




Driving[”] Self-Service Buying Experiences with Video






We live in a fast-paced, digital world where everyone wants everything now. To meet this demand for instant gratification, organizations are turning to video content that delivers self-service buying experiences for prospects in all stages of their buyer's journey.

Research shows that:

- [87% of B2B tech buyers](#) want self-service options;
- Video is expected to make up [82% of all internet traffic](#) by 2021; and
- Millennials watch online videos for [2.4 hours per day](#) while Gen Z averages [3.4 hours a day](#).

In this report, we discuss how video acts as a vehicle to drive self-service buying experiences. We look at first-hand accounts from marketing and sales teams that use video to deliver friction-free buying experiences, as well as best practices for creating them.





Creating Frictionless Buying Experiences


From Ritz-Carlton’s “The customer is never wrong” to Burger King’s “Have it your way,” successful companies have been heeding customers for more than a century. For today’s businesses, this means giving customers the product they want and the buying experience they prefer.

That preferred buying experience is watching videos: [72% of people](#) say that they prefer to watch a video than engage with text-based content.

“People are increasingly more visual learners,” said Michaleen Craig, Sr. Lead, Website Development & Performance Analytics at [FinancialForce](#), a business application provider and Honorable Mention winner of Vidyard’s 2020 Video Marketing Program of the Year. “A short introductory video can be engaging as well as informative. Then we can serve up more in-depth content, like reports, as our buyers realize we are the right fit and request more information.”

FinancialForce is just one on a growing list of companies that create and tailor videos to attract potential customers with the content and messaging they prefer. For example, instead of trying to convert leads with aggressive CTAs to “talk to sales” or “book a meeting,” [Marketo’s](#) site offers buyers a chance to learn on their own, with buttons such as “view a product tour” that click through to video content. Since implementing this strategy, Marketo saw a [1,103% boost in conversions](#) from a four-minute demo video.

In 2020, [92% of marketers](#) said that video content was an important part of their strategy, up from 78% five years earlier. Furthermore, organizations that created [more than 50 videos a year](#) grew from 13% in 2019 to 46% in 2020 — a 254% increase year-over-year. As video content continues to prove its effectiveness, it is poised to keep growing.



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This growth allows buyers to explore and learn about a brand at their own speed in a friction-free manner, whether it is bingeing an entire portfolio at once or selectively jumping from clip to clip at a more deliberate pace. Some of the most popular videos are educational or “how-to” clips that show how a product works rather than just talking about it.

Buyers don't just like it; they want more. [Eighty-six percent of buyers](#) said they would like to see more video from brands, with 36% wanting more educational/explainer videos and 14% wanting more product demos.

“By far, our most popular assets are quick two-minute product tours,” said Craig. “They are a great introduction to our products and showcase our capabilities, such as financial management or professional service management.”

FinancialForce recently un-gated all of its introductory videos, removing any friction for prospects in the first steps of the buyer's journey.

“Video is consistently top-performing content,” Craig explained. “And we are moving toward producing and including more videos on our website.”

In terms of numbers, FinancialForce sees an [89% completion rate and 96% identification](#) on product tour videos, while [40% of its conversations](#) are driven by video.

Through short tours, long webinars and all the content in-between, video is radically transforming inbound marketing. At the same time, it is overhauling outbound sales from prospecting through closing.





Tailoring Video Content

Once buyers have worked their way through the marketing funnel and are ready to engage with sales, video content plays an outsized role in converting those leads. Recent research from [Demand Metric](#) shows a [93% year-over-year increase](#) in the number of businesses using video for sales prospecting and engagement. Of those using video, [94% report](#) that it performs as well as, if not better than, other outreach forms.

In fact, [76% of sales leaders believe](#) that remote sales interactions are equally or more effective than traditional in-person engagement in prospecting for new customers.

Emails that feature video links have resulted in up to [4X more responses for sales teams](#) at companies like HubSpot, and adding video content to emails can [reduce opt-outs by 75%](#). In fact, just using the word “video” in an email subject line makes it [8X more likely](#) to be opened. Videos in emails are changing the way that sales teams prospect, and they’re having even greater success when they personalize videos for individual leads.

“When a lead comes in, I make them a video between 45 seconds and 75 seconds, and I send it to them within five to six minutes of them signing up on our website,” says AJ Amiel, SDR at [#paid](#), a Toronto-based marketing platform creator and Winner of Vidyard’s 2020 Visual Selling Team of the Year award.



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Breaking the ice with a video allows an authentic relationship to develop by making a prospective customer feel seen as an individual, more comfortable and thus more likely to want to engage.

“The goal is to set a good impression at the top of the funnel to provide a good customer experience,” noted Amiel.

Amiel uses a simple dry-erase marker and whiteboard to write out the prospect’s name and their company’s name so the prospect can see that it is not a generic pitch. Amiel also personalizes his videos with props, including the time he sent a video of himself holding a bag of wax to a candle company to show them that he makes candles at home.

“I wasn’t sure what the results would be,” said Amiel. “It’s weird just putting yourself out there. But once you do it, once you get reps in, it’s great.”

It’s been great for #paid, too: The company saw response rates increase 5X for outbound prospecting and 2.5X for the number of sales opportunities generated since using video outreach.

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[Digital 22](#), a HubSpot marketing agency in the UK and winner of Vidyard’s 2020 Video Mastery Award, uses tailored video content to follow up on its initial outreach to potential clients. Discussing an initiative to register contacts for a training event, Head of Growth Paul Mortimer recalled, “I reached out to 50 people and did not get through to one person. I left voicemails and I left word to pass it on with no response. But, when I followed it up with a video, I heard back from every single person.”

Mortimer thinks that the personalized videos in the emails made a connection. He says he typically smiles and waves in the animated thumbnail and enunciates each contact’s name so they see he’s talking directly and uniquely to them. “It’s still a novelty, and that helps connect,” he added.

However, Mortimer pointed out that best practices for tailoring video means more than just targeted content; *when* you send a video is just as important as *what* you send.


“You don’t just send every email with a video,” Mortimer advised. “It’s a strategy that you apply, a skill you need to practice. It’s before and after a meeting. It’s after a call. It’s tactical when you do it.”

This strategic approach to video is an important part of Digital 22’s success, and the company credits video with transforming their business by:

- Doubling website traffic;
- Increasing website form submissions by 63% across the board; and
- Upping price guide submission rates by 10%.

While tailored video content is clearly the next frontier for both sales and marketing teams, video is not simply one-size-fits-all. Content that resonates with one buyer will not necessarily work for the next. Measuring the success of video content is crucial for planning future outreach campaigns.





Measuring Video Strategies To Fuel Future Initiatives

While buyers are pursuing *what* they want, *when* they want it and *where* they want it, diligent organizations are analyzing their data to figure out just what, when and where that is. [Seventy-three percent of companies report](#) they are using some form of video analytics to track video content effectiveness, and nearly [90% of sales professionals report](#) the increasing importance of accessing video viewing data to qualify leads, engage prospects or influence deals.

Each of the companies referenced in this report are award-winning for the content they create, their ability to analyze that content's results and how they adapt their strategies accordingly.

At Digital 22, the company uses analytics to assess the success of the videos, digging deeper into the data than simply tracking views.

“When it comes to comparing one client’s success with video to another, we don’t track views because it’s not meaningful,” said Mortimer. “We had one client who could put the world’s worst video out and get 20,000 views, just because they had that big an audience. Whereas you’d have another client who was lucky to get 20 views. But, in the end, they both had the same conversion rate.”

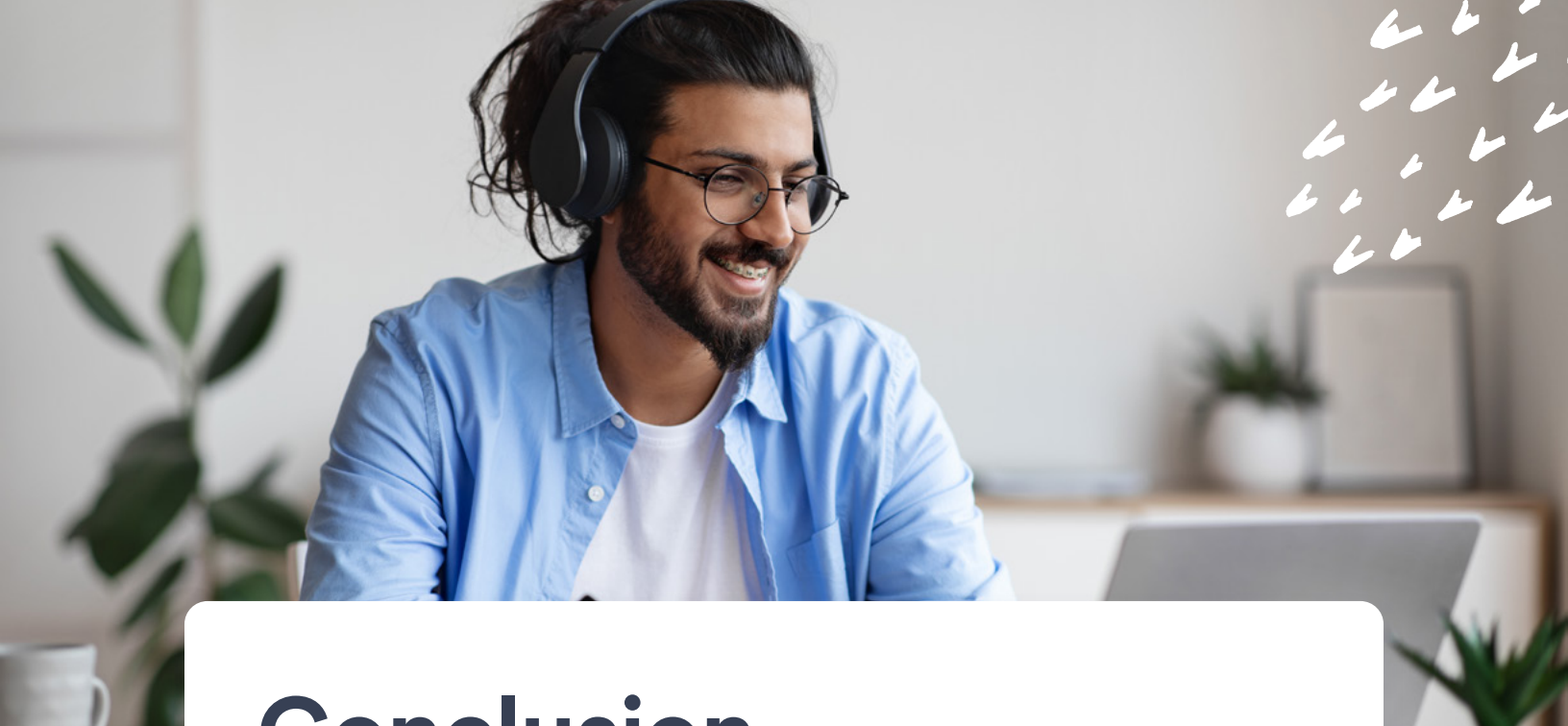


For #paid, Amiel can instantly track his emailed videos on a dashboard and measure their success. Looking at his screen, he stated, “I have a 79% open rate on 116 videos; 56% have clicked on it and 21% have replied, so that’s pretty good.”

Being able to see what works (and what doesn’t) helps Amiel modify his approach with videos to future prospects. But the one thing he knows for sure from his metrics is that video has been a game-changer.

“For me, it’s night and day when I send videos,” he explained. “A solid chunk of my conversions are on the first day, with the first video touchpoint, or the second day, when I follow up on the video.”

While each company uses video in a unique way, they all analyze their video data and work to maximize their video efforts. The ability of sales and marketing teams to measure their content is a vital part of video’s impact and success.



Conclusion

Video content is transforming the buyer’s journey by offering a friction-free, self-service experience. Forward-thinking organizations are creating video content tailored to individual buyers and prospects. As a result, sales and marketing teams are measuring the success of those videos with detailed analytics to fuel even stronger and more targeted future campaigns.

From “how-to” videos and training webinars to outbound prospecting emails, video content is transforming the future of sales and marketing. To learn more about how your organization can create impactful videos and give your buyers the journey that they want, [watch this three-minute video](#) to find out how Vidyard can help!



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