How to Professionally Plan and Produce Video for Business

DaCast *

So you're interested in getting started with online video? You've come to the right place. This eBook will help teach you how to professionally plan and produce video for business. We'll explore the online video business model, discuss case-studies of how to use video for business, and share some tips, tricks, and essential considerations.

Before discussing some concrete video use-cases for business, let's first review some current trends within the video streaming market.

How Video Can Work For Your Business

The video streaming market is experiencing massive growth. Given the explosion in online video and the rise of broadband internet, online video is becoming more popular than ever before.

Overall, the video streaming industry is predicted to be worth $70.5 billion by 2021. Within that industry, live streaming is making up the majority of the expected growth over the next few years. According to marketing expert Neil Patel, "Live streaming is accessible and beneficial to everyone, and it's time you started using it."

Modern businesses have a variety of options for incorporating video into their workflow. A few of the models for video for business include:

- OTT Video: directly monetize premium content

- Online educational courses

- Sports

- Marketing and promoting other products/services

- Reselling video functionality as a value-added service

- Promotional video for eCommerce

- Internal communications video for business

For some readers, these examples might still seem fairly abstract. To get more specific, let's look now at some case studies on how to use video for business successfully.

Case Studies of Businesses Built on Video

Video can help you expand your business. It can boost communication, generate leads, strengthen your brand and increase your profit. But you don't have to just take our word for it. Instead, let's consider 4 unique businesses that are using video effectively for their own goals.

Get inspired by the success stories of online retailer GoggleOutlet, value-added streaming solutions reseller Striv.TV, e-learning hub MorningCME, and the CDFL sports league! By using online video, these businesses have grown and succeeded so can your business!

GoggleOutlet

Salt Lake City-based GoggleOutlet provides an affordable source for winter sports goggles. The company is the official supplier for many professional skiers, coaches, non-profits, universities, and teams. In addition, GoggleOutlet reinvests a portion of its profits into supplying free equipment to disabled veterans, supporting kids with cancer in   outdoor recreation, and helping single moms get services.

Founder Daniel Frieling explains that his business needed a few key features out of a streaming services provider. First, he needed a platform that supports both live streaming and video on-demand at a professional level. He also needed a video streaming platform that can deliver content to a global audience. And finally, Frieling sought all this at an affordable price.

"I tried three different platforms without any success before finding the perfect solution: vzaar (now DaCast)."

Daniel Frieling, GoggleOutlet.com.

Critical Feature: Embedding Videos on Your Website

GoggleOutlet now uses DaCast to embed product demo videos on its website. This provides customers with better information, which in turn helps to drive sales and engagement. In fact, video content makes online purchases 1.6x more likely. With the DaCast platform, GoggleOutlet now has access to live streaming for its benefit concerts and can monetize training video collaborations with expert coaches. Even with those professional features, DaCast offers competitive pricing. Frieling notes that "DaCast's pricing model is 1,000 times better than anyone else's!"

Striv.TV

Another business that's succeeding with online video is Striv.TV. Founded in 2012, Striv.TV works with high schools to provide live streaming solutions for events and sports. These services also make up the foundation of educational programs, allowing students to learn broadcasting and technical skills at more than 85 high schools in the United States.

Critical Feature: White Label Platform

Striv is a thriving business, thanks to a flexible partnership with the DaCast online video platform. Striv.TV uses the DaCast video API to integrate video streaming and storage into its existing workflow. Striv.TV customer schools can log in to a customized dashboard to upload and manage content, as well as to access analytics. And because DaCast is a fully white-label reseller platform, the company's video content is also branded with the Striv logo.

Taylor Siebert, CEO of Striv, says the switch from their former OVP provider to DaCast was "a smooth transition" thanks to a "well-documented API that was pretty straightforward with no need to reach out to the DaCast support team."

MorningCME

Another video for business success story comes from the educational platform MoningCME. Like countless other businesses, MorningCME uses video to generate revenue from educational content. In this case, the business provides "Continuing Medical Education" (CME) credits to medical professionals via a range of video training.

Content is free to view for subscribers. However, with an annual subscription (which costs $150) you can receive AMA Category 1 credits, AAFP Prescribed credits, and NP Pharmacology credits for these CME courses. MorningCME also offers a group discount if multiple providers from a clinic or hospital sign up together.

Critical Feature: Native Analytics /View Tracking via API

For MorningCME to maintain accreditation, it must have a mechanism in place for verifying that users actually watch the videos they host on their website. When looking for a video hosting platform, they found that many other OVP services don't allow the company's native tracking function to function. However, by embedding with the DaCast API, MorningCME was able to bypass this issue and gain full analytics tracking abilities.

