

The little purple book of
video marketing
for HE and FE marketers



OVER 80,000 VIEWS

Within three months of the film's launch

1,596 REGISTRATIONS

For an advice and guidance appointment

17.7% INCREASE

In applications by young people aged 16-18 (compared to 2015)

Northampton College

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“ Videos use emotion to tell stories in ways that most other forms of marketing cannot. I received an email from a student who attends the University of Pennsylvania. She saw a Penn video on YouTube as she was researching universities and she fell in love with the school without even having a chance to visit. ”

DAVID MEERMAN SCOTT
The New Rules of Marketing & PR

Video marketing stats

AMMO FOR BUILDING
A CASE INTERNALLY

If your college or university is new to video marketing, use these stats to back up your business case for investing in film and animation content:

1.8
MILLION

Number of words
that one minute
of video is worth

Dr James McQuiverty
of Forrester Research

9/10

Generation Z-ers (under
20s) visit YouTube at
least once per week

Sparks & Honey 2015 Report

96%

Improvement in click
through rates when
a marketing email
includes a video

Implix email marketing survey

8/10

Internet users remember
watching a promotional
video in the past 30 days

Online Publishers Association

1,200%

Percentage increase in number of shares for video compared to links and text

Simply Measured

6/10

Visitors will watch a video, if one is available, before reading any text on a webpage

Diode Digital

800%

Percentage increase in conversion rates for landing pages with a video compared to those without video

FunnelScience

3/4

B2C marketers say video is the most effective of all the different types of web content

The 2015 State of Digital Marketing by Web Marketing 123

9/10

Visitors remain on a site longer if it has prominent video

MistMedia

79%

Of website traffic will come via video content by 2019

Social Media Examiner

7/10

People view a brand more positively after watching interesting video content from that brand

Axon Research



For years, video content has been heralded as 'the future of marketing'. As these stats show, that time has come and video is proving to be the key tool for marketers right now.



“ The final selection of a University often comes down to a spontaneous and uncontrolled sense that it feels right... The decision can be extremely emotive. ”

**ABIGAIL DIAMOND, TIM VORLEY,
JENNIFER ROBERTS & STEPHEN JONES**

Behavioural Approaches to Understanding Student Choice (2012), research commissioned by the Higher Education Authority and the National Union of Students

Video strategy sat nav

SIX QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE YOU COMMISSION OR CREATE A VIDEO

Creating video without a strategy is like getting in your car just to go for a drive. Hopefully you'll enjoy the journey, but it probably won't be your most productive trip.

Instead, we recommend you answer these six questions before you create or commission any video content for your college or university. They are the why, who, what, where, when and how of video strategy.

1

WHY ARE YOU CREATING THIS VIDEO?

What is the specific objective you want to achieve and which metric will you use to measure success against that objective?

WORKED EXAMPLE

Our objective is to increase Open Day attendance at University XYZ, so we'll measure how many people register for our next open event after watching it.

2

WHO ARE YOU TARGETING?

Who are you speaking to and at what stage of their decision-making cycle? The more diverse the target audience, the more diluted the impact of your video, so be selective.

WORKED EXAMPLE

We want to target prospective students, aged 16-17, who live within a 50 mile radius.

3

WHAT IS YOUR MAIN MESSAGE & CALL TO ACTION?

What is the core takeaway you want viewers to remember after watching this video? Which call to action will best bridge from that message to the objective you defined for Q1?

WORKED EXAMPLE

Our main message is that our Open Day will help viewers to decide whether the course they have in mind is right for them, no matter which university they are considering. Sample lectures will be delivered for each School of Study and careers advisors will be available for one-to-one guidance. The call to action is to register via a unique landing page so they can pre-book the activities they want to attend.

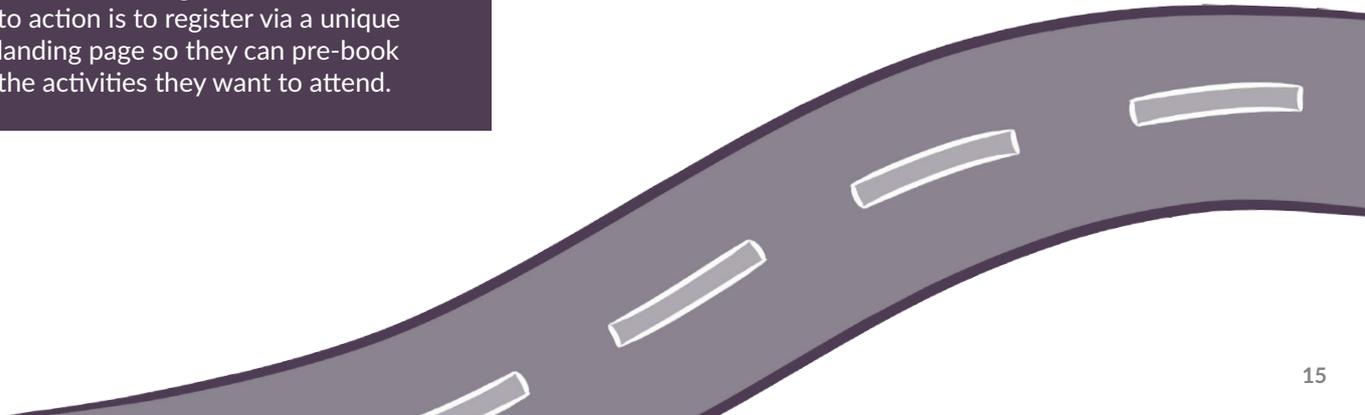
4

WHERE WILL YOU PLACE THE VIDEO?

This covers the distribution and promotion tactics you will use to get your video in front of the right eyeballs, in the desired quantities. Consider your owned, earned and paid-for channels separately.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Watching the video will be the main CTA across our website. We'll email a link to our database of prospective students. We'll also create paid campaigns on Facebook and YouTube.



5

WHEN WILL YOU USE THIS VIDEO?

When is the optimum time to launch your video? Is there a specific date you need it for? Work backwards from this date, allowing three months for an epic promotional film, or up to three weeks for small projects. How long do you want it to last for? Do you need to avoid showing or mentioning anything that will soon become outdated?

WORKED EXAMPLE

We want the video ready in time to promote our first open event of the academic year, which is perfect timing for 17 year-olds who are just starting to narrow down their options. We want to use it for at least two years, so don't want the dates of open events included in the video.

6

HOW SHOULD THE VIDEO LOOK / FEEL?

This leaves the most fun – but potentially distracting – creative considerations until last. Only once you've figured out what you need the video to achieve can you make effective decisions about creative treatments.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Our video should be fast-paced, energetic and short (max 90 seconds), with cinematic-quality production values, quick edits and a punchy music track.

Your answers to these questions will be like tapping a postcode into your satnav - they'll make sure you know where you're going and how to get there.



“ Working with Clearhead on a variety of projects has been fantastic. They delivered a high quality creative product on time, and with great communication and collaboration throughout the process. All of the feedback I received on the videos they produced has been more than positive. I wouldn't hesitate to use Clearhead again for future projects. ”

BRANDON PAZITKA
University of Hertfordshire

Six things to do before you start filming

PRE-PRODUCTION TIPS

1 EXPECT TO SPEND THE BULK OF THE PROJECT DURATION IN PRE-PRODUCTION

The more thoroughly planned everything is before production starts, the smoother the whole process becomes. That's why two months of a three-month project are typically spent planning and preparing. Everything is discussed, agreed and documented in advance, so everyone is clear exactly what shots will be captured (and why, how, where and with who) during the production days.

2 PLAN YOUR SOCIAL ELEMENTS FROM THE START

If your video content is destined for social media, plan and create a specific version from the start. Wide shots look amazing on a desktop, but are tiny on a phone screen. Ask your agency to keep a square frame in mind and then maximise use of that space for your social edit. In addition, social viewers only hang around for three seconds before deciding whether to continue watching, so get to the point. Quickly.



3 INVOLVE STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT

Students bring a lot to your video content: the target audience's point of view, increased authenticity and a readily available cast. Recruit students to take part in pitches and focus groups, to appear on-screen and to feedback on edits. At Clearhead, we also facilitate student-led behind-the-scenes productions, offer internships and deliver free-of-charge talks and workshops.

4 TIE VIDEO CONTENT INTO WIDER CAMPAIGNS

Take a strategic approach to your video content, planning and promoting it as part of wider campaigns. Look for opportunities to cross-pollinate campaign elements across different formats. Could the stars of your promotional film also be featured in the prospectus and in online blogs? If so, carry out interviews and take professional photographs of them during shoot breaks.

5 BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE

Losing focus dilutes impact. If you have more than one objective, achieve them through individual videos. It's the same as other types of marketing content. If you try to communicate too much, or speak to too many different types of people, you'll end up saying "nothin' to no-one". Where will this video live? What do you want people to remember? What do you want them to do next?

6 GET STAFF INVOLVED EARLY

No matter how brilliant and successful your video content, internal stakeholders will be most supportive if they feel that they can take some of the credit. Early on, identify who needs to be consulted about decisions, and who just needs to be kept informed. If staff first hear of your epic promotional film when they see it playing as an advert at the local cinema, they will (understandably) feel put out, rather than proud.

We've also seen that the clearer the brief, the more effective the result. Test your brief against the six questions starting on **page 12** to check for anything you've missed.



“ Clearhead made a project that was very last minute and an anticipated headache very easy. We were working to a tight deadline and an uncertain filming schedule, but their flexibility and professionalism meant we ended up with a promotional film that our Dean was so happy with, he asked me to hire them again! ”

ALISON CURTIS

City University London

More bang for your buck

GET VALUE FOR MONEY FROM
YOUR VIDEO CONTENT

OPT FOR A CREATIVE TREATMENT YOU CAN BUILD ON

Education marketing is cyclical. Each year, you are marketing to a new audience who won't have seen (or paid much attention to) your previous efforts. Take advantage of this by creating something that you can recycle and develop further. For example, we created a promotional video for Northampton College that shows three separate student stories. Stories focusing on students from different courses can be created in the same style in future years. This means the college can re-use the existing creative concept and general campus scenes, making the most out of their initial investment.

SQUEEZE THE PROJECT FOR ADDITIONAL CONTENT OPPORTUNITIES

The cost of creating additional edits is small compared to the costs of planning and production. From the start, think about how to squeeze as much valuable content as possible from the project. For example, when creating a promotional video for the City of Westminster College, we also captured enough content to create additional edits for each curriculum area. They used these as standalone pieces of video to target prospective students with content relevant to their intended area of study.

FILM MULTIPLE PROJECTS AT THE SAME TIME

Plan your filming days to capture footage for several projects during one production block. Once a film crew is set up and on site at your college or university, there are significant economies of scale from capturing additional footage at the same time. Planning in advance also opens up opportunities to be more creative with your video content. For example, you could tell a story over several weeks, or build up anticipation of an event or launch with a series of teaser videos.

DOUBLE UP ON CONTENT WITH A STUDENT-LED PEEK BEHIND THE SCENES

If your institution runs a film production course, invite students from that department to create a behind-the-scenes video. This will provide free, additional content for your marketing efforts; showing what went into a shoot can be just as interesting as watching the final production. It also gives students real-world experience of being on a professional shoot, and can provide an assessment opportunity, too.

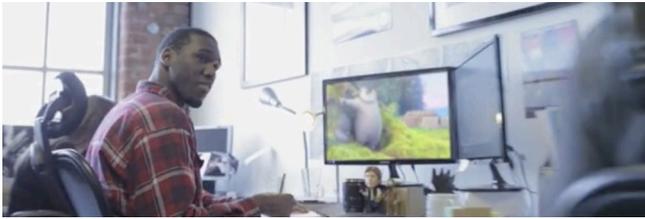
NAIL THE BRIEF

A lot of time and money can be wasted on video content that doesn't have a clear purpose. If you know exactly what you want each video to achieve, you'll have a head start on achieving value for money straight away. You'll also have a stronger business case in the first place: an epic promotional video that costs more but leads to a 10% increase in enrolments will have a greater return than a cheaper but much less effective piece of content.

FUTURE-PROOF YOUR VIDEOS BY UPPING QUALITY STANDARDS

Videos tend to look dated after about two years. You can bump this up by an additional year or two by working with suppliers who work ahead of today's quality standards. This lifespan extension helps to make the initial premium of higher quality more worthwhile in ROI terms. In addition, the improved first impression of your college or university's brand is an extra advantage.

These six ideas are just the start: tell us about your project and we'll make some suggestions on maximising value for money that are specific to your circumstances and challenges. Email sarah@weareclearhead.com or call **01582 410892**.



“ The team from Clearhead were likeable, highly motivated and easy to communicate with throughout the process. I would recommend Clearhead without hesitation to other colleges and universities who want to stand out from their competitors and showcase their unique qualities in a way that is so inspiring yet unexpected in the education sector. ”

THERESA ANN DROWLEY OBE

Redbridge College

How to make sure your videos are findable

YOUR VIDEO SEO CHECKLIST

Is video SEO part of your distribution and promotion strategy? Great video content is useless if your target audience can't find it. The following checklist will give your videos the best possible chance of being found through natural searches online:

CREATE A UNIQUE LANDING PAGE FOR EACH VIDEO

Search engines will be better able to find and index your video content if each video is on a separate landing page. Include relevant content in other formats on the same page. For example, if your video is boasting about your college or university's great location, include an interactive map of the area, a gallery of local images or a blog piece about the great things to do nearby. Optimise each of these elements on the landing page for the same phrase as your video.

HOST YOUR VIDEO CONTENT ON YOUR OWN PLATFORM

YouTube may be the default platform for video, but it is not always in your interests to use it. That's because the SEO value of any content you publish gets credited to YouTube, not your domain. Host on YouTube if reaching the widest audience and social interaction are your priorities. If you want to scoop up the SEO juice for your own website, you're better off hosting your content yourself. To get the best of both options, one option is to put previews and teasers on YouTube, then use in-video annotations and links in the description to drive traffic to watch the main content on your site.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR METADATA

Metadata refers to the text fields that accompany a video file, such as the title and description. They influence whether viewers decide to view your video or not, and are also used by search bots to make sense of your video. Keep both the title and description concise and use copywriting skills to make them compelling. Include your keywords but avoid marketing-speak like "watch our new promo video". Longer titles and descriptions will be truncated when displayed, although the full text will still be indexed by the search engines.



TRANSCRIBE YOUR VIDEO

Transcribing your video brings two main benefits. Firstly, viewers with hearing impairments (or those who are watching it silently) will still be able to access the content. Secondly, the repetition of keywords in the transcription will support your SEO efforts by helping the search engines to make sense of your video. Add the transcription to the HTML on the page your video is hosted or embedded on, or upload a caption file if you are using YouTube or Vimeo.



PICK A POWERFUL THUMBNAIL

The thumbnail you choose can dramatically impact your video's play rate. It needs to reflect the nature of your college or university's brand but also effectively convey what viewers can expect to see in the video. You can use frames from your video as the thumbnail of your video, or you can upload an image. Make sure that any text used on a thumbnail is sufficiently clear and readable even if the image is scaled down (e.g. when viewed on a smartphone).



CREATE NEW CONTENT THAT ADDRESSES SEARCH QUERIES

Create content that answers FAQs or provides new information. To perform well in searches, your videos need to deliver the best answer to a problem or provide information that's not readily available elsewhere. What search queries do your target audience enter into Google? Create content that helps them solve that problem.



SET UP YOUR SCHEMA MARKUP

Schema markup is additional code that you can include in the HTML of your webpage. Adding it makes sure your content can be returned on the search results pages in the way you want it to be. It's a project jointly created by Google, Microsoft, Yahoo and Yandex – so applies equally across all search engines. You can find out more about schema markup at schema.org.

Optimising your promotional video content using these seven steps will only help if you've followed the number one rule of video creation: don't be boring! Don't make videos that nobody wants to watch; always tailor them to your audience for the best chance of success.



“ Clearhead are a great bunch to work with: professional and amenable. Their body of filmed work speaks for itself in terms of having very high production value, but what is equally impressive is their ability to interpret a brief and easily adapt their cinematic aesthetic to the subject in hand. We required an engaging, stylish film that was on-message and delivered in a very short space of time - and that is exactly what we got. Impressive stuff. ”

STEVE CORBETT

University of Hertfordshire

Any questions?

FAQS FROM OUR EDUCATION CLIENTS

HOW MUCH DOES A PROFESSIONAL FILM COST?

It depends. Videos of 'talking heads' will obviously cost a lot less than an epic promotional film. As a guide, our clients spend between £3,000 and £30,000 with us on each project.

IS IT BETTER TO STAGE EACH SCENE OR CAPTURE REAL PROCEEDINGS 'LIVE'?

Where it is possible to plan and stage each shot we prefer to do so for marketing/promotional films. We've found that trying to get footage without staging shots results in too many compromises. Firstly, filming during lessons is disruptive and distracting to students. Secondly, it's not always possible to get the lighting, background or people exactly how we want them when we are not fully in control of proceedings. This results in a diluted execution of the creative concept for your film.

However, authenticity is important. Wherever possible, we cast real staff and students in roles and supportively coach them on-set to get the best, most natural-looking results from them for maximum authenticity. We are experienced in working through real stories (e.g. of current students or alumni) and selecting the most powerful ones to use as genuine narratives for our films and animations.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

The more notice you can give for a project, the better the outcome will be (and the less stressed you will feel!). However, we realise that education marketers don't always get the benefit of long lead times, especially for smaller projects!

A very simple shoot can be planned, filmed and edited within two or three weeks. For a larger-scale, cinematic promotional film, allow up to three months to complete the pre-production, production and post-production phases.

COULDN'T I JUST GET MY MEDIA STUDENTS/VIDEO TECHNICIAN/IPHONE TO CREATE A PROMOTIONAL FILM?

You could, but you risk a poor first impression. Just as you wouldn't print your prospectus on nasty paper using a horrific design (we hope), consider what the quality and style of your video says about your college or university. Wobbly frames, unclear or jarring audio, unflattering shots, copycat ideas and lack of pace or emotion makes your college or university look unprofessional and unappealing.

At the same time, budgets aren't infinite and your institution needs to demonstrate value for money. That's why having a clear objective and metrics for success in place from the start helps to keep the content focused and track your video's effectiveness.

HOW DO CLEARHEAD ADD VALUE?

- Our prices are inclusive of end-to-end strategic consultancy, helping you to quickly transition from only a handful of YouTube views to a film-savvy, student-recruitment machine in no time.
- We work well ahead of today's quality standards, which means your film or animation will still generate 'wows' in three years' time, rather than looking old after 12 months.
- We'll use the creation of your film or animation as a learning opportunity for your college or university students. For example, we can facilitate for media students to create a behind-the-scenes documentary of the production of your project and deliver free-of-charge talks and workshops. We offer internships and regularly recruit and train our employees directly from the universities we deal with.

Got a question not listed here? We're happy to answer it. Email sarah@weareclearhead.com or call us on **01582 410892**.

Hall of Fame

CLEARHEAD'S EDUCATION CLIENTS

The knowledge in this little book is based on our experience working with some great clients in the education sector, including:





“ The Clearhead team took our messages and translated the core of what we are about into a compelling narrative. Everyone who has seen the film has felt moved by it and it has taken our film offering to a new level.

“ A shortened edit was broadcast in cinemas as part of the 2015 summer campaign and incorporated across digital marketing channels in the group’s summer and late campaigns. These campaigns supported the group in meeting its recruitment targets for 2015-16. ”

JONATHAN GOODE

Activate Learning

Let's talk about you

FANCY A COFFEE?

Invite us in and let's discuss whether video can help you to achieve your objectives. We'll share insights from across the education and commercial sectors and show you our latest work for other colleges and universities. Email sarah@weareclearhead.com or call **01582 410892**.



Gavin O'Brien worked at BBC Worldwide and QVC before co-founding Clearhead. He remains at the helm of the company as Business Director and is responsible for ensuring clients are delighted.



Sarah Plater is our Education New Business Strategist. She joins us after five years as Marketing Manager at Redbridge College, during which time she was a Clearhead client.

70,000 VIEWS

Between July and October 2016

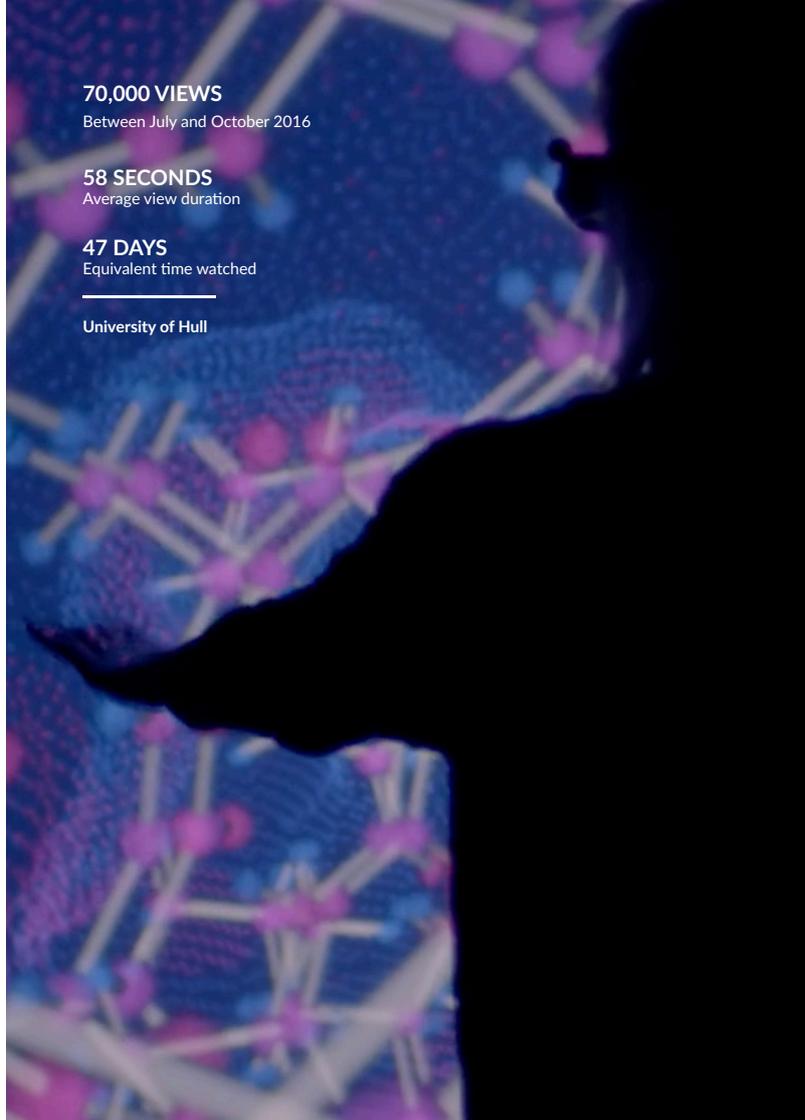
58 SECONDS

Average view duration

47 DAYS

Equivalent time watched

University of Hull





sarah@weareclearhead.com | 01582 410892

weareclearhead.com

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