


Using Video As A Selling Tool

On-truck, online video can drive more sales

BY PHIL SASSO



Q Are videos really the next best thing to a hands-on demonstration? If so, how can I use video to generate more sales?



As tools and equipment continue to advance technologically and the cost of video continues to decrease, video is definitely a growing trend in tool and equipment marketing.

One-on-one demos and paper literature are not quite dead, yet. But, if you want to connect with customers, you need to be in tune with where things are going, not where they've been. Using video can definitely put you ahead of that curve.

Show and Sell

"Folks in their 20s and 30s ... absolutely want to see interactive content [and] multimedia-type presentations as one of their first methods of learning," says Mike DuBois, Publishing and Editorial Manager at Integrated Supply Network (ISN). "If we want to appeal to the people making buying decisions, then we have to give them information in

the manner that they want to receive it."

In your case, this means using video to supplement literature and, in some cases, to replace one-on-one demos. You could start as small as buying an inexpensive 7" portable DVD player. A quick Google search reveals player prices ranging

from \$60 - \$150.

The more formats your player can play (like MPEG-4, MPG, and DivX), the better -- as you'll see later. Be sure the player has external speakers, not just headset jacks, or you'll need to buy a set of speakers too. But whatever you do, keep the volume to a manageable level. You don't want to be shouting over your video to answer customer questions. Better too low than too loud.

Set your media player on a shelf at about eye-level. I realize that's prime real estate in your truck, but I think you'll find over time that these videos will sell enough product to be worthy of that position. Eventually, if video proves to work for you, you may find yourself mounting a larger video monitor in a predominant place on your truck. (Consider planning space for a 20" video monitor or larger with a nearby power inverter outlet if you're buying a new truck anytime in the future.)

Using on-truck video is like being in two places at once. While you are writing up an order, your customers can be watching a training video you're selling, or better yet, a video showing features and benefits of some of your newest or more technical tools.

Lights. Camera. Action!

You can produce your own video, says DuBois. It doesn't have to be fancy. Just put a video camera on a tripod and do a series of three to five-minute pitches.

Don't have a video camera? Borrow one from a friend instead of buying one, until it proves profitable. Also, try to present to a live person when recording so you sound more relaxed and natural.

Video lets you do things you can't do in a normal hands-on demo like show a product in-use on a vehicle. You might want to record a new video every month just to keep it fresh.

If video stardom isn't your thing, or if you want more polished videos, look to your flag, WD or vendors for help. Many have DVDs and/or YouTube vid-

eos. Zamzar.com lets you type in a YouTube URL and download a video in over a dozen video file formats including MPEG-4, MOV and AVI.

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Look over these formats (<http://bit.ly/zamzar-video>) before buying a player so you know it's compatible with at least one format. You can download converted files up to 100MB for free. Several levels of subscription service are available that allow you to convert files up to 1 GB -- but you shouldn't need files that big.

DuBois also suggests you consider launching your own YouTube channel so customers can watch demos and longer training-type sales videos on their own schedule. It's easy to set-up a channel (if you have a Gmail or Google account, you're halfway there). You can also incorporate and post these videos onto your social media sites. (For more on using social media



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for your business, read the Sales Q&A March and April 2012 two-part series on social media.)

A YouTube channel is good for several reasons: it lets you post original videos and “subscribe” to video feeds for distributor and/or manufacturer videos, it’s fairly easy to use, it’s search-engine friendly, and, best of all, it’s free.

There are also other video services like Vimeo and Flickr, but YouTube is currently the most popular. In fact, it’s so popular that YouTube searches are very near eclipsing Google searches, says DuBois.

If you don’t want to invest a lot of time managing online videos, *Professional Distributor’s* online Media Center archives hundreds of tool and equipment videos from many manufacturers. Visit [\[vicepros.com/media-center\]\(http://vicepros.com/media-center\) to view them all.](http://www.vehicleser-</p>
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Micro Broadcasts

DuBois has another suggestion to take you leaps and bounds into the future of video: use QR codes (bar codes made of tiny squares that smartphones “read” and automatically take users to an online page) to bring customers from the real world to “cyber video.”

“Everybody’s carrying a smart phone,” says DuBois. If you put QR codes on products, shelves or display boxes on your truck, your customer can be watching a short video on his phone about the exact product he’s interested in. This allows you to present interest-specific demos on-demand to several customers at once. Now it’s not like just being in two places at once – it’s like being in a virtually

unlimited number of places at once -- doing sales pitches or relying on professionally produced videos with the most up-to-date technical details.

You can also emblazon your literature with QR codes (see goqr.me) and/or shortlinks (see bit.ly) linking to online videos, says DuBois. (Both sites offer free services.)

To juggle all this information, you might even consider keeping a spreadsheet of your most popular tools and equipment with links to video and PDF literature. When a customer asks for a specification sheet or product literature, you can easily email him both the PDF and a video link.

I agree with DuBois that harnessing the power of video is smart. It can help you spend less time researching and answering technical questions, and more time closing sales. ■

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