



## SUMMARY

Video content is a key component of any marketing strategy. Even as other mediums and formats became less effective in 2020, video became even more effective. There's little sign of that slowing down. [HubSpot talked about some things video marketers should know in 2021](#), using data from Wyzowl Research. They said, "more than 99% of current video marketers told us they'll continue using video in 2021, and 96% plan to increase or maintain their spend" - **96% plan to increase or maintain their spend**. You don't do that unless it's working.

[HubSpot goes on to say](#), "What's more, from the people who told us they don't currently use video, 69% told us they expect to start in 2021. (This is 10% higher than last year's figure of 59%.)"

In fact, I probably don't need to tell you any of this, as it's likely you're in one of those groups. Oberlo put together a [great list of video marketing stats](#). "According to Optinmonster, video marketers get **66% more qualified leads per year** (Optinmonster, 2019). Optinmonster also concluded that video marketers achieve a **54% increase in brand awareness**. Additionally, **93% of marketers say they've landed a new customer thanks to a video on social media**."

So let's get into it. How can YOU **level up** your in-house video marketing?

## ONE

### **Seek out non-traditional sources for talent and crew.**

I've cast voice over for television in less than half an hour for less than fifty dollars! The client ended up preferring my voice over the casted talent, which made it even simpler. If I had put out a casting call and done it "the way you're supposed to," I would have added several days to turnaround and spent hundreds more on voice talent!

Save the timeline and budget for the details that make the most difference. Videographers, grips, boom operators, voice over artists, storyboard artists, and many more people can be sourced from unique places like Fiverr.com, universities, local clubs, family members, etc. -- There's no shame in using these sources and connections. You get the work you need faster and at a lower cost, and often you're giving recognition and opportunity to lesser known artists who deserve a shot.



I needed a last-minute replacement for a crew member in San Francisco when [capturing an event for Betts](#). It turned out a friend of a friend I had met on the east coast actually lived on the west coast. He filled in and did a great job, and it wasn't nearly as complicated or costly as it could have been.

## TWO

**Use stock footage in a compelling way, and if you can't do that \*DON'T\* use it.**

Few things make video marketing look less intentional and more artificial than poorly selected and edited stock footage. Yet at the same time, few things stretch a budget further than carefully selected and edited stock footage.

Let's say you're capturing your own footage. At the end of the day, you're going to have a lot of footage with similar lighting conditions, similar colors, a lot of the same people, and most importantly... a lot of those shots will have context and cohesion because of OTHER shots. This is where almost all stock footage selection goes wrong. It's bad enough when the shots chosen have entirely different environments, lighting, or color. What really sinks a stock edit is the lack of context and cohesion like shots establishing the environment before moving to a close up or multiple angles of the same content in case you need to show similar shots throughout the edit.

With the right experience and knowledge, you can seek out the right footage on traditional stock footage websites and more modern ones. Or, you can take advantage of (what I would say is) the cutting edge approach to stock footage at [Artgrid.io](#) (*using that link gives you 2 extra months free*). Artgrid offers sequences, not individual shots. You begin your search as you would anywhere else, but each shot you find is attached to a collection of anywhere from a handful of shots to 100+ extra shots featuring the same scene, actors, lighting, etc. [Here's a recent video I completed for Chorus using stock from Artgrid.](#) We had just over one week to put this together and stock was the best option given the tight turnaround and the desire to make this project feel more personal and human.

## THREE

**Get \*fewer\* opinions. Ask better questions.**

When I work with clients, I try to ask their thoughts on only the things I need to and in very specific ways. This isn't because I don't like my clients' feedback. It's because when I'm looking for feedback, I'm not looking for personal preferences. I'm looking for identity-aware, strategic analysis that helps shape the content into something brand focused and effective. Only certain



people can offer that type of feedback, and even they have areas where personal preferences take over.

