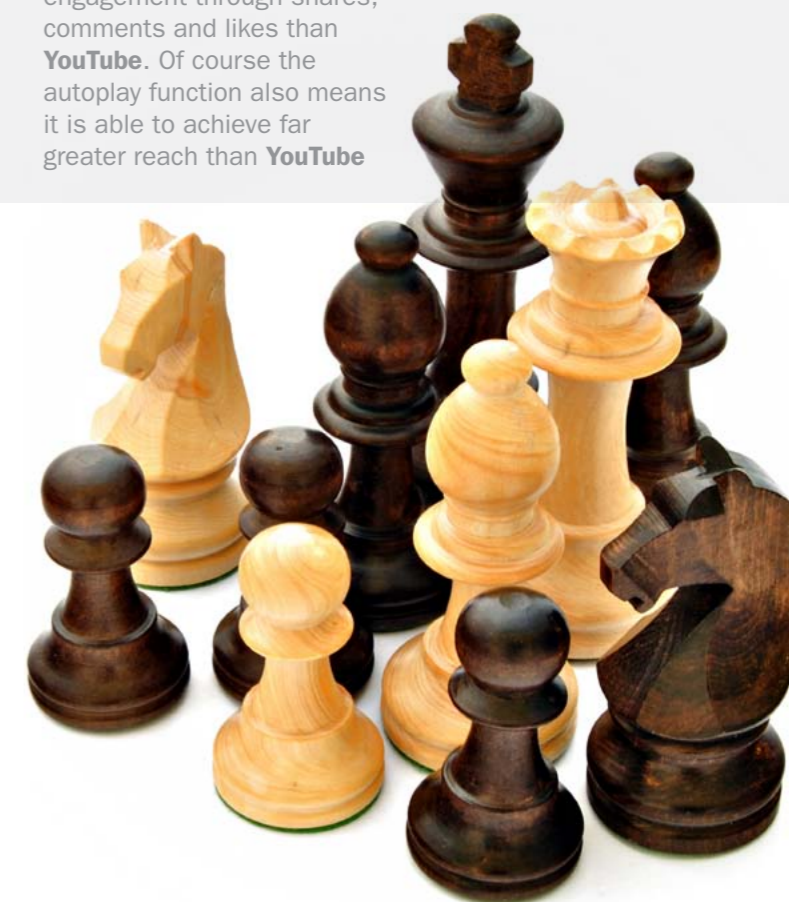
Content Distribution:

YouTube has built out an ecosystem of application partners distributing its creators' content. **YouTube** apps are available on nearly any mobile device and through Apple TV and Amazon Fire. Whilst not a media outlet; **Facebook** is social. Video on this platform achieves far more engagement through shares, comments and likes than **YouTube**. Of course the autoplay function also means it is able to achieve far greater reach than **YouTube**

opt-in, but the impact of forced viewing is up for debate. Think **YouTube** for media distribution and **Facebook** for social sharing.

Content Quality:

YouTube was made for video and so its community of creators, vlogger stars, filmmakers and TV channels gives the platform better video prestige than **Facebook's** more generalist following. However, **Facebook** are ramping things up in a bid to attract more content creators, working hard to improve analytics, revenue splits and promotion tools for help in building its media brands and to get its audiences on side. We say watch this space... **Facebook** has just live streamed Season 5 of *Game of Thrones*.



Final word

“An ad hoc approach to video is no longer financially acceptable. The time has come to be ambitious, with a video strategy that engages customers and creates brand advocates not just for today, but for years to come.”



Clare Broadbent
CEO Cedar

Meet the white paper team

Editors: Helen Garrood, Kim Willis

Contributors: Sarah Edwards, Helen Garrood, Ann Hartland, Talia Eagle Merrett, Alex Palmer, Chris Rayment, Kim Willis

Research: Alex Palmer, Chris Rayment

Industry contributors: Tim Sparke, Stuart Stubbs

Editor-in-chief: Maureen Rice

Digital director: Robin Barnes

Design: Will Helsby

PR & Comms: Samantha Duff

Cedar Consult

To discuss video content marketing with us further, contact the Cedar Consult team:



Hannah Saunders
Business Development Director
hannah.saunders@cedarcom.co.uk
+44 (0)20 7550 8003



Joseph Costello
Senior Business Development Executive
joseph.costello@cedarcom.co.uk
+44 (0)20 7550 8136



Helen Garrood
Business Development Strategist
helen.garrood@cedarcom.co.uk
+44 (0)20 7550 8043

Sources

Introduction

- [YouTube Statistics](#), YouTube Press Room, YouTube (accessed May 2015)
- [Q1 2015 Community Highlights](#), Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook, April 2015
- [Cisco Visual Networking Index: Forecast and Methodology 2013–2018](#), Cisco VNI 2015
- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015
- [TouchStorm Video Index](#), October 2013

Principle 1: Great content is born from one sentence

- [YouTube Audience Refresh UK: Top 10 Reasons for using YouTube](#), Google, August 2014
- [Unruly, Social Video Lab: The Science of Sharing](#), An Unruly Whitepaper, July 2013
- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015

Principle 2: Take your audience to heart

- [comScore MediaMetrix, Desktop and Mobile, UK](#), January 2015
- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015

Principle 3: Think long term

- [Octoly, Viral Video Success doesn't mean YouTube Success](#), July 2014

Principle 4: Be found to be seen

- [comScore Video Metrix](#), January 2014

Principle 5: Video creation is storycraft

- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015

Principle 6: Substance is nothing without style

- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015

Principle 7: It pays to pay attention to the details

- [comScore UK, MediaMetrix MultiPlatform](#), June 2014
- [Cedar Research: Populus survey of British YouTube users](#), April 2015

Editors' Pick: Personalised video

- [How Personalized Video Works And What It Can Do For You](#), Forrester, September 2014

cedar

+44 (0)20 7550 8000
hello@cedarcom.co.uk

www.cedar.agency/CedarConsult

