

Video Content Becoming a Standard Promotional Tool by Dave Willems

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If YouTube has become one of your favorite sites or top sources for daily entertainment, you're not alone. Having celebrated just its fifth anniversary in May, this online sensation recently announced that it gets **more than 2 billion views per day**.

Considering this number has doubled since just last October, it's pretty remarkable to see the kind of effect YouTube – and video in general – is having on our everyday world. While people are tuning in for everything from silly animal clips to the latest concert footage, as a recent article by the online consulting entity MarketingProfs reports, many are relying on video for something much more important. They're using it to make purchasing decisions.

The article explains what makes video-based customer testimonials so influential and why this format works so well on Web sites. It's definitely worth a read (www.marketingprofs.com), but for those of you who prefer your information in smaller bits, here are the main points:

Benefits of Customer Testimonial Videos

- **Credible** – Consumers don't want to feel targeted by ads that are obviously trying to sell them something. In most cases, they'd rather see a real person telling a real story based on a real experience.
- **Findable** – With the explosion of traffic on the Web these days, buyers are looking for anything and everything online. These types of videos give your products and services extra ammunition. Properly naming files so they're easy to find by search engines is important as is organizing all the media within your site to maximize visitor usability.
- **Actionable** – Once you've grabbed your customers' attention and efficiently communicated the story (remember, the shorter the message, the better), make it easy for them to take action by including links to learn more or initiate contact.

Clicking on video content continues to be one of the top actions being taken by consumers via the Internet because it's extremely easy. That opens up tremendous opportunity for businesses, nonprofits and other marketers. It won't be long and having the capability to create quick and effective video content to upload about your organization – and to use in multiple ways – will no longer be a special effort but a standard one.

Seeing this trend intensify dramatically over the past couple of years – as evidenced by those amazing YouTube numbers – is the main reason many non-traditional video entities are positioning themselves to create effective video content. This ranges from organizations like *The Post-Crescent*, marketing firms like ours and others here in the Valley, and even small retailers. The latter are finding Web video to be an extremely cost-effective option even with very tight budgets.

Think of it in even simpler terms perhaps. Hasn't it always been more compelling to show and tell, as opposed to being limited to just the latter? Quick, cost-effective video content makes show and tell easier than ever, which means the YouTube numbers will only continue to swell.

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