The reason you should get fewer opinions is that too many opinions dilute the value of any one opinion. You end up somewhere in the middle of several ideas or you swing one way on a few and another way on the others, giving you a disjointed end result. When people hear things like, “what do you think about this?” or, “how could we make this better?” they answer these questions from the same perspective with which they might answer, “what do you think of this outfit?” or “what’s the best action movie?”

Offering more targeted questions can be helpful, for example: “How can we better incorporate our value prop into this script specifically through the lens of use cases in our messaging doc?” Questions like that eliminate a lot of the room for personal preference. However, even then, you need to ask yourself, *who should really be answering these questions?* It isn’t meant to be disrespectful to those you might omit. It’s respectful to everyone’s time and expertise.

Especially in my position, I **need** to know who to ask and what to ask. I don’t want to burden someone with questions that they’re not even supposed to be equipped to answer. More specific questions and fewer people asked can lead to more focused projects that move faster and produce better results.

## FOUR

### **Be aware of what else your ‘audience’ is watching.**

In previous decades, content from business to consumer (B2C) brands and especially business to business (B2B) brands were held to different standards. There was a more obvious divide between the production capabilities of hollywood studios, television shows, made for tv movies, online shorts, and so on.

Now, with advances in technology, a rise in available talent, and most importantly **unprecedented access to some of the highest quality and most artistically impressive content consumers have ever witnessed**, viewers expect more from brand content. Now, consumers and prospects view content from the likes of Netflix and HBO from their phone and in their browser... and that’s exactly where your content lives.

Imagine your next ad playing amongst the trailers before the theatrical release of a recent Star Wars, The Big Short, Inception, or even many “lesser” films. Would it be in the appropriate



company? This is happening, and you can bet the teams behind those ads are taking that into careful consideration. I recognize your content isn't living next to cinematic content in the same way pre-movie ads are, but that's closer to the truth than the idea that your content and that content are in different worlds. Your consumers and prospects, especially as younger people age into your demographic, are going to expect a certain level of quality because that's what they'll be seeing 90% of the time.

There are particular exceptions here depending on the content and what it may be emulating or the trend it may be following, but your core content cannot be half-done. Pursuing content that fits in reasonably well with mainstream expectations can mean bigger budgets, and it is certainly not the only factor in the success of video marketing. This is one tip in a list of ten, and your exact strategy will depend on your exact needs.

## FIVE

### **Use video more. Use video consistently.**

I know you're probably thinking, *I already do!* No. More.

[Wordstream says](#), "Marketers who use video grow revenue 49% faster than non-video users." and, "Marketers who incorporate video into their campaigns experience 34% higher conversion rates." - There's no clear definition here, but one can assume that the people they're talking about aren't putting out just 2 or 3 videos a year.

You need recurring topics, video podcasts, and interview series. Give your audience something to expect. Become a part of their lives by offering consistent value. These aren't new ideas. If you're in content marketing and many other areas, you're familiar with the concept of demonstrating value to draw people in. This is often used in one-off ways. An interview with experts here. A demo video there. But consistent content that consistently offers value will (can you guess?) **consistently** bring people into your funnel, into a conversation, or into your other content.

This is especially true with companies that have multiple value propositions, varied use cases, and complicated customer needs. Death Wish Coffee Company celebrated and entertained their customers throughout the course of a year with several mini-documentaries in their campaign, [#GRINDITOUT](#).



## **SIX**

### **Use analytics.**

This might seem like an obvious one to, well, about half of you. To my surprise, [Marketing Evolution](#) said, “As of 2020, the use of analytics in marketing was 52.7 percent.” - Perhaps it’s because, as they go on to say, “Marketing teams struggle to demonstrate how these investments in analytics contribute to organizational success.”

I can’t speak to the state or quality of analytics and related tools when it comes to every marketing channel, but I can speak to video, and video analytics are full of valuable data. Every piece of content released offers an opportunity to gain insight into how your audience engages with video content, their attention span, where a particular project may have lost interest, what content is most shareable, and much more.

