

Exploring the Different Types of Multimedia Content

WITHOUT A DOUBT, multimedia content has taken over the internet, with brands creating content packages that all tie back to a single concept and marketers weaving different styles and content types into their creations. Why are so many companies using multimedia, and how do they all seem to do it so well? We'll answer these questions in this white paper.

Let's take a deep dive into the role of [multimedia content](#) in your branding and lead generation strategies. We'll then review different types of content to add to your blog or website. Next, we'll talk about different tools for creating amazing multimedia content along with various goals to set when starting the creation process. Working with multimedia is one of the harder aspects of content creation, but its ROI (return on investment) is more than worth the time and effort.

What Is Multimedia Content?



As its name implies, multimedia content pulls from multiple forms of media to create something engaging for audiences. This process might involve creating interactive infographics with compelling images and an intro video or letting users click on pop-up text boxes throughout the experience.

In many ways, marketers have become pros at weaving multimedia content together — they just never realized it.

WHY IS MULTIMEDIA CONTENT USED?

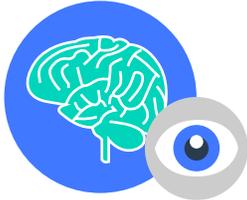
Marketers can't assume that their audiences learn the same way. They have to cater to visual learners, auditory learners, and kinesthetic learners who all approach content in different ways. Multimedia content allows a brand to approach its customers through the customers'

learning styles and create something that interests them. For example, videos and podcasts will interest your auditory learners, while kinesthetic learners will head for your interactive infographics.

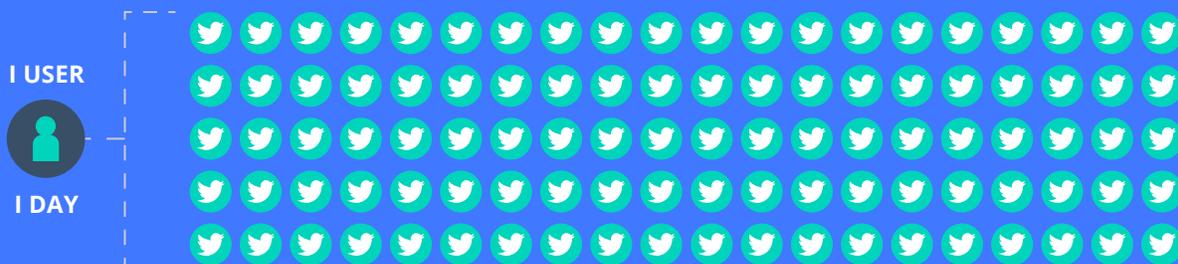
In addition, the brain processes information in different ways. [Highly visual content](#) stays in the long-term memory — rather than the short-term memory for written content — and gets processed faster as well. By creating multimedia content,

your audience can understand your message faster and remember it longer, which is the goal of any marketing campaign.

Multimedia content taps into these different learning styles and appeals to almost all learners. Marketers often choose a specific message or big idea and make it the center of the content when they're trying to rebrand or sell a specific concept. For example, many companies created multimedia content around the 2016 Rio Olympics because the Olympics allows them to align their brand with the athletes' traits: active, determined, and



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youthful. Every company from sports drinks to breath mints is trying to establish itself with that type of branding.

WHY IS MULTIMEDIA CONTENT BENEFICIAL TO YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY?

Primarily, multimedia content lets your brand stand out in a sea of blog articles and static listicles. Many messages get shared on social media every day, and companies, brands, and influencers post so much content that it's challenging to make your voice heard above the rest. For example, Twitter's collective users post an average of [347,222 tweets per minute](#), and many users tweet more than 100 times per day. If your brand shares only a couple of blog articles per day, you can easily get swept away in the chaos and become ignored. Multimedia content has a greater chance of going viral and tapping into those social influencers who can keep sharing your content and making sure it gets noticed.

Multimedia content also has a longer shelf life than traditional written content and static graphics. A blog or website that publishes an article or two per week isn't going to see a huge bump in traffic unless a larger website or influencer mentions the source. However, many companies create large outreach plans to make sure the multimedia pieces get noticed. After all, if your company is investing a significant chunk of your budget to create a video or interactive infographic, you want to make sure that content provides a strong ROI and hits your lead generation goals. In some cases, a company

can see a bump in traffic or mentions that last three to six months after the first content launch.

Audiences often see a bump in multimedia content when a brand launches a new product or a new season starts. Pool cleaners and ice cream companies tend to launch multimedia content in the spring and summer when their products are most often used. Not only does this approach convey a "big idea," but it also serves as a public relations opportunity to announce the start of the season and the company's offerings. Plus, the shelf life means that content created at the start of the season can generate shares and leads until the end.

Explore the Different Types of Multimedia Content

Once you're sold on the benefits of multimedia content, the next challenge is identifying what kind you want to create. This white paper will start with a general overview of the different types of content and then delve into the goals and benefits of each one.



Video Content

Smartphones and screen recordings have made video content one of the easiest forms of multimedia to produce. However, quantity never

rivals quality, and marketers looking to invest in video content need to have a plan for standing out.

ANIMATED VIDEO

Animated video content covers everything from Gumby-like stop-motion creations to cartoon animals. Like infographics, