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Marketing Videos in Disguise: Tips for Making a Video Ad That Doesn't Look Like an Ad

Not all marketing videos are created equal. And video advertising today is a world different than it was just a few years ago. At one time, the only way to advertise with video was with a 30-second or 60-second television commercial. But the Internet, tablets and smart phones have changed all that!

While there is certainly nothing wrong with producing a 30-second or 1-minute video to sell your product or service, those videos are unlikely to go viral. The marketing videos that garner millions of views on YouTube tend to have one thing in common: they don't look like advertising.

As a local business owner, chances are your videos won't go "viral" per se, but there are some creative ways to get as much juice out of them as you can.

How do you disguise a marketing video? It's easy, really. All you need to do is craft a story about something related to your product. People love stories! When you give viewers a narrative to follow, you engage them in a different way than you would with a traditional advertisement. You give them something to care about.

Some of the most effective "in disguise" marketing videos use humor to tell a story about a product.

For instance, Friskies Cat Food has produced a series of videos featuring a world-weary older cat welcoming a new kitten to the house. The voice over is the kind of thing any cat owner can appreciate. The initial video was three minutes long, and the first mention



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of Friskies happened at about two minutes. It got more than 22 million views on YouTube.

Ads of this nature are powerful for entertaining viewers. It was shared repeatedly on social media and certainly helped this brand in terms of both awareness and ultimately, sales.

Tips for Making Your Own Disguised Ad

If you want to try your hand at making this type of video, here are a few tips to help you out:

1. Brainstorm ideas that have to do with your product, but aren't actually *about* your product. For example, a wedding planner might do a video that featured a unique proposal. As mentioned earlier, adding a humor twist when appropriate is likely to increase the number of times your video is shared.
2. Use up-to-date videos. If you're doing screencast style videos, be sure to use current styles such as PowerPoint videos, Whiteboard videos, or Animated Explainer videos to help tell your story and further engage viewers.
3. Hire a professional writer. Writing a great narrative script is not easy. Unless you already know something about storytelling and script writing, make the up-front investment and hire a pro. The quality you get will make the expenditure worthwhile.
4. Include a late call to action. Just because you are disguising your advertisement in a story doesn't mean you don't need a call to action. Make sure to put it late in the video so you don't break up the story.



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5. Cast good actors. The story needs to be delivered well to work; so if you're casting live actors, be sure to hold auditions and pick the right cast to tell your story effectively.

As opposed to a "hard-selling" traditional ad, a well-made video story can be more effective at selling your product or service. If you have the budget to produce one, it can pay for itself many times over.

When you're ready to produce your marketing videos, Cigma Media is here to help. Just contact your Associate Producer or email us at info@cigmamedia.com.