## **SEVEN**

### **Pick better music.**

You may think that corporate, bell-filled jingle does just fine because, “who really cares?” But you’d be wrong. Going back to point number four, remember what your audience is engaging with regularly.

Knowing where to look is half the battle. Certain stock sites are overrun with stereotypical, cheesy, and just-good-enough music. Websites like [Artist](#) offer a different approach to stock music while keeping a low-cost subscription model. The selection is made up of unique music offerings from a variety of artists, often exclusive to the platform. The majority of the music has a more organic feel than that of *traditional* stock music.

If the budget is there, a place like [Music Bed](#) is a surefire way to nail your track selection. True gems live here like artists with name recognition and songs with maximum popularity potential. Not sure how to *actually* pick better music? Let’s talk. It’s an odd specialty of mine to match projects to music. The track I selected for [this Chorus project](#) has gone on to become a keystone track in much of their product-oriented video.



### EIGHT

#### **Add sound effects and foley, *carefully*.**

This area is a hotbed of potential mistakes, so be careful. Sound effects can just about ruin an otherwise fine project if it isn't incorporated thoughtfully. *Accent* is the word I would use to describe SFX and foley's place in video.

In B2C instances, especially for food & beverage industries, SFX may be critical, but it should still be an accent. [Here](#) you can watch a television commercial I produced that uses sound design to offer impact and immersion into the different environments.

The best way to add any form of sound design to your project is by hiring a dedicated foley artist, but there's a wide range of budgets and you may be surprised at [the results Daniel Schiffer was able to get](#) with just a few hundred dollars.

### NINE

#### **Include a clear and purposeful call to action by telling stories.**

Too often, videos that look great lack clear purpose. Some brands can get away with this, like Coca-Cola. They don't need a call to action. They just need to remind you that they exist (in clever ways) so the next time you're thirsty for some sugary goodness, their name comes to mind.

What I'm talking about goes deeper than a call to action (CTA) though. A video that looks good + a bumper with "visit our website to learn more" is not purposeful. Purposeful means weaving the call to action into the entire video through tone and pacing.

One of the most substantial ways to do this is with narrative (aka story). It isn't reserved for entertainment and super bowl commercials. Story should be used whenever possible. It's the most powerful communicative tool we have. Revealing your product to customers in a compelling story makes the CTA at the end feel more like a call to arms than an attempt to get your sale.

Sure, to those that don't connect with the story, it may just look like an attempt to get your sale. But you'd be surprised at how many people connect with stories. Research from [Headstream](#) says, "55 percent of consumers who love a brand's story are willing to make a purchase." This article from [Forbes](#) talks about "why storytelling should be a priority for marketers." Don't



underestimate your audience. They're looking for video content that looks good, yes, but they want it to be backed by strong storytelling.

This is a concept that is too large for this document alone, but just keep in mind that when I say narrative, story, and storytelling, I don't mean love stories and action scenes and dramatic character development. You can have compelling stories with simple characters, everyday circumstances, and thoughtful progression all within [thirty seconds](#).

## TEN

### **Choose the right video partner.**

No matter the scale of the marketing team, it's likely you outsource some component of video marketing. This can be frustrating for many marketers. Vendors often fail to understand brand needs, standards, and messaging.

What should take a couple weeks ends up taking months on end because you end up micromanaging the contractor who's doing your motion graphics, trying to get the right font sizes, colors, and spacing throughout the whole video. Or you end up doing most of the work when your script developer doesn't do a good job speaking in the brand's tone of voice.

Choosing the right video partner means looking for more than just good portfolio work and the right price. They need to demonstrate an expertise that goes beyond video and shows they can invest in brands in order to understand them and effectively communicate on their behalf.

Choosing the right video partner is about good communication. You need to make your needs and expectations clear, and do your best to ensure they have a solid understanding of your goals, messaging, and brand standards.

I could be that video partner! Let's talk about how I can accelerate and amplify your video marketing efforts, enabling you to scale output and quality, while simultaneously reinforcing brand identity and giving you the freedom to better leverage in-house strengths.