

# Make the video fit the venue.

## Part two: Optimizing video for the second screen.



Last week's article was about the importance of tailoring TV commercials to the audiences and how they watch television. But video is now much more than TV. This week we'll look at commercials on the second screen.

Online video has expanded to include rich-media embedded ads, commercial breaks in online programming, website content, PDA screens and a lot more. Content and ads can be full screen or in windows, buttons, skyscrapers, banners and wraps. Image resolution may be 1080-P high-def or just a few hundred pixels.

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According to a 2007 TNS Media Intelligence survey, 16% of U.S. Internet Households watch TV programming online. In fact, TV programming has displaced news as the the most widely viewed online content. Internet marketer research firm eMarketer projects that 91% of broadband users will watch video online by 2011.

There is more evidence of a trend toward video consumption on the second screen. Or actually second screens, since people consume video on their PCs at work, their notebooks and their PDAs. In 2007 Ipsos MediaCT studied the 52% of Americans 12 or older who had streamed video online.

That 52% means the group is much larger than the innovators and early adopters in Everett Rodgers' Diffusion of Innovation classifications. Those two groups only add up to 15% of the total population. To get to 52% requires all the innovators and early adopters plus all the early majority and about one out of ten late majority members. In other words, streaming video is mainstream.

Ipsos MediaCT did a parallel study in 2008 and found that in just that one year viewing of video on computers almost doubled, from 11% to 19% of total video viewing.

Total consumer consumption of video content is increasing as new options are adopted. Forrester Research projects that the four hours per day the average consumer watches now will grow to five in 2013. The report notes some significant projected changes. (Their numbers don't match those of the Ipsos MediaCT study because Forrester studied the entire population 12 and older, and Ipsos MediaCT only the 52% who had streamed video on their computers.) The changes the Forrester Research report foresees include:

- Video on demand will grow from 20% of all video consumed to 45%.
- Video delivered via internet will go from 10% to 35%.
- Mobile video will increase from 8% to 15%.

- Peer-created video will quintuple from 2% today to 10% in 2013.

Obviously these aren't mutually exclusive categories. Someone might well use a mobile device to watch a peer-created video on demand.

As with TV, people watching second, third or fourth screens view and listen to multiple media simultaneously. According to a 2004 Forrester Research study, the most recent time respondents were online, many of them were also doing something else:

- 17% watched TV.
- 16% listened to radio.
- 18% talked on the phone (which is now almost universally a visual as well as audio medium).

Not surprisingly, only 2% read newspapers while online. By the time of the study (2004) online news had begun its climb into ascendancy among news media. Many people felt no need to read a newspaper when an on-screen window had much more recent updates than could be found in a paper printed half a day or more earlier.

With all the ways there are to watch and all the audiences who are watching, the way marketers and their agencies develop and produce video has changed. One size definitely doesn't fit all any more.

Spot length is a very important consideration. TV spots range from two seconds to seemingly endless infomercials. But most are :30s or :15s. The right length of an online spot is a lot shorter. Probably ten to fifteen seconds in most cases. The time a spot has to capture attention relates to how well targeted the audience is. If intelligent behavioral/contextual/demographic targeting has delivered an audience that might be interested in the product or service being advertised, a :15 is fine. The contextual aspect is especially important. Someone in the market for a car may not be inclined to click on a car manufacturer or dealer ad while going online to get movie start times and buy tickets. So a couple seconds of reminder video is the best an advertiser can hope for. When that

same prospect has entered "Kelly Blue Book," she or he will spend some time looking at and clicking on ads.

Think a couple of hundred cable TV channels give viewers a lot of choice? How about millions of online options? Bore the target audience and they're gone. And running a re-cut version of a TV spot will almost certainly bore them. Online advertising must grab attention immediately, then hang onto to viewers with entertainment and interactivity. The little screens are about two-way conversation. Effective online ads allow for that opportunity.

We hate to use this week's buzz word, but engagement is critically important. Although an advertising video ad is just ten or fifteen seconds long, prospects may spend a lot of time with the advertiser if the ad takes them to an appropriate place in the brand's website, and if there's meaningful interactivity to encourage – here's that buzz word again – engagement.

Once an ad has delivered visitors to a website, the site should be set up to hold them. The three keys:

- Relevant information. Not boilerplate, real information. Including feedback from other consumers. A BrainPosse principal recently chose a brand for an appliance purchase because of two factors:
  1. The brand had complete, easy-to-access information on its site. Everything needed to make a decision was there. Not spread all over one page, of course. It was in convenient, logical, easily-navigable drill-down format.
  2. There were user reviews on the brand's website. The reviews weren't filtered. About one in twelve was negative. But that sprinkling of complaints made the positive reviews much more believable.
- Bite-sized bits of information. Yes, depth is needed. But visitors will be more comfortable with simple pages and intuitive navigation with easy access to layers of detail in the areas they want to learn about. Once visitors get on-site, a video stream should be no more than

two or three minutes. We recently completed a site on which we kept video streams to under a minute each. The site improved results by 62.5% in a very tough category.

- Opportunity for feedback. Visitors love it, and companies get free information that would cost thousands or tens of thousands of dollars if a research firm gathered the data.

Of course it's possible to make an online ad way too attention-getting.

The pitfall is throwback to the earliest days of TV. Rosser Reeves, then chairman of the now-defunct Ted Bates agency, called it vampire video. Irrelevant visuals which distract from a commercial's message.

In the sixties, vampire video was wasteful because audiences noticed and remembered the irrelevant visual device, not the product or its benefit. Today the effects are even worse. Because when a visual of an animated dancing hottie encourages an adolescent boy to click on an ad (perhaps in the hope of more dance action or perhaps a video game) the mortgage company sponsoring the ad ends up paying two dollars for the click.

That's right. Amazingly enough, the animated dancer was there to draw attention to a mortgage offer.

We haven't been able to track the data, but we suspect that somewhere around 99 out of every 100 clicks came from people with no interest in a mortgage. So \$198 out every \$200 the advertiser spent for clicks was completely wasted. Online video ads – especially those in a pay-per-click buy – should be crafted to attract genuine prospects and virtually no one else.

Commercials in repurposed TV content streamed on the web have special requirements of their own. generally eight minutes of commercial content in a half-hour show get pared down to a

minute or less. Spots are ten or fifteen seconds. Since there's presently just one advertiser per episode in most cases, commercials should be effective as free-standing units and as a sequential story. And they should charm, amuse, intrigue or seduce viewers rather than bludgeoning them. After all, the viewers are watching exactly the same show on Hulu that they could have seen broadcast on NBC. So why did they opt out of broadcast TV if the show content is the same?

Hmmmm. Could it be the commercials?

Marketers better make sure they use that charm-amuse-intrigue-seduce stuff so viewers don't opt out of their online spots.

Tailoring video to the venue isn't a new idea. But it's become more important than ever now that media have proliferated into so many variations and audiences watch them in so many ways and with such varying degrees of attention. One nice thing about creating video advertisements for the second, third and fourth screens is that it's still early in the various media's life cycles, and a lot of folks still haven't got the formulas right. So time and effort spend in perfecting an approach to video ads on computer screens, cell phones, PDAs, online content interstitials can put a company ahead of the pack.

To learn more about principles and best practices of marketing communications, visit our website or call BrainPosse at 865-330-0033.

**Next week Part 2 – the final four: Sloth, Wrath Envy and Pride**

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