

Streaming Video:

Video:

Effective Engagement Tool

CONCURRENT WITH THE CONTINUOUS EVOLUTION OF MOBILE LEARNING, THERE WILL LIKELY BE A SIMILAR EVOLUTION IN THE USE OF VIDEO.

BY STEVE ZUCKERMAN



Video is a powerful tool to communicate and exchange information with a high level of engagement. And we all know that the better the transfer of knowledge, the better the user will take it in, minimizing the risks of negative outcomes.

Not only that, but it's becoming more and more popular with the new wave of more tech-savvy employees, who are replacing the retiring Baby Boomer generation. According to research from Bersin by Deloitte, in one

month alone — May 2012 — 163 million unique video viewers streamed more than 26 billion videos, watching for about 5.8 hours on average.

Research shows these younger generations live online in increasingly mobile and social ways. It's where they get their news on current events and communicate with friends and family. Research conducted by International Data Corp. predicts the mobile Web will replace wired Internet as soon as 2015.

Maybe that's why a recent survey by the Masie Center found that 30 percent of organizations worldwide are piloting the use of mobile and tablet devices for

learning purposes. These companies might be responding to the evolving communications habits and learning-style preferences of their workers.

Thus, video is quickly becoming an essential value-add for both on-demand and mobile learning apps because it is flexible, self-governed and self-sustained. On-demand videos allow learners to consume knowledge that is personalized, highly accessible, and can rapidly be applied to their work efforts.

"People are just naturally more easily and instantly engaged by the human face and voice," observes David Mallon of Bersin. "As a result, the use of video, as well as audio, voice-over-IP and collaboration tools can help bridge the gap between self-paced e-learning and face-to-face instructor-led training. For product training, instructors may use a video camera to demonstrate the use of the prod-

uct. When used as part of a virtual classroom for management or other soft-skills training, video can help facilitate student interactions in breakout rooms.”

Nancy Kondas, of DuPont Sustainable Solutions Product Development for Learning & Development, agrees on the practically unlimited horizons for video learning. “It’s an interesting and exciting time. If you look at the way we consume information — the Internet, flat text, Facebook to Instagram — there are more apps for just pushing out video. There is an increase in activity in delivering broadband content.

“In the past, we weren’t able to do things at the quality level that was evident in the professional broadcasting industry. But today, that’s all changed. Tools have become more acceptable and easy to use, enabled by broadband. The whole paradigm is changing and giving us a lot more opportunity.”

The Masie Center is tracking a rise in the use of short video as a supplement to the learning process at major organizations. A key driver, says Elliot Masie, is the desire of learners to hear context and work examples from multiple voices. “The more the video segments focus on targeted bursts of context, including the ‘back story’ or ‘field truth,’ the more learner consumption and appreciation grows,” Masie says. Bottom line: you deliver more effective training.

Other reasons that video learning positively differentiates itself from traditional learning:

- >> It can provide information in about half the time as words alone.
- >> It offers employees the chance to gather, access and process information at their own pace, and they don’t have to do it in a traditional learning environment. They can watch a training video when it is convenient (during downtime) or when it is needed (like solving a workplace dilemma).
- >> It supports corporate communications, global learning and change management.
- >> It’s more interesting and engaging than

manuals, PowerPoints and classroom instruction alone.

- >> It can be paired with assessments or used to reinforce learning objectives after classroom training or an online training event.
- >> It’s a powerful way to show the audience

showing proper techniques globally in a consistent manner.

- >> It is an effective means of providing corrective information or explanations delivered by top leaders to a wide range of constituencies, even if these extend to multiple company sites around the globe.

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the proper ways of performing tasks without subjecting them to hazardous conditions.

- >> Its storytelling ability can transport learners into certain situations applicable to their jobs, allowing them to better understand the consequences of their actions and thus discouraging them from making poor decisions.
- >> It can be both an effective and flexible tool for overcoming corporate challenges, solving internal problems and

- >> Its production costs have come down drastically in last few years. Using a camera phone, recording a video (of acceptable quality) is relatively easy and at almost no cost. This sort of video works well when a “how-to” video is needed efficiently to explain a new and important process.



MINIMAL BUT REAL DOWNSIDES

Like many ideas that are still in the development or acceptance stage, there are some downsides to learning via video.

For instance, the question of hosting video and bandwidth is always an issue. Corporate I.T. departments are always wary of anything that will increase the load on their networks.

Creating videos on your own can pose a raft of problems if not done properly. Among the clients we've talked to say that trainers need to be able to effectively convey their messages in a video format, which requires a whole different approach than face-to-face training.

So if you're creating produced video, even "on the fly," you'll need additional tools and skill sets. And if it's employee-generated video, then you need to address content stewardship (accuracy, business alignment, privacy, risk, etc.) issues and perhaps moderation.

Finally, there's a small possibility that injecting video into a training lesson can be distracting if it's used gratuitously.

GREAT FOR COMPLIANCE

Video is especially popular in the corporate community for continuous training (such as refresher courses, or the types of training that provide reinforcement for post-training activities or topics). It is commonly used for other technical training specifically related to the company's operational environment.

Some of the greatest results can be seen in the area of compliance training. Common subjects include safety skills, legal issues (including sensitivity training and anti-discrimination), and maintenance and reliability skills to name only a few.

DuPont Sustainable Solutions clients come to us because they know video is something their employees are demanding of them. And they know that when they're dealing with compliance topics, or when they can't command the room with something that's engaging, the transfer of

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information isn't going to happen. From a safety standpoint, the efficient transfer of available knowledge is sometimes even a matter of life-and-death.



KEY TRENDS IN VIDEO LEARNING

Learning professionals agree that corporations should be doing more video training, if for no other reason than its popularity in their employees' everyday lives is growing at an astounding rate.

But they've learned that they need total buy-in from corporate management before embarking on an expanded video training program. The most effective approach is to convince their leaders beforehand that shifting from the traditional instructor-led classroom event to a more user-driven, on-demand learning culture will pay off in both the long- and short-term.

DuPont's most successful learning and development clients are those who use video as part of a "blended" approach. This means incorporating video into all learning events: classroom/instructor-led and self-paced online learning.

Along with the mobile learning evolution, there will likely continue to be a fast evolution in the use of video, driven by two factors that separate Internet-enabled mobile video content from video content delivered on DVD: (1) portability; and (2) proximity to wireless Internet access.

These two differentiators will likely continue to enable a more user-centered experience,

providing learners with more control of the content they are consuming.

While professional video projects are still great for corporate functions like onboarding and major product releases, there is a trend toward the "democratization" of video occurring — the smartphone camera effect.

"We know that people are going to places like YouTube for free training, so we have to make sure we can provide streaming video at the highest quality possible," explains DuPont's Kondas. "We had to figure out how to play in that same space as commercial products." ⓘ

—The author is software products manager at DuPont Sustainable Solutions, charged with developing the software platform that delivers the company's proprietary video learning content.