

COLUMNS

## How to create effective mobile videos

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*Emily Adams*

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

By **Emily Adams**

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Pull out your phone or iPad or laptop. Since you are already reading this article online, open a new tab. Go to your favorite social site I will pick Instagram.

Now start scrolling. How long did it take you to come to the first video?

For me, it was the fourth post. When I opened Facebook, three of the first five posts were videos.

No surprise, video is popular. Video is eye-catching by its very nature, so many companies use it as part of their online content strategy.

Video gaga

Earlier this year, I discussed [the importance of engaging video content as part of content's specialized role in mobile and digital marketing](#).

There is a difference between simply doing video and doing video well, especially on mobile.

Done poorly, poor videos can still grab your attention.

Done well, video is also engaging. It grabs your gaze and holds it in place.

Done very well, video is memorable. It tells a story, conveys a message, and sticks with the viewer.

But it is not easy to do video well.

The biggest reason? Video is accessible.

Video is everywhere. Nearly every person you see walking on the streets is carrying a video camera in their pocket. If anyone can make a video, your competition is everywhere.

Posting a video, for the sake of having a video, is not good enough anymore.

Video has often been cited as the "next big trend" in social media. But video is not new.

Evolution of video

Video marketing used to mean television commercials. Brands had a captive audience. People would sit through video ads to get to the program they wanted to watch.

When YouTube first launched, people flocked to the new platform. Searching for content that interested you meant people could easily waste or invest hours watching content online, including brand videos.

But consumer behavior and expectations have changed.

While people can still waste hours watching content, what they watch has changed.

Consumers are much more selective about the video content they choose to engage with online.

How they watch has also changed.

Customers are not glued to their TV set or YouTube app to watch videos.

Facebook, Vimeo, Instagram, Web sites, blog posts and social networks all deliver videos instantly, giving people virtually limitless options to find new content to watch.

Which also means virtually limitless distractions to pull their focus away from the video content you worked so hard to post.

Mobile video

More videos are consumed on the go. Mobile devices let you keep hundreds of hours of entertainment and education at your fingertips.

Mobile videos need to reflect the mobile nature of the device it is loaded on and the people who are watching.

Shorter videos. High resolution. Minimal buffering. Crafting the best video can get highly technical very quickly. But it is simpler than that.

Make mobile videos people want to watch

Start with yourself. Are you interested? Good. If your video does not hold your own attention, do not bother sharing it.

Once you are happy with the video, take a step back. Chances are you are too close to the content. You like it, but you are not your customer.

What do they want to know?

A technical breakdown of your latest equipment purchase may be fascinating to you as an industry insider, but your customers will tune out. A hard sales pitch will make them click away. A rambling talking head will make them tune out.

What will interest them?

Answer their questions. Offer tips and tricks. Share powerful testimonials. Give them the information they ask for when you talk face to face.

Will your video hold their attention?

Here is my own rule of thumb: The first cut that holds my attention is too long for my audience. I will cut it back another 25 percent.

Your video needs to earn the viewers' attention before it can hold it. Watch just the first few seconds of your video. Turn the sound off. Does it make you want to keep watching?

You cannot control the circumstances under which the viewer will first see your video, so test in the worst conditions.

WILL YOUR VIDEO be memorable? Only time will tell. No one can control how another person will respond.

But you can give your video the best chance. Engage and earn attention. Carefully craft your message. Tell a story.

Create something you would stop to watch.

*Emily Adams is content manager at [Automated Marketing Group](#), Littleton, CO. Reach her at [emily.adams@longtermfix.com](mailto:emily.adams@longtermfix.com).*