

COLUMNS

Brands and publishers need to reorient for vertical video

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

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After years of resistance against vertical video, the rising popularity of this unorthodox orientation has begun to push advertisers and publishers to reconsider their video strategies.

We are now seeing a steady stream of creatives come out of the woodwork, rewriting their beliefs and singing praise. What was once thought of as an ugly, inefficient use of space and the mark of a wayward amateur is now found to be a superbly useful visual technique that is well received by consumers and content creators alike.

So what took us so long to get here in the first place?

The reality is that consumers have favored this portrait orientation for a long time now, whether brands and publishers realized it or not. We just needed to look to the very thing we stare at all day anyway our smartphones.

The ubiquity of smartphones and consumer attachment or dare we admit, addiction to them have essentially created a breeding ground for vertical video to take root and thrive.

Watching and recording content vertically on our handheld, vertically oriented mobile devices is intuitive, instinctive and allows for the up close and personal experience we crave.

It is because of these attitudes and habits that publishers and content creators should rethink and reorient their mobile strategies.

For any publishers or brands that have yet to pivot for vertical video, here are some reasons that might entice you to see the power of the dark side after all:

Share your brand's story through a new lens

If you are worried about appearing inconsistent or that you are not staying true to your voice, just know that you do not have to let go of your roots.

Instagram, for example, added a vertical format feature without compromising its image.

Adopting vertical video is more about adapting to the ebb and the flow of consumer expectations.

Think of vertical video as another way for your brand to be heard, but in an increasingly relevant way. A varied

approach to mobile strategy opens more channels to connect with the consumer and allows for a more diverse audience, which ultimately means greater reach and exposure.

Develop better reach and a bigger following

It is no secret that younger millennials have grown up alongside technology and are early adopters of new trends. They have been inundated for some time now with mobile applications that were created for the sole purpose of hosting vertical video content (think Snapchat, Meerkat and Periscope).

Even Twitter has recently embraced vertical video with the launching of "Moments," a new experience for catching up on the latest news, which relies heavily on vertical video. These mobile-focused platforms are ahead of the curve, leading the first wave at the right time.

Publishers who are resisting the flip to vertical video risk lose out on the millennial audience and generations to follow.

Due to the affinity for mobile platforms and the ever-intensifying on-the-go mentality, consumers favor visual content that they can access and view most easily.

Catering to these habits ultimately ensures your audience will be more likely to watch, share and favor your content or product.

Adapt and deliver: on the right platform

If you want to catch your consumers or readers on the flipside, you have to adapt and deliver accordingly. That does not mean we are in a complete, be-all, end-all shift. Vertical video is just one more option, not the only option that works.

For brands and publishers to win on mobile, it is about introducing a new way to reach your followers and the right mix of content, platform and screen orientation.

While a vertical format might work for watching a short news clip when you are out and about, it would not necessarily have the same traction with a feature-length film.

Do not adopt vertical video because of industry pressure. Instead, incorporate it into your mobile strategy to deliver content in a way that feels natural for your audience.

THE RISE of vertical video shows us that the industry was already at its tipping point to go upright. It was less of a disruption but rather a logical evolution based on consumer behavior.

The market has been ready for vertical video ever since it was conquered by vertical devices.

Publishers and brands that resist change and do not adopt this format risk putting themselves at a disadvantage.

As consumer convenience continues to trump all, vertical video will become the expectation on mobile.

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