

Video is the new black in marketing

 By [Deseré Orrill](#)

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In today's 'too much information' (TMI) age, standing up and standing out are the key to being remembered. One tool that goes beyond just 'engaging' its audiences to help users retain the memory of the marketing message (or anything else for that matter), is video and it is fast becoming the mainstay of communicators around the world - including in South Africa.

Content marketing, engagement, shareability, fans, storytelling and the user experience (UX) to convince and convert, are some of the current buzzwords permeating marketing speak. Beyond the power to convey key messages though, video has the ability to effect systemic change. While pictures are powerful communicators, a moving picture has infinitely more possibilities and requires far less interpretation. Catering more easily to the human brain's sensory systems, video enables viewers to pick up on cues like facial expressions, tone of voice, imagery, music – within seconds eliciting an emotional bond that exercises influence over personal choices and actions.

More than five billion videos are watched on YouTube every single day - that's a whole lot of watching. According to CISCO, 80% of all online traffic will be video by 2019, while Facebook recently reported that it is generating eight billion videos views per day with Snapchat a close second on six billion views daily, both outranking YouTube. However, YouTube also reports that the number of hours that people are watching on its channel have increased 60 percentage points year-on-year with 3.25 billion hours per month being the latest statistic to come from the channel. Interestingly, and importantly, YouTube* has noted that the average 'mobile' watching session lasts 40 minutes.



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In South Africa, it has been widely reported on how we have leap-frogged PCs in favour of consuming everything mobile. Although smartphones are becoming cheaper and more South Africans can now access the Internet through these devices, it is the cost of data that is hampering progress.

The #DataMustFall campaign couldn't have come soon enough, nor the release of the National Integrated ICT Policy White Paper, which calls for a number of far-reaching changes to how the telecommunications market operates. Part of this is the provision of a Wireless Open Access Network (OAN), which has exceptional potential for marketers and educators alike.

Video should be an upfront consideration in all marketing strategies – whether aimed at consumer or business audiences. In fact B2B is one of the fastest growing viewer segments for video. It is no longer enough to 'score marketing points' with a one-hit viral wonder. Far more effective is the use of informative and entertaining videos (or a series of them) that resonate with specific audiences throughout their customer journey – creating a sense of expectation for the next 'episode' and encouraging sharing with relevant target markets. The initial marketing frenzy around growing numbers of fans and followers within the social media sphere has abated, and the more realistic and valuable metrics, namely Comments (engagement) and Shares, are now considered the most relevant when it comes to measuring social advocacy.

On its own, the video has limited power to convert, but as part of an integrated communications campaign the power of video increases exponentially. Read the hints and tips on any of the social media platforms we have at our disposal and they will encourage you to upload a picture or a video to increase the chances of it being shared or commented on. According to Forrester research, a video on a webpage makes it over 50x more likely to rank on Google's first page and when added to an e-mailer, video significantly increases engagement, particularly if there is an emotional connector of some description.

So, while there is ample evidence that video is one of the most if not THE most powerful digital tool available, the cost factor in creating, distributing and viewing video content often still plays a restrictive role in South Africa. On one side we have the cost of data restricting video deployment and buffering progress, but on the other, is the misconception that it is prohibitively expensive to make one. It needn't be.

Of course, we all want to deliver that blockbuster experience, but in reality, really great videos are being created on mobile phones themselves. It's important to differentiate between carefully planned and executed video productions where creative concept and story line seek to achieve crafted objectives, and instantaneous mobile video that captures the Zeitgeist without necessarily being a creative masterpiece. Timing is essential, and mobile enables canny marketers to take advantage of the moment. As a simple tip, familiarise yourself with the video functionality on your phone to allow you to be quick on the draw; keep the phone horizontal while filming; forget about wide shots – close-ups are best for small screens; avoid text if possible, but if you must use it, keep it sharp and bold. And most important of all, keep it short and to the point, bearing in mind that data is still expensive... for the time being anyway.

**YouTube statistics released September 2016.*

ABOUT DESERÉ ORRILL

Deseré Orrill is a co-founder of the Ole! Media Group and is currently the group CMO as well as managing director of MbbiMedia, a mobile engagement company within the group, and HoneyKome, the strategic digital consulting arm of OMG. She is intrigued by the way in which digital communication is redefining the relationship between brand and consumer, and how mobile in particular has become the catalyst for changing the traditional marketing monologue into a conversation.

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