



How to Drive Traffic to Your Online Video

By [Heidi Cohen](#) , August 31, 2006

Online video growth is causing marketers such as Anheuser-Busch to contemplate producing video content for online audiences only. Meanwhile, video content owners like Disney, CBS, and Fox are testing new ways to distribute it. In both cases, marketers are moving beyond their current audience, targeted through traditional media, to new audiences reached via online media.

As a marketer looking to tap into the latest trends, you create engaging online content. Then, you're challenged with getting that content in front of a relevant audience. When building a viewership for online video, you must take a broad perspective. Like growing any other type of customer base, it requires a variety of techniques.

Distributing Video Content

Simply putting video content on a corporate Web site just doesn't cut it. Many company sites attract relatively light traffic, especially if qualification is required, such as over-18 for an alcoholic beverage brand.

Suggestions for attracting an audience to your online video content:

- Post video content on sites that feature consumer-generated video, such as MySpace.com and YouTube. Placing video content on sites like these alone usually isn't sufficient to create buzz and attract an audience. Additional enhancements and marketing support are required. For example, the [X-Men 3 MySpace profile](#) contains exclusive features, such as the ability to add 16 friends to your MySpace page (with the download of a mutant skin). To date, it's attracted over 3.2 million friends.
- Share video content with sites that draw large audiences to drive traffic to your content. CBS's recent deal with Yahoo to distribute "60 Minutes" and iTunes' distribution deals with Disney, CBS, and Fox, are examples.
- Use PR and word-of-mouth techniques. This works best when the content's original and has buzz-friendly qualities, such as Norelco's [Shave Everywhere video](#). Remember to embed links to the video in online press releases distributed by newswires.
- Use marketing communications to drive viewers to the video. If you use offline advertising and communications channels, make the URL memorable and easy to spell. Options include:
 - Advertising, including online, TV, and print. The advertising can be dedicated to promoting the video or refer consumers to the site's URL. The X-Men 3 MySpace profile was part of an integrated online marketing campaign.
 - Web site. Place the online video prominently on your own Web site. Cross-promote your video elsewhere on your Web site and in related online communications, including e-mail and RSS. Post your online press release on your site to aid searchability.
 - Customer communications. Promote the video in non-marketing e-mail, such as bills and customer service communications. On a related note, promote the video to your employee and distributor base. Also, have employees include a link in their sig files.
- Cross-promote online video through offline media. This is increasingly popular among TV shows looking to build viewership and maintain it in their off season. For example, Stephen Colbert drives viewers to ColbertNation.com with direct, on-air references.
- Tap into mobile video distribution systems. A number of TV shows are being distributed in this manner.

- Make video content search friendly by adding associated searchable text and tags to help it to appear on search engines.
- Blog about the content and links to the video.

Metrics

As with other forms of marketing, it's critical to understand business objectives before you implement a program to promote your video. Develop the program to deliver results that meet those goals and put metrics in place up front to assess their success. Metrics to consider for video viewership include:

- **Views.** The number of times a video was viewed and over what time periods.
- **Revenues.** Depending on the type of content and where it's placed, this metric may vary:
 - Revenue share for pay content, which may also be on mobile
 - Advertising generated either before or after the video, such as on Revver
 - Direct action, such as purchase as the result of the video
- **Branding metrics.** Use branding surveys to assess changes in consumer attitudes.
- **Viral quality.** Measure how many users forwarded and downloaded your content. If it creates sufficient buzz, monitor its effects with tools like Nielsen BuzzMetrics.
- **Costs.** Assess all relevant costs associated with producing the online video and related marketing needed to get it viewed by your target market. Compare these costs to the total value of your benefits.

When developing online video content, remember to take into account your goals and approach to building an appropriate audience. Being an online video producer may be fun, but, as they say in the traditional advertising business, it isn't creative unless it sells.

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A banner advertisement for Email Labs. On the left, the 'Email Labs' logo is displayed in blue and black text on a white background. In the center is a photograph of a long, straight road stretching into the distance under a cloudy sky. On the right, a blue background contains the text 'Drive Success with our Technology + Expertise' in white, with a 'DOWNLOAD WHITE PAPER' button below it.

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