

A guide to Video advertising for small businesses

Introduction to video advertising

Video advertising is a high impact and creative method of delivering your marketing message that can drive greater attention compared to text and standard display advertising.

Typically it appears “in stream” - in other words before, during or after other video content. But it can also be embedded within social feeds, larger display formats, or be integrated into a publisher’s text based content. Where you can buy video at scale, there is often the ability to skip an ad after a few seconds, and only pay for completed views. In the gaming world, you can even have reward based engagement where free to play games are served video ads and unlock game related rewards upon a completed view.

According to the [IAB’s half yearly 2020 Adspend update](#), the display market has grown slightly - up 0.3% - and video ad spend is up 5.7% to £1.35bn, with its growth reflecting the rise of digital video streaming during lockdown.

Whilst its heritage lies in TV advertising, digital video advertising offers additional creative capabilities that can significantly increase consumer engagement. On the flip side, marketers have to take into consideration things like sound on/sound off experiences, portrait vs landscape, consumer data usage, and factors that can influence a consumer experience based on the platform they are using (mobile/PC etc) or the environment (Wifi/4G, public library vs noisy kitchen etc).

What marketing challenges is it best suited to

Digital advertising offers a range of video options for businesses of all sizes. Video continues to offer the rich, storytelling capabilities that TV ads offer but, with more specialised targeting and branding options available, it can deliver more effective branding and messaging at a fraction of the cost of TV.

Video is ideally suited to demonstrating a product: showing the functionality and capabilities it offers. Or conversely, it is well suited to emotion: showing the value a product can offer to a user at an emotional level, or representing the mood that the product can create or be affiliated with.

Video advertising is least effective when complex messaging or processes have to be explained. This is better suited to text-based articles or long-form “how to” videos on YouTube. While not traditional advertising, this can also be an effective use of video as well, to gain marketing objectives.

As a rule, video is probably better suited to brand advertising than sales or short-term promotion. However, the two are not exclusive. Promotional messages, discounts and sales offers can be added or overlaid on a video with a strong brand message.

How to reach your audience

Video advertising has similar targeting capabilities to display advertising, unlike traditional TV ads, where you reach a rough audience based on a programme's average viewership. Serving a video campaign online can deliver more targeting options to ensure greater efficiency and a better return on your investment. It also means that you can tailor your message specifically to the people who you are trying to reach, thereby making it more effective. Advertisers have a plethora of targeting capabilities in order to achieve campaign goals. These include:

- **Geography:** Targeting based on a user's IP (Internet Protocol) address or based on their mobile device ID
- **Context:** Often the most important aspect to ensure that you target content that resonates with your ad. So, targeting travel ads against travel content etc. Performance rates can be improved by 10x if managed effectively
- **Audiences:** Targeting audiences or segments is common practice and can range from age, demographics, socio-economic groups to interest and intent layers
- **Devices:** Mobile, tablet, desktop, gaming devices, all identified from the IP address
- **Operating systems/types:** Android, iPhone, Samsung etc
- **Browsers:** Whether Chrome, Safari, Firefox etc.
- **Time:** Such as time of the day or day of week
- **Retargeting segments:** Reaching those who have visited a specific page on your website before (using pixel integrations)
- **Frequency capping:** How many times you want a single user to see one of your ads in a chosen time period
- **Inclusion lists:** A specific set of domains for your chosen campaign

Creative considerations

Don't think that putting a 30 second TV ad online will tick the digital video box. IAB research shows that consumers get annoyed when ads are not made for the right platform, and this gives a negative impression of the brand and publisher.

The nature of your video creative will be determined by the platform it gets served across and the campaign objectives. A key thing to consider is the user experience though. If going down a mobile targeted route then consider a portrait based experience, compared to a TV oriented landscape approach. Generally assume that the consumer has no sound activated and, where sound is critical, signpost to unmute or have subtitles to give a verbal experience.

If the video is skippable, create enough intrigue and brand presence to convey the key message before the skip option is made available.

For brand awareness and consideration:

- Position yourself as a thought leader
- Tell your brand story
- Share stories of customer success

For conversion:

- Show a quick demo of your product
- Give a sneak peek of your launch
- Preview your event

Media budget considerations

Creative budget varies dramatically and production costs for video content will typically be higher than for other formats.

Media budgets are dictated by the campaign objectives and the audience size. Too little spend on media will result in your ad becoming a mere drop in the ocean. Too large and the campaign may deliver too high a frequency.

Like standard display campaigns, average budgets range between £20-£40k mark every month, but the minimum spend is somewhere between £5 and £10k per month. Larger more impactful campaigns would start at £15k per month and can scale easily to over £150k.

Campaigns can easily be booked over a quarter or even yearly basis as spend is constantly optimised to chase new audiences and deliver the main campaign goals. Some publishers, networks or ad-tech providers will have minimum spend levels that you'll need to guarantee, but most will have solutions for even the most limited of budgets.

The strategy and formats to choose is often the most difficult decision. It really depends upon what you're trying to achieve with your campaign. Larger, more complex formats are good for raising awareness and engaging users.

Technical considerations

As with most other digital advertising solutions, the ability to analyse and optimise a video campaign to ensure it's delivering on your campaign objectives is key. Depending on the platform you choose to use, having knowledge of Excel to interrogate any data your campaign develops and understand the impact of any changes in terms of targeting or creative execution is key. Reach and frequency are two key metrics in this space, and ensuring you deliver enough impact to your audience without over serving is crucial, as you want to hit the sweet spot of awareness without leading to over exposure and a negative perception from the consumer.

This is often why brands work with a media agency who can identify these signals and help optimise campaigns more efficiently.

Real-life campaign examples

Great creative examples include Hotels.Com 'Captain Obvious and the Skippable ad'.

For lower budget campaigns, creating instructional videos are very powerful.

What are the leading businesses in this area?

The social platforms offer a great opportunity to deliver video content at scale - like YouTube, Facebook and TikTok - but there are many other players that can also help seed a video campaign. These could be as an in-stream offering - typically a pre-roll, mid-roll or post-roll video - delivered around additional video content from individual publishers or companies like Unruly. Out-stream video experiences that get delivered in non-video environments are another alternative and companies like Teads and Adform are well respected in this space. Finally, rich media experts - like Inskin Media and JustPremium - are able to create high impact digital ad formats that can incorporate video elements as part of their advertising experience and deliver them across a range of brand safe premium publishers.

With thanks to the businesses who authored this guide:



Inskin specialises in multi-screen, rich-media display advertising, partners with 190 publishers, works with over 1,000 blue-chip brand clients and delivers campaigns to more than 1,000 premium websites, globally.

It believes that well-designed, rich-media ad formats, with outstanding creative value, delivered in premium online environments encourages user attention more than any other form of brand advertising.

UNRULY

Unruly is one of the leading video ad platforms in the world. Publishers use Unruly's self-service tools, global relationships with premium demand partners, user-friendly ad formats and dedicated support team to maximise their revenue across a range of different screens, including CTV, mobile and desktop.

A pioneer in bringing emotional intelligence to the ad ecosystem, Unruly's innovative, multi-format tech, unique audience insights and creative solutions also enable brands and agencies to seamlessly engage global consumers in premium, brand-safe environments.

Part of the Tremor International group (AIM: TRMR), Unruly is on a mission to transform digital advertising for the better.