

MARKETING

Marketers should tailor video content to different platforms: Gartner L2

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Producing video content is an investment. Image credit: Gucci

By SARAH JONES

Aside from considering the format of videos for each platform, new research finds that different types of content resonate better within certain social media communities.

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According to a report from Gartner L2, consumers engage more with Instagram videos featuring real-life footage, while YouTube and Facebook videos that feature products and plot-driven narratives fare better in comparison. Gartner L2 attributes this partly to the Instagram audience's lower attention spans and desire for visually stimulating content, which marketers should keep in mind as they roll out video campaigns.

"Consumers respond more to videos," said Karen Lee, analyst at **Gartner L2**. "We found that among analyzed brands, average interactions per video post on both Facebook and Instagram have continued to increase since last year, whereas average interactions per image post have decreased.

"With shortening attention spans and the growing saturation of Internet content, brands need to stand out from the pack and creating eye-catching, informative and entertaining video content," she said.

Gartner L2's **report** looks at 200 brands across 14 sectors, including luxury, specialty retail, travel, watches and jewelry, food and beverage, beauty and automotive.

Content campaigns

Keeping up with the demand for video content can be pricey, but some brands have found ways to repurpose content effectively. Both YSL Beauty and Dior have released multiple versions of the same repackaged video, changing up the length.

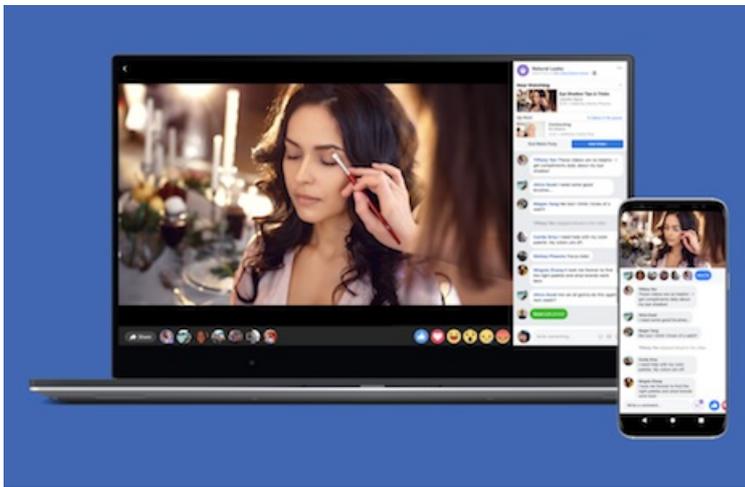
With consumer attention spans getting shorter, Gartner L2 found that 30-second videos tended to perform best in terms of viewership.

Along with adjusting the duration of videos, brands should be editing the format of content with consideration to user behavior on a particular platform. For instance, a video posted to YouTube could have optional subtitles, while a Facebook version could have subtitles built in to cater to an audience that consumes 85 percent of content without

sound.

Beyond user behavior around video consumption, brands that want to expand their reach through video views should consider the audience across platforms.

For instance, 60 percent of the top 100 videos on Instagram feature real-life footage. Meanwhile, YouTube leans most heavily towards product-focused content with 77 percent of the top videos falling into that category, compared to 64 percent for Facebook and 42 percent for Instagram.



Facebook users tend to watch with the sound off. Image credit: Facebook

YouTube also has the greatest share of top-performing videos that are plot based, with 34 percent of the most watched films on the platform centered on fiction, compared to 9 percent on Facebook and none on Instagram.

Along with social media, brands are incorporating video into their Web sites, but they need to consider how they deploy this type of content.

Putting a video on the homepage could catch a visitor's attention, but it could also lose a potential customer if it makes a site load too slowly. Getting around this issue, 70 percent of brands that have homepage videos place them below the fold, allowing time to load with infinite scroll.

Another workaround is using GIFs instead of video files to speed load times.

While only 28 percent of brands studied have videos on their homepages, they are much more commonly used elsewhere. Fifty-two percent of the index brands have videos on a product page, while 78 percent include videos on a content page.

When posting videos on a Web site, brands should consider using links that will lead a consumer down a path to purchase. Rather than embedding a YouTube link, providing a click to navigate to products that are shown is more effective.

"Linking videos to a path of purchase is important because it ensures that the video is not a dead end," Ms. Lee said. "Whether someone viewing a video is just browsing or intending to purchase, it's best to have links ready instead of leaving them the burden to find the product page(s) themselves.

"In our report, we found that only about one-third of brands link their videos further down the path to purchase to a category or product page from their brand site homepage, so there's definitely room for improvement," she said.

Video push

Given the importance of video for engagement, social platforms are making it easier for consumers to discover and watch video, while also giving brands more tools to share film content.

Pinterest was the latest social media platform to invest in updated video features, as it looks to help brands and advertisers serve up actionable inspirational content to consumers.

Brands and creators who have business accounts on Pinterest will now have access to an improved video uploader, analytics and other video-centric features. Pinterest has been focusing more on business capabilities and ecommerce since before its initial public offering this spring ([see story](#)).

Instagram similarly dove headfirst into video with the launch of IGTV, a home base for the platform's expanded video offerings, including hour-long videos and curated films.

The platform allows creators to make more varieties of video offerings, which have previously been limited in length and search capabilities. Instagram may be attempting to challenge YouTube for video dominance, something that brands who work with the platforms should be aware of ([see story](#)).

As luxury brands have embraced IGTV, they are rolling out campaigns in multiple formats, with horizontal YouTube films and vertical IGTV videos.

Regardless of platform, brands need to consider a video's length as they aim for views and engagement.

"With shortening attentions spans, it's best to keep video lengths short," Ms. Lee said. "We found the average duration for top performing videos on YouTube was 55 seconds, four times shorter than the average length of all posted videos of analyzed brands, reflecting the trend of short-form videos.

"However, there is still space for longer video content, but the content has to be engaging," she said. "For instance, we saw top brands like Nike enjoy high views on Instagram with longer videos around two to three minutes centered around inspirational stories of real-life athletes."

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