CDFL Sports League

Another case of an organization that has effectively used video for business is the Collegiate Development Football League, or CDFL. The CDFL is the leading producer of post Collegiate All-Star football games and Scout Bowls in the United States.

The CDFL uses video streaming solutions to live stream football games and for video on-demand streaming. Then, the business monetizes its video via a paywall pay-per-view system.

Critical Feature: Low Latency Live Streaming

One important consideration for sports streaming is latency. Latency is the time between an event taking place and appearing on viewers' screens. It's essential to keep latency short, as 80 percent of sports fans use a "multi-screen" approach to look up stats or chat with friends while watching. If they see a tweet about a touchdown before the live stream shows it, it ruins the entire viewing experience..

DaCast offers a low-latency streaming solution via "HLS Direct."

"DaCast gave us strong credibility and left us with a good reputation… [for the] first time in five years we were able to monetize plus reach a wider audience."

George St. Lawrence, CEO of the Collegiate Development Football League

HLS Direct leverages the HLS protocol—the most compatible and widely-used streaming protocol—and reduces latency to 10 seconds or less.

How to Build a Video Business Plan

By now, we hope you better understand how video for business can help your company succeed. Luckily, you can apply many of the same strategies you use to build any business to your video efforts. In video, as in business as a whole, planning is everything. Here's a simple process that will help you to implement video within your broader business strategy and boost revenue and brand visibility.
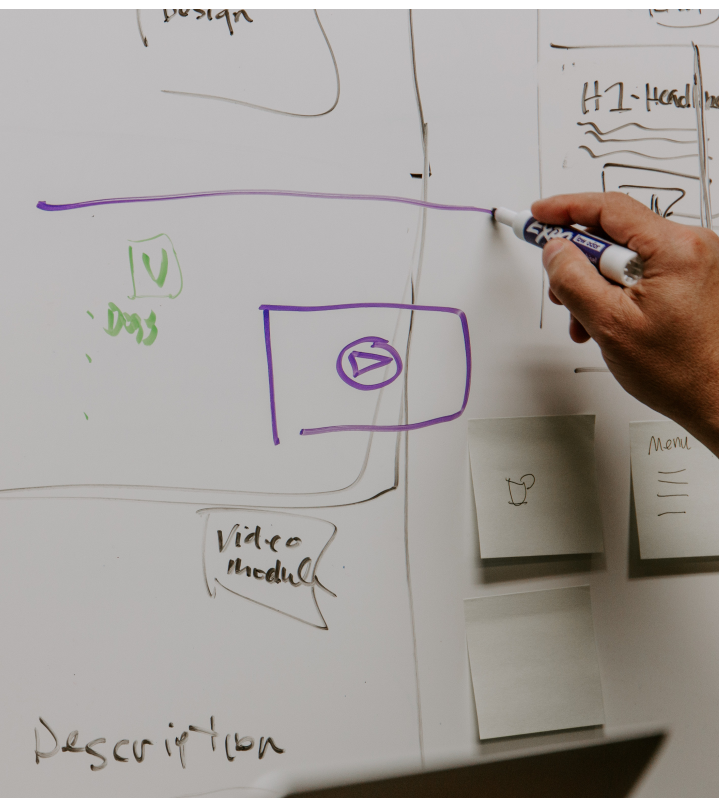
① Conceptualize

Build a basic idea of what you want your business to look like. Feel free to reference the business models we discussed early in the eBook. Throw a few ideas around with colleagues and discuss how they work. Next, take each idea in turn and simply ask questions about it. Begin with some higher-level questions:

- ◇ Is this idea relevant for my audience?
- ◇ Will the video content make the viewer feel something?
- ◇ Is this model likely to meet my goal?

If an idea makes it through this first pass, you can get into the finer details:

- ◇ Where would the video take place?
- ◇ What props would we need?
- ◇ How do we create x, y z?

Simply by asking the right questions, you can often weed out which ideas you should scrap.

② Test

Sometimes it's difficult to see on paper how something actually looks in real life. Having the footage in front of you brings things to life in a way that words on a page generally can't. With some actual footage to review, it becomes easier to tell if a particular idea is a non-starter. Do a small amount of testing to see if you like the results and if your original assumptions were accurate.

③ Reassess

Next, you want to refine your plan. Use the feedback gathered in step 2 to refine the ideas you created in step 1. Rinse and repeat this process as many times as it takes until you've got a video plan that satisfies you. This process can also be cyclical; you'll want to use analytics and other results to test the effectiveness of your plan continuously, and then tweak as necessary.

④ Implement

Now it's time for the rubber to meet the road. In other words, it's time to start video production. At this stage, you also want to consider budgeting, equipment, filming logistics, and so on. All these details are essential to turning your plan into a reality.

If you have the budget, a video production company is a great choice. You can also find independent video producers on platforms such as UpWork. If you're using an outside video producer, then it's very important that you brief them properly. Both parties should be crystal clear on what type of video you need for your business. That way, there won't be any surprises when the end product comes through.

We chatted with Daisy Bambridge from TNR Communications on this topic, and she recommended 7 questions your brief should cover:

- What's your video objective?
- How much video budget do you have?
- Who is your target audience?
- Where will the video be filmed?
- Who will be in your video?
- When is your deadline?
- Do you have any stock footage to use?

Whether you're filming only a couple of shorts, or a series of long-form content, this basic process will help you do so in an intelligent way.

Considerations When Recording Videos for Business

When you're creating professional business video, there are many things to think through. Of course, we can't cover all these topics here—that's why people go to film school! But we can mention a few considerations that are important for everyone.

① Creative Considerations

Anything you can do to improve the artistic value of your video is valuable. Engaging content helps to attract and retain your audience. Whether you're shooting comedy, training videos, product launches, or sports, you want to maximize content quality. This involves various creative considerations.

The basics of good video quality involve light and composition. The specific choices you make in these areas can vary hugely, depending on subject and material. For example, a product video should be clean and well-lit, with the subject in the center. On the contrary, an entertainment piece might be dark and grainy, with the subject framed in the corner. The point is not to prescribe a course for you, but to ensure you pay attention to these factors.

② Equipment

Another critical consideration is equipment. Generally speaking, you should invest in the highest quality equipment you can afford—as long as it will provide sufficient video quality for your use-case. That's a broad guideline. However, the differences between cinema-grade cameras and a smartphone video are huge.

For almost all business users, smartphones aren't good enough and cinema-cameras are overkill. Most professionals opt for something in the middle. At a minimum, an APS-C DSLR or mirrorless camera can provide exceptional video quality in an affordable package. As an upgrade, many professionals choose cameras with dedicated XLR ports, built-in filters, and other video-specific features.

Also, don't forget audio quality! It's incredibly important for viewers as well. Consider using a combination of lav and shotgun mics to record several sources of audio each time you record. Make sure to test your levels, use windscreens if you're outdoors, and monitor while you're shooting.

③ Streaming and Encoding

Live streaming video brings up a whole other set of considerations. One of these is choosing proper encoding settings. An encoder is a hardware or software tool that connects to your cameras, prepares the video for online streaming, and then sends it to your online video platform.

Common encoder settings include video codec and bitrate, audio codec and bitrate, framerate, keyframe interval, resolution, and more. Which settings you want to choose here depend on your specific situation. To learn more about the encoder settings we recommend for DaCast users, check out our full guide to encoder settings!

Workflow

When you're creating content regularly, it's important to streamline your video workflow as much as possible. Efficiency in recording, editing/live production, and publishing content is critical. And the more often you're doing it, the more valuable efficiency can be.

There are countless ways to improve efficiency. However, one that's important to mention is API integration. According to Streaming Media, "The video workflow and distribution environment is incredibly complex, and the way to build a best-of-breed system or even just gain finer control over tasks—especially when delivering video at scale—is by API."

Most businesses are migrating to API-based workflows for online video. An API workflow allows you to customize aspects of production and integrate into existing systems. The more complex your video workflow—and the more regularly you publish content—the more important video APIs will be for you.

How to Choose an Online Video Platform For Your Business

In a world where business is increasingly dependent on video, choosing the right platform is critical. A modern professional grade streaming solution will provide you with all the tools you need to get up and running, fast.

A few of the features you should look out for as a business include:

- ◇ Powerful CDN network
- ◇ Secure video hosting
- ◇ White-label platform
- ◇ Customization options and full content control
- ◇ 24/7 support

DaCast provides all of these features, and our plans start at just $19 per month. Professional users with API and monetization needs can upgrade to a plan at just $125 per month. If your business needs advanced video hosting solutions, we also provide an additional, more advanced video hosting platform. Please do not hesitate to contact us for more info or sign up directly on our website https://www.dacast.com/.

Are you interested in using DaCast to host, monetize, and deliver your video content? If so, contact us 24/7 or sign up directly for our platform.

Any Questions?

Contact us 24/7 at DaCast.com
or via email at sales@dacast.com

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