

THE IMPACT OF TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT



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MediaSolutions

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the digital marketing landscape has been transformed by device adoption, widespread social media consumption and the explosion of digital creative formats – particularly video.

Consumers are no longer bound to their televisions at home; with screens now available on the go, access to content is ubiquitous. With this constant access to media, the amount of time people spend watching online video content has increased substantially over the last few years.

In 2015, the average consumer watched 62 minutes of online video per day. This number is expected to grow to 72 minutes by 2017.¹

With this increase in online video content consumption, it's no surprise that there is a shift in the form of content development and online advertising spend. US brands spent a total of \$7.5B on video in 2015 and this figure is projected to increase to \$9.6B in 2016.²

Video has particularly gained traction within the travel industry, as a way for brands to connect their unique travel story with consumers. While images and words are compelling, video enables travel brands to bring to life the unique features of an experience or destination. Through the power of sight, sound and motion, video accentuates the emotive and personal experience of travel – connecting with viewers in a way arguably unmatched by any other medium.

¹ eMarketer, "Cross-Device Marketing Roundup", October 2015

² eMarketer, "US Digital Ad Spending Will Approach \$60 Billion this Year, With Retailers Leading the Way", May 2015

TRAVEL VIDEO'S IMPACT ON AWARENESS, RESEARCH AND BOOKING

Given the time and treasure invested in travel, it has always been and remains a considered purchase. Travelers spend extensive amounts of time researching destinations, hotels, air and activities across dozens of online platforms.

*The average consumer visits travel sites
38 times in the 45 days leading up to a booking.³*

Through the effective use of video content, travel brands can reach, engage with, and captivate audiences. Video has the unique ability to allow travelers to feel, experience and share emotions. Well placed videos can shape the destination and activities a traveler ultimately pursues, playing a valuable role in guiding the consumer through the entire journey – from driving awareness, to destination research and selection, to purchasing.

Each one of these touchpoints provides an opportunity to influence the traveler's final decision. The more connected a travel brand can make the consumer feel with a particular travel experience, the more likely the consumer is to book.

Leisure travelers leverage video at all stages of their purchase journey⁴

65%
when thinking about taking a trip

61%
when choosing a destination

45%
booked instantly after watching a video of travel activities

Beyond building awareness, videos unequivocally offer the ability to influence booking

45%
of leisure travelers booked instantly after watching a video of travel activity.⁵

72%
of business travelers & 74% of affluent travelers booked immediately upon watching a video.⁶

62%
of leisure travelers & 74% of business travelers say that they want to see a video before making a final travel booking decision.⁷

³ Millward Brown Digital (Commissioned by Expedia Media Solutions), "The Traveler's Path to Purchase", August 2013

⁴ Google, "The 2014 Traveler's Road to Decision", June 2014

⁵ Google, "The 2014 Traveler's Road to Decision", June 2014

⁶ Google, "The 2014 Traveler's Road to Decision", June 2014

⁷ FredereicGonzalo, "How Travelers Use Online Sources for Travel Decision-Making", September 2012

TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT CREATION & IMPLEMENTATION

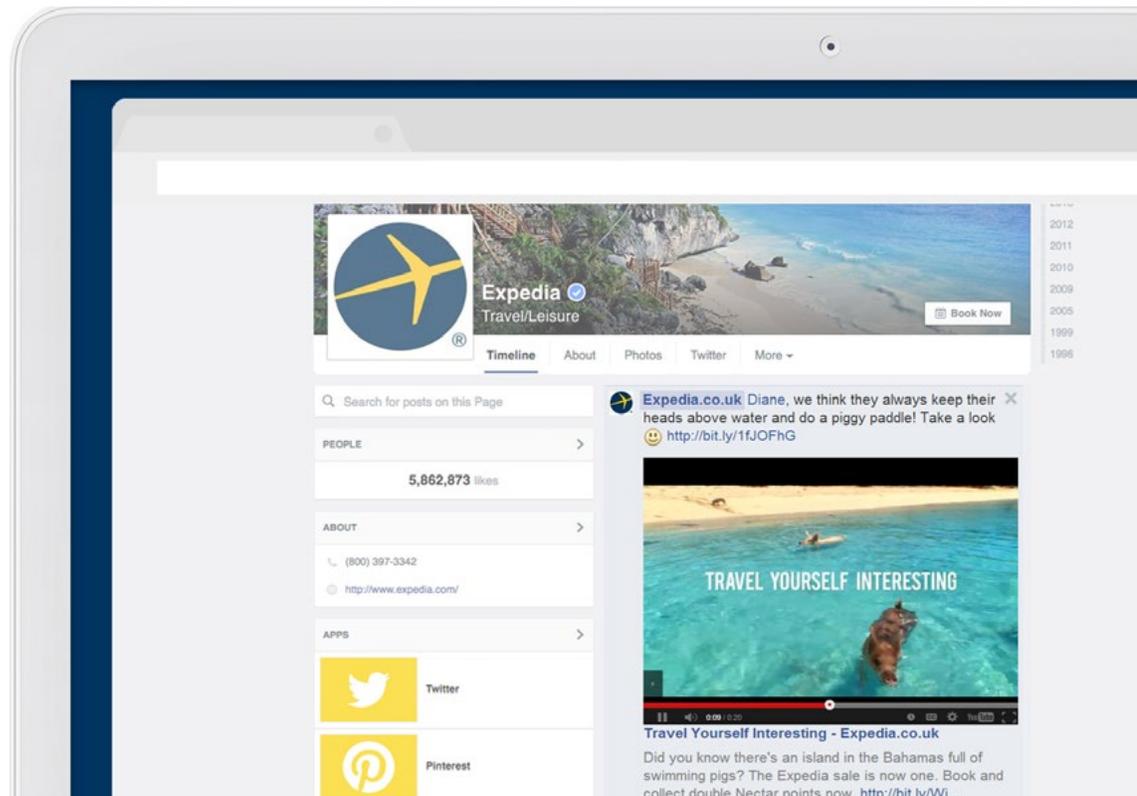
TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT: STORYTELLING UNIQUE VALUE

The ability of video to tell a story that connects travelers with destinations and experiences provides a unique opportunity for travel brands. But how does a brand tell its unique story in a way that not only inspires and informs travelers, but encourages them to ultimately book a trip?

To be heard through the crowd and inspire travelers, brands need to feature something that sets their destination, hotel, or activity apart. Something unique – even iconic.

Expedia and The Bahamas Tourist Office did just this when they partnered on a campaign that proved people also love swimming pigs. Of course, vacationers the world-over know that the Bahamas are one of the planet's premier warm-weather, tropical beach destinations. However, the British Commonwealth nation (consisting of more than 700 islands covering more than 180,000 square miles of ocean space) wanted to pique the traveling public's interest beyond its most well-known destinations of Grand Bahama and Nassau.

To do this, The Bahamas Tourist Office recorded a video of a unique experience accessible in a small chain of islands known as the Exumas – swimming with pigs. The video went viral – with thousands of shares, likes, and comments. During this two week UK campaign, UK hotel demand to the Bahamas increased by more than 660% and UK package booking demand rose by nearly 295%. By presenting an experience that was unique to the Exumas, and inaccessible anywhere else, these islands became a “must see” destination overnight.



TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT: BRANDING THROUGH EXPERIENCES



The key is to weave together the most compelling imagery and iconic elements in an interactive way that engages consumers as they consider where to travel next.
– Angelique Miller, Director of Creative Partnerships, Expedia Media Solutions

Given that travel is so rooted in personal experiences, travel brands should take a first-person approach to video so as to give the perspective that the viewer is actually there, experiencing the place for themselves. By using visually unique experiences from the perspective of the viewer, the video can help travelers imagine themselves there, eating the cuisine, wandering the streets, talking to locals, and so much more. As the demand for unique travel experiences grows, the use of experiential video can help viewers visually and emotionally connect to influence and drive their purchase decisions.

The more immersive the experience for the viewer, the easier it is for them to be inspired to become visitors. Adding interactive elements to digital video can

also help showcase travel experiences in a personalized way for a traveler. While traditional video tells a story, interactive video creates a virtual experience with a travel brand – immersing a viewer as a part of the story.

Expedia Media Solutions worked with VisitDenmark to create a first-person interactive video with specific focus on Copenhagen as a vivacious city rich in culinary, design, historical and nightlife experiences. The film was captured using specially-designed wearable cameras which constructed a personal and unique first-person perspective.

Creating awareness about cycling as a preferred mode of transportation in Copenhagen was a goal for VisitDenmark and so the first-person interactive video

series puts viewers in control of the content as they ride through the streets on a vintage bicycle. At several points the video offered viewers a choice in dining, activities, and amusements, allowing them to choose a path through Copenhagen based on their personal interests. At the end of the experience they were able to e-mail, share or book their itinerary.

Interested in continuing their exploration in real-life, this campaign converted viewers into visitors. Throughout the campaign, passengers to Aarhus increased by over 75% and passengers to Copenhagen increased by more than 15%. Additionally, a brand survey revealed that interest in Denmark increased by nearly 35% after visiting the microsite.

TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT: INFLUENCING THROUGH INTEGRATION

While the impact of video as a form of content marketing is powerful, its messaging, placement and integration is equally important to effectively reach and influence viewers.

Video content can bring to life a travel brand and experience resulting in increased awareness, but in addition, it also has the power to influence travel decisions and bookings. By using proper placement, integration and effective messaging, video can increase passengers, shift competitor share and ultimately drive bookings.

When leveraging video to drive direct response, ensuring a clear call to action is in place as well as driving them to a place to sign up, book, or whatever the conversion point goal may be enables the viewer to take action. In addition to empowering viewers to take action, video placement has proven to be effective at helping drive conversion when placed on landing pages as an influential last touch point for driving bookings or contest sign ups. A study found that video on a website landing page increases conversion by 86 percent.⁸ In addition to landing pages, video placement in e-mails can improve conversion rates by 20 to 60+ percent.⁹

“In the travel category, we often struggle with the balance of showcasing a destination (what we sell) versus the traveler (who we sell to) and consistently over time our testing data has shown that when we focus on a personal and relatable moment – even a seemingly subtle one – we drive deeper engagement and increase sales. We chalk this up to the concept of Making Travel Personal, which is the advertising strategy at Expedia. Celebrating the traveler and showcasing personal emotional side of travel. In order to do this well, we attempt to use real people in real moments instead of stock imagery which can often look contrived. We seek out those unexpected moments which capture meaning more than words can possibly express. It’s part of our DNA and helps to differentiate Expedia.”

– Vic Walia, Senior Director Brand Marketing, Expedia.com

TRAVEL VIDEO CONTENT: INFLUENCING THROUGH INTEGRATION - CONTINUED

While placement and messaging are essential to effective video content implementation, utilizing video as a prong in a fully integrated campaign extends the reach, message and offering to help truly achieve marketing objectives.

VisitBritain effectively did this by using video in a cross-platform promotional campaign targeting US travelers.

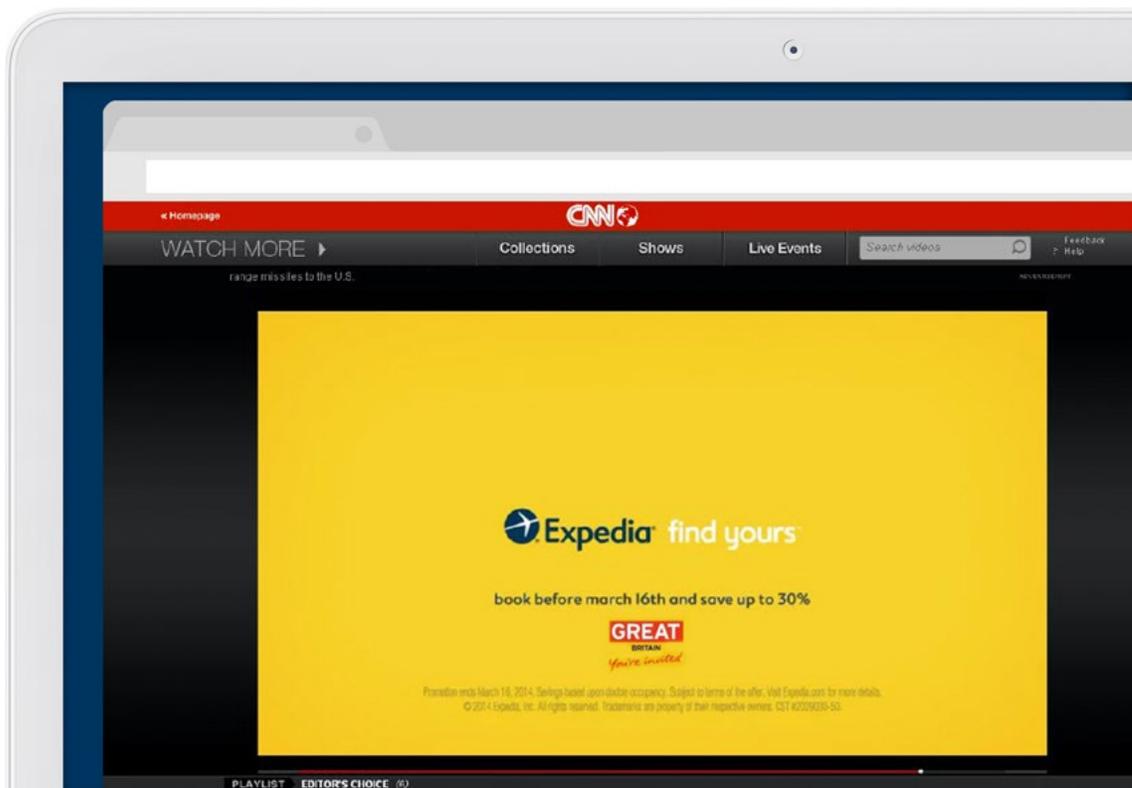
VisitBritain's objective was to shift the perception of American travelers who generally associate Britain with London exclusively.

In partnership with Expedia Media Solutions and the Expedia.com brand team, the Find Your Storybook campaign was created showcasing the UK's Culture, Countryside and Heritage to key US markets across a variety of media platforms with the goal to build awareness and drive US travelers to these British destinations.

This integrated effort included a co-branded TV campaign in the New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles markets; both onsite and co-branded offsite advertising to drive

customers to Expedia.com; and a sophisticated social media campaign that included Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and ViewFinder blog updates.

The Facebook promotion garnered more than 1,700 likes while the Google+ campaign generated more than 1,500 +1's. The Twitter campaign was a smashing success – with 525 participants joining in and contributing 3,300 Tweets that produced a total reach of 1.5 million impressions. Both total transactions and share of transactions originating from targeted US markets increased YoY.



CONCLUSION

As the digital landscape continues to evolve along with the increased screen time and video content consumption, travel video content will remain a valuable asset to brands. The power of video to engage viewers through sight, sound and motion plays a valuable role in guiding the consumer through the entire purchase journey – from driving awareness, to destination selection, to booking.

Travel marketers can create and use video most effectively by:

- Creating video content that connects the unique value of a travel brand through the power of storytelling.
- Considering taking a first-person perspective to immerse the viewers into the experiences and evoke emotion.
- Including video as part of an integrated marketing campaign with thoughtful messaging, placement and strategic partnerships to extend the reach of the content and drive for results.





Formed in 2007, Expedia Media Solutions is dedicated to building online and offline media partnerships for travel and non-travel brand advertisers and to enable them to leverage the unique media value of Expedia's network of leading travel brands and global points of sale. Expedia Media Solutions has revolutionized the way brands reach and connect with online travel consumers, emerging as a thought leader in online advertising sales among travel Web sites and e-commerce brands. With a growing product portfolio offering a multitude of advertising and sponsorship opportunities, Expedia Media Solutions has created a viable marketing platform for advertising partners to reach the more than 70 million worldwide monthly unique visitors that visit Expedia, Inc. Web sites.

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