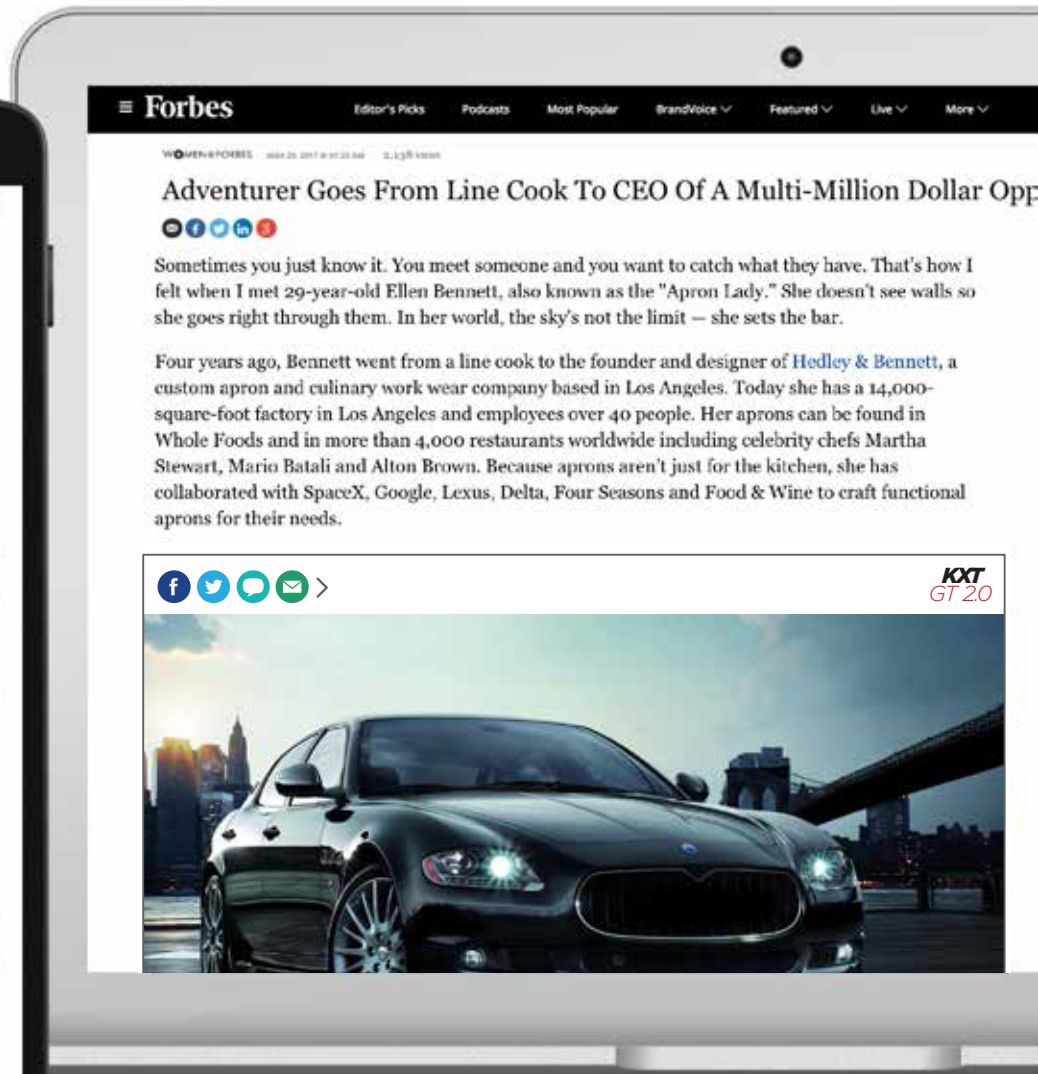
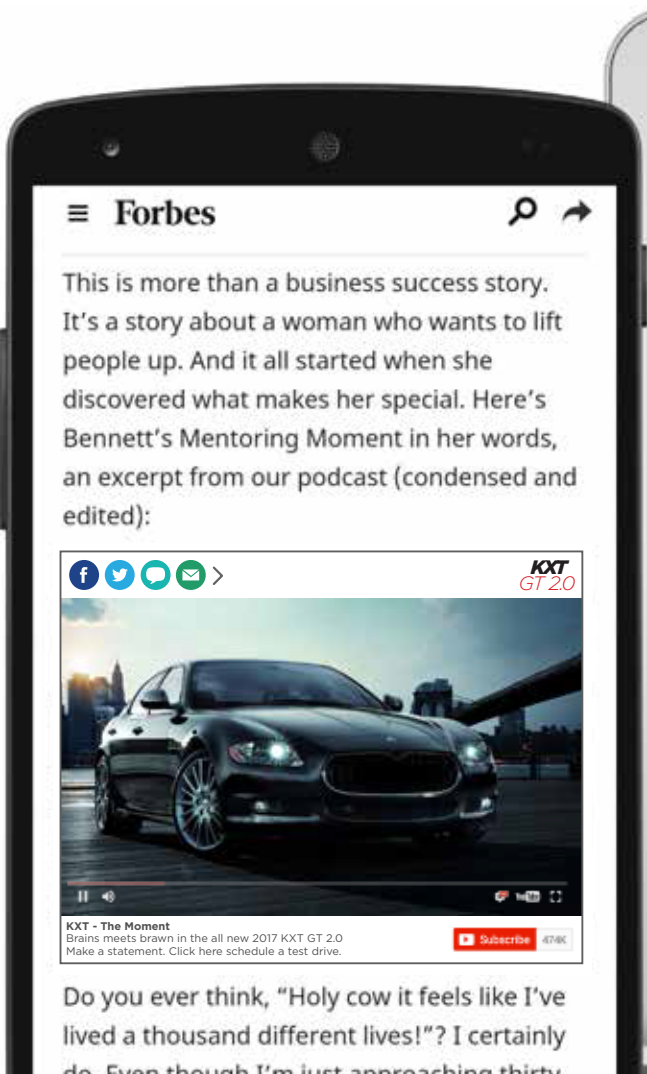

The Video Ad Journey: Best Practices for Driving Full-Funnel Results

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Introduction: Why Design Your Customer Journey Around Video
- II. Using Video for Each Stage in the Funnel
- III. Measurement: Business Metrics vs. Vanity Metrics
- IV. Pulling it All Together: Full Video Ad Journey Example
- V. Conclusion
- VI. About ViralGains



I.

WHY DESIGN YOUR CUSTOMER JOURNEY AROUND VIDEO

We're living in an age of information overload and consumers see thousands of messages every day. What does it take to break through that clutter?

Advertisers have long understood the value of video to get their brand stories across, and it's why they've traditionally invested the lion's share of their budgets in TV. Nothing quite matches the combination of sight, sound, and motion for brand recall. In fact, Yahoo! Research reports that in-stream video delivers a 53% brand recall, far higher than any other ad format.

What's more, video is preferred by the consumer, as evidenced by our consumption patterns. Consumers watch nearly 7 billion videos on Facebook and YouTube each day. On top of that, these stats from the 2015 Animoto Online and Social Video Marketing Study say it all:

- **4 TIMES AS MANY** CONSUMERS WOULD RATHER **WATCH A VIDEO** ABOUT A PRODUCT THAN READ ABOUT IT.
- **1 IN 4 CONSUMERS** ACTUALLY LOSE INTEREST IN A COMPANY IF IT **DOESN'T HAVE VIDEO**.
- CUSTOMERS ARE NEARLY **50% MORE LIKELY** TO READ EMAIL NEWSLETTERS THAT **INCLUDE LINKS TO VIDEO**.
- **4 IN 5 CONSUMERS** SAY A **VIDEO** SHOWING HOW A PRODUCT OR SERVICE WORKS IS **IMPORTANT**.

Why should brands build their customer journeys around video? Well, because it's simply the best way to connect with consumers.

WHY WE WROTE THIS GUIDE

Video is typically used in the awareness phase of the customer journey, but it can be effective throughout the entire sales funnel. Savvy brands recognize video's ability to influence offline behavior and drive sales. Video is also the perfect vehicle for engaging with consumers in the mid-funnel, when they're actively seeking more information about a brand.

This eBook outlines best practices for giving consumers what they want: videos that help them discover and choose products they love.



II.

USING VIDEO AT EACH STAGE OF THE FUNNEL

Video Ad Journey At-a-Glance

Video isn't just for brand awareness. With better targeting options through digital video, marketers have learned that video is an effective tool to move consumers through every phase of the customer journey. Here's how:

PHASE IN JOURNEY



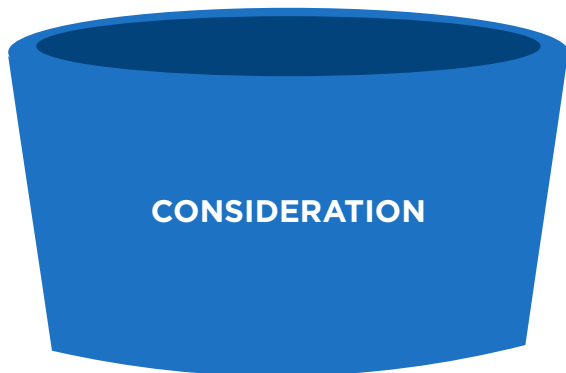
AWARENESS

GOAL:

- Increase mindshare
- Gain earned media from paid media

VIDEO TACTIC:

Earn incremental engagement and action from an initial video view by presenting the consumer with a carousel of additional videos to watch using ViralGains' Video Explorer Engagement Card.



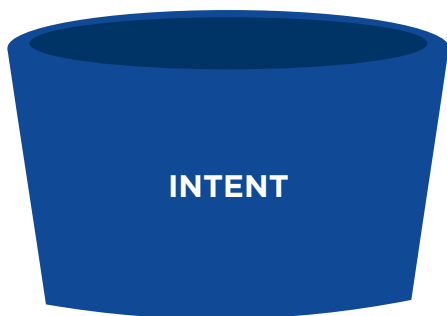
CONSIDERATION

GOAL:

- Qualify viewers

VIDEO TACTIC:

Use Engagement Cards to survey consumers about sentiment and favorability. This data can be used to segment audiences and tailor sequential messages.



INTENT

GOAL:

- Showcase new products and features
- Prompt consumers to state preference

VIDEO TACTIC:

Start a conversation with consumers and ask for their product preference.



CONVERSION

GOAL:

- Showcase products and features preferred by individual consumers
- Drive customers to product or sign-up page

VIDEO TACTIC:

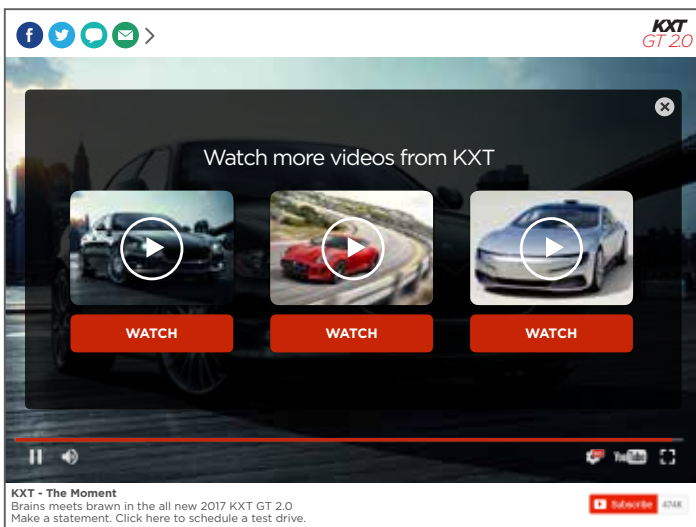
Present videos based on data collected in the Consideration and Intent stages.
Create videos that feel like product demos and provide opportunities to purchase directly from the video ad.

AWARENESS

This stage is where marketers seek new customers, launch new products, and aim to keep their brands top of mind for existing customers. As with all brand campaigns, marketers invest in creative that captures consumers' attention with compelling messages. These can be humorous, thought provoking, or emotive.

Here's where digital differs from TV: First, consumers gain awareness even if a video is never played. When you brand a player and starting screen, you can gain an awareness impression even if the timing isn't right for the consumer to watch a video.

At the conclusion of a digital video, marketers can keep consumers engaged by inviting them to view more videos from their campaigns. The supplemental videos can be presented in a carousel contained in a ViralGains Engagement Card, which is a custom end screen that appears at the end of the digital video.



ViralGains' Video Explorer presents consumers with additional video to watch. This keeps consumers engaged in the moment, delivering earned media to your paid media investments.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

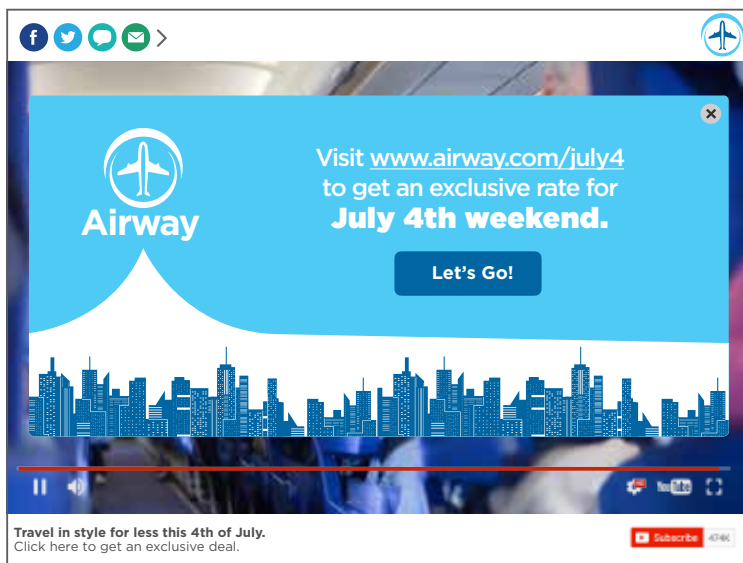


- Measure engagement for each video. Create the message that generates the best response from consumers.
- Build an audience segment of users who have expressed an interest in your brand by interacting with your video content.
- Target qualified consumers with a video ad that showcases your products, services, or features. Provide a feedback loop that allows them to express which ads are most relevant to them.

CONSIDERATION

Once you've built an audience segment of consumers who've expressed an interest in your brand, keep their interest warm by creating a deeper level of engagement. Engagement Cards are uniquely suited for these tasks.

Engagement Cards can be used to bucket consumers by interest, or enable a consumer to customize a product — such as with a mortgage calculator, build-a-car model, or credit card selector. Brands can collect data from users' interaction with the Engagement Cards and tap into that information for the next level of messaging.



Use Engagement Cards to invite consumers to an event, such as an upcoming sale or product demo. In this scenario, consumers can email the details of the free trial to themselves.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Tie the Engagement Card to drive specific business KPIs, such as email sign-ups, disclosure of product preference, or to drive attendance to a sales event.
- Use rich media to provide an immersive and interactive experience.
- Capture data from consumer preferences to inform the next set of messages.
- Create sub-categories of audience segments based on stated interest (e.g. SUV, van, sports car) for targeting.

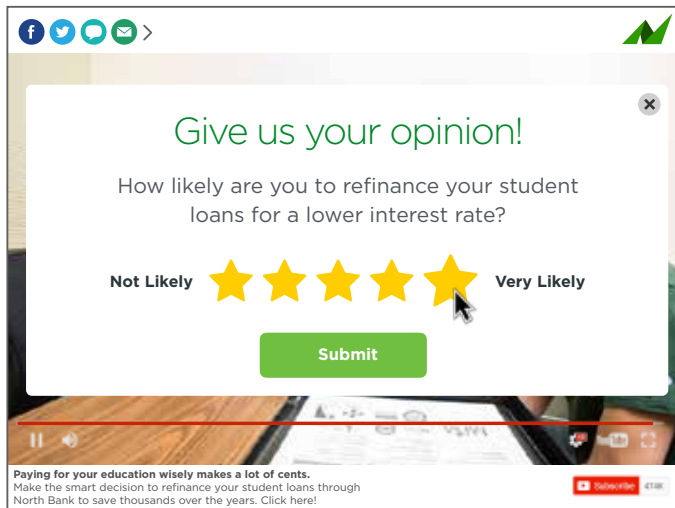
INTENT

Consumers are on a constant search for information and are influenced in numerous ways. Once they've expressed an interest in your brand, check in to see how they feel about your offerings.

Has a particular product model caught their eye? Are they considering a competitor? Have their tastes or requirements evolved since their last engagement?

ViralGains Sentiment Surveys allow you to ask the consumer a wide range of questions, such as:

- How do you feel about the video?
- Do you favor a competitor?
- What is your timeframe for purchasing?



Sentiment Surveys offer numerous benefits. They collect declared — not implied — data, so it's more accurate. Because they're targeted at consumers who have previously demonstrated an interest in the brand, the response rate is an impressive 6 - 8%. Most importantly, they're the catalyst for a two-way conversation with the consumer.

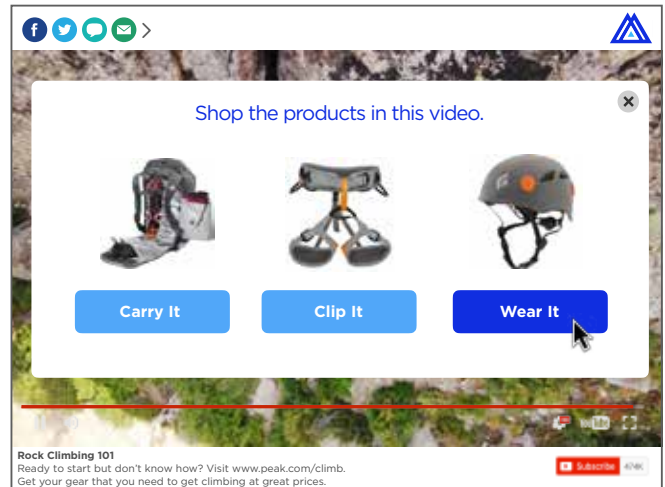
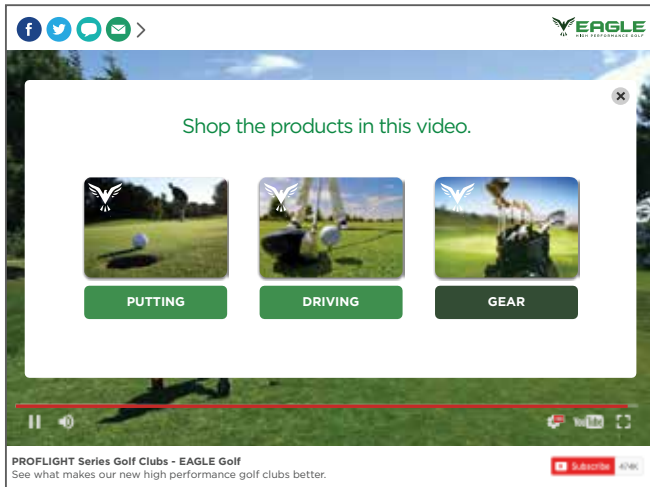
TIPS FOR SUCCESS:



- **Be thoughtful in how you write your survey questions so you avoid reflecting your brand's internal biases.**
- **Ensure your questions are tied to specific business KPIs, so the data you collect is actionable.**
- **Segment consumers by interest, competitive preference, or other criteria important to you.**
- **Create a video strategy to target and convert qualified consumers. Successful conversion videos often feel like product demos.**

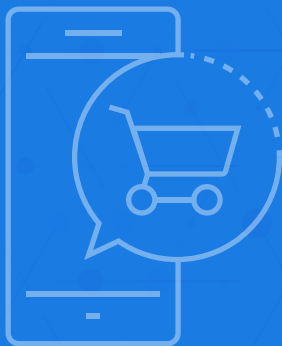
CONVERSION

Once the consumer shows engagement by viewing several videos, the Product Preference Engagement Card asks the viewer which product he or she is most interested in and drives the viewer to the appropriate landing page or checkout cart.



Demo videos are particularly good at converting customers. For instance, if you're selling an appliance, videos in the later stages of the customer journey should demonstrate how it works or how to assemble and store it. If you're selling apparel, offer tips on how to accessorize or pair the clothes with other items so they can be worn for a wide range of occasions. This approach helps consumers understand how they can incorporate your products into their lives.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:



You can put almost any kind of functionality into a Rich Media Engagement Card.

Consider that viewers may not want to leave the content they are viewing when engaging with your ad. Even if your desire is to have them visit your website, attempt to put some critical functionality within the player interface. This can include lead capture or even direct purchase from the ad unit.



METRICS: BUSINESS KPIS VS. VANITY METRICS

Traditionally, digital ad campaigns have been tailored toward vanity metrics, defined by measures that seem good, yet have no business value. But the industry has advanced. It's now possible to modify ads based on business-oriented metrics, such as sales, email sign-ups, and authentic connections to your brand.

VANITY METRICS

What's a vanity metric? These are metrics — such as click-through rate, percent-completion rate, video completion rate, and viewability — that the ad tech industry uses to measure and assess the quality of digital video campaigns. These metrics provide important information, such as whether consumers were presented with a video ad, and if that ad appeared within their browsers. However, keep in mind that the purpose of these metrics is to prove the technology provider did what it said it would do — such as serve an ad in a video play — and little else.

BUSINESS KPIS

Successful campaigns impact a company's bottom line and deliver results you can easily explain to a CEO, such as the number of test drives scheduled. Rich Media Engagement Cards and Sentiment Surveys allow you to measure, drive, and improve your campaigns based on performance against these business KPIs.

MEASURING AUTHENTIC CONNECTIONS

What is the actual value of the consumer who engaged with your campaign? Have you turned respondents into brand enthusiasts, willing to share information with their friends and family? Do they engage with your brand on social media? Have they signed up to request more information? What is their lifetime value?

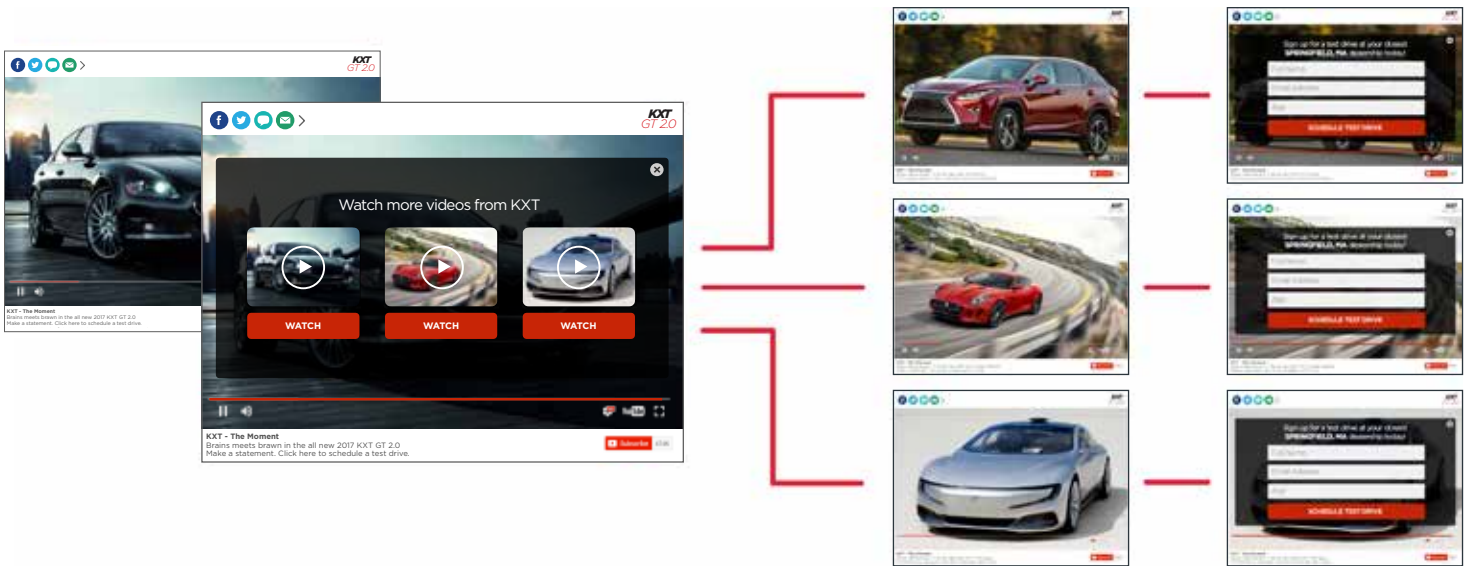
Using a blend of measurements — such as viewability, time spent, survey answers, and click activity, brands can gain a better idea of the connection created by their video advertising. However, it is also important to tie campaign measurement and optimization to KPIs. It paves the path to understanding your brand's specific customer journey, and forever cements the bond between creating authentic connections and meeting your business goals.

IV.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER: FULL VIDEO AD JOURNEY EXAMPLE

SET-UP:

Let's take a look at an example video ad journey use case for an auto brand with a large product offering. The brand's goal is to entice potential customers to sign up for a test drive at a local dealership.



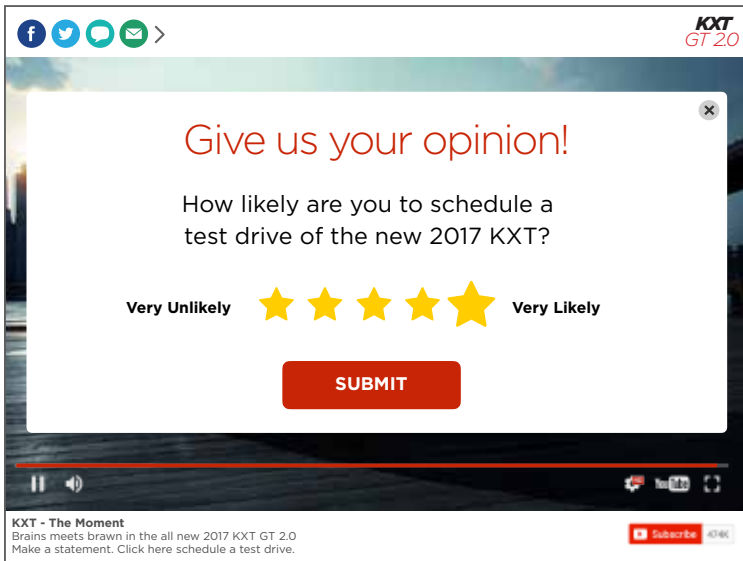
AWARENESS:

The video ends with a Video Explorer Engagement Card that includes additional videos, each featuring a different type of vehicle. In this use case, the initial video ads depict the various auto makes and models.

This combination of a Video Explorer and Product Preference Engagement Card helps the auto brand segment consumers based on their product interest. For instance, consumers who click on an additional video are placed into one of three categories:



These audience segments, although useful, require more messaging to meet business goals.



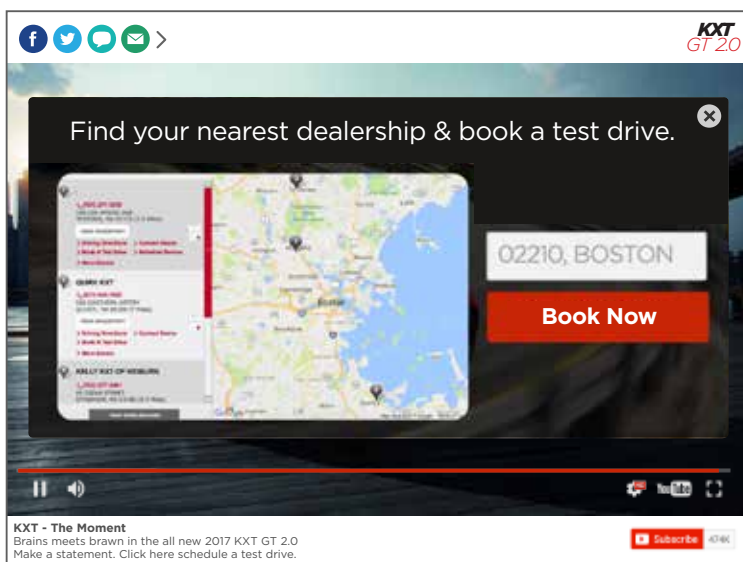
CONSIDERATION:

Sentiment Surveys are an effective way to market to people who think of your brand more favorably. Using this Engagement Card allows brands to find consumers amenable to their message and decrease the number of views wasted on those who are not in market for their products.



INTENT:

The auto brand can further communicate with qualified audience segments by creating videos specific to the make and model chosen in the awareness stage Engagement Card. Viewers can be retargeted with a message specific to their desires.



CONVERSION:

During this stage, the brand presents a custom Rich Media Engagement Card that prompts the viewer to sign up for a test drive directly from the ad.



CONCLUSION

For years, consumers have demonstrated a preference for video when learning about new products and services. This interest empowers marketers to use video to grow their businesses and build long-lasting relationships with customers.



New tools, such as Engagement Cards, enable marketers to start a two-way dialogue with consumers. These interactive end screens allow marketers to collect behavioral and attitudinal signals from viewers to segment and qualify them for future campaigns. This helps marketers better target videos to nuanced personas and gauge purchase intent throughout campaigns.

As marketing evolves from a branding exercise to a multi-channel engagement discipline that encompasses the full customer experience, so does video. Data is the cornerstone of the video ad journey, as it allows marketers to embrace this new approach to marketing and guide viewers through a path to purchase, ultimately achieving value beyond views. The evolution of video described in this eBook reflects an exciting new era in the world of marketing and customer engagement, and it's only the beginning.

VI.

ABOUT VIRALGAINS

ViralGains is a video ad journey platform that enables marketers to engage people with relevant brand stories in the contexts that people most favor. Using the platform to engage in a two-way conversation, brands discover exactly what people want — and how they feel — and build a unique journey that connects highly qualified consumers with relevant messages that generate awareness, motivate intent, and impact purchase decisions. ViralGains is headquartered in Boston, with regional offices in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York. For more information, please contact us at www.viralgains.com.

OUR CLIENT ROSTER COVERS 11% OF FORTUNE 500 BRANDS



LEARN MORE

Email us at hello@viralgains.com to learn more about ViralGains' video advertising solutions and request a demo.