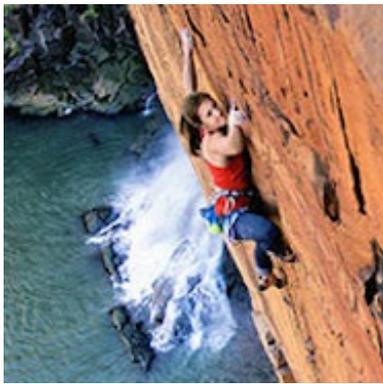


INTERNET

Storytelling success requires the right partners

November 11, 2014



Marmot's Paige climbing during its Lead Now tour

By SARAH JONES

NEW YORK - With the proliferation of digital video and changes to social media platforms, it can be difficult for a brand to stand out in the landscape, according to panelists in the “Brands and Master Storytellers” session at ad:tech New York.

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Luxury Daily

About 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute, competing for attention. Putting content in front of an audience that will be interested in the particular story, whether through distribution partnerships or influencers, is the key to forging an authentic connection with consumers.

"Find a partner that is a natural compliment to your brand or effort," said Jared Anderson, director of Jarden Media Ventures at [Jarden](#). "Your partnership should feel organic, not pushed."

Showing personality

L’Oreal Luxe took a detour from its usual method of acquiring existing brands with the launch of its in-house label for YouTube vlogger Michelle Phan. Ms. Phan had an existing fan base of about 7 million followers, mostly in the millennial age group.

The tricky part of the launch, said Terry Rieser, partner and COO of **Tag Creative**, which worked on the campaign, was making a luxury brand out of a girl with a Web cam in her bedroom. First, the agency had to introduce Ms. Phan to the executives at L'Oreal, for which it tapped into the power of storytelling, crafting a short video that explains her and her fans.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/iN67A_MF3jQ](https://www.youtube.com/embed/iN67A_MF3jQ)

Welcome to em michelle phan!

To maintain authenticity, Ms. Phan and her community were involved in every step, including product development.

Em michelle phan is sold exclusively online, both through its own channels and through a distribution deal with Amazon. Tag Creative made about 70 pieces of content tied to the em michelle phan line, and used Web ads and an email campaign to spread awareness, and uses little besides content and social to market the line.

The collection has so far exceeded expectations.

Choosing the right built-in audience is important for brands when telling stories.

Jarden's Mr. Anderson focused on this when sharing activewear brand Marmot's outdoor adventure video series.

Marmot sent its athlete Paige Claassen on a world tour, in which she climbs mountains in global locales and raises money for causes. The marketers filmed long-form video content, which they then turned into two unique Web series for Fitness and Men's Journal magazines.

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Lead Now - Tour Promo

To raise awareness, Marmot used the magazines, blogger outreach and meet-and-tweet events. Ninety percent of the views of the series were organic.

Mr. Anderson's advice to brands is to think about distribution at the beginning and to not be afraid to stagger your content.

Douglas Dicconson, co-founder and managing partner of **Cinelan**, a digital film studio, found out the hard way that distribution is key. He conducted research with the Pew Charitable Trust, which found that three minutes is the optimal length for digital video.

At launch in 2010, the production company was planning to make three minute films with documentary filmmakers, which it was sure would be picked up by media outlets, taking care of their distribution. The company almost shuttered, but bounced back with a new partnership with General Electric.

GE Focus Forward films tell stories of people working to make the world a better place, drawing a comparison to the company. These premiere at film festivals globally, and are

also available to stream on GE's Web site.



GE Focus Forward film "Emergency Doc"

Cinelan is currently working with Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen on “We the Economy,” a series of three minute films by filmmakers.

The agency, recognizing the need for mobile distribution, works with Jun Group to reach consumers within applications.

Mitchell Reichgut, CEO of **Jun Group**, explained that Facebook has changed its sharing algorithms, making it so brands have to buy promoted posts to get noticed in a news feed. Also, 86 percent of mobile usage is in-app, rather than within the mobile Web.

Jun Group creates technology to integrate brands’ videos into an app, for instance, allowing consumers to skip ahead in a game by watching a video.

“We the Economy” is expected to reach 1 million views within its first 30 days, and boasts a 92.4 completion rate.

Short and sweet

Being concise and breaking up content can help ensure that consumers sit through the whole story.

For instance, Italian jeweler Bulgari is continuing to spread awareness for its ongoing 130th anniversary celebrations with a video series exploring different aspects of its identity.

Housed on YouTube, rather than a microsite or its primary Web page, Bulgari has shared six videos ranging from its passion for leather goods to the grand opening of a boutique

in Rome. Given affluent consumers' rushed schedules, Bulgari relied on short films rather than a full-length documentary to share its message but not bog down its enthusiasts with heavy content ([see story](#)).

"If you're sitting in a bar and someone starts talking to you and three minutes later, they're still talking, and you don't know them very well, you're gone," Cinelan's Mr. Dicconson said. "You're either checking your watch or you're checking your phone, you're doing something else."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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