

The global effect: using online video as a marketing tool

Mark Bryant, Creative Director at Hush Media, producers of content for the web, radio, TV and press, looks at the influx of videos online. Delving into this medium within a medium, he explains why it's become such an effective marketing format.



On 15th February 2005 the web changed forever. Three former PayPal employees created a new online service by the name of YouTube. With its easy to use interface, they made it possible for anyone who could use a computer to post a video online that millions of people could watch within minutes.

YouTube soon turned video sharing into one of the most important parts of internet culture, and the figures speak for themselves – after just over a year online the site had

hit the 100 million videos-watched-per-day barrier.

This new sharing format has made viral videos an incredibly powerful tool in the modern marketers toolbox. If viewers are really entertained or moved by a clip, they're likely to forward the link on to a friend, colleague, or family member who might also appreciate it.

It's referral marketing at its best. How many other marketing methods do you know whereby potential customers send on advertising messages to other potential

30% of all web traffic.

This has had a profound effect on other areas of the media as proved in recent research.

After polling 2,800 people in six countries, a recent study carried out by IBM showed that a massive 76% have viewed video online and 45% do so regularly. Of those who have watched online video, 15% say that as a result they watch "slightly less" TV, while 36% said they watch "significantly less" TV.

Channel 4 was the first UK terrestrial TV channel to address this downturn by launching their own on-demand service, 4OD on 6th December 2006. The BBC soon followed suit, reporting that viewers had watched over 42 million programmes via their iPlayer service in the first 3 months alone.

In commercial television,

on-demand programming online has opened up a whole new world of advertising with many more potential marketing opportunities.

We all know how effective terrestrial TV advertising can be, but, understandably, this is out of the price-range of many small businesses. In the future however, as on-demand programming progresses, it will be possible to advertise on a much, much, smaller scale. Allowing advertisers to hone down their target market and only hit the users they want to reach with very little wastage.

But it's not just the broadcasters who understand

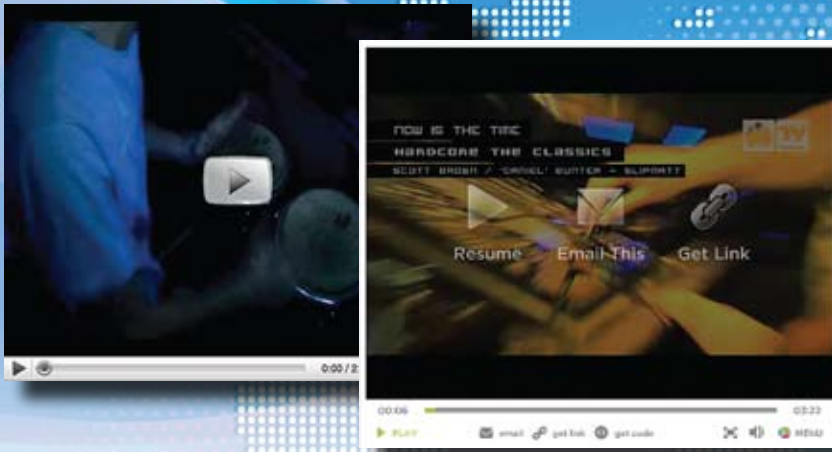
“Once a good viral video is out there in the online ether there's no stopping it; recipients become senders and a message can reach an extensive global audience very quickly”

customers, who then send it on again and so forth? Once a good viral video is out there in the online ether there's no stopping it; recipients become senders and a message can reach an extensive global audience very quickly.

However, for viral video marketing to work, the sales message needs to be intertwined, even hidden, into something really entertaining. Engage a viewer and they're more likely to forward it on.

Such changes in the way the internet is being used has made today's surfer much more demanding, with online videos contributing to around

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the importance of moving with the times. Yell.com has recently launched a new service whereby advertisers can have their own TV style web commercial produced and added to their directory listing.

Integrating video into existing business web sites has become a popular way to bring pages to life, increase their impact, and their reach. Users are more likely to sit down and learn more about a company by watching a well produced video, than trawl through pages and pages of

corporate spiel. Just think of the number of people who would rather "wait for the movie" than read a book.

Once a source of static information, the web has transformed into a truly interactive social medium with an ethos that it's good to share. Gone are the days when websites were limited to pages of text and images downloaded on a slow dial up modem. Today's web users want more, they want it now and they want it fast... So let's be the ones to give it to them.



CONTACT: For more information of using online video as a marketing tool, call Hush Media on **0845 686 1234** or visit **www.hushmedia.co.uk/webvideo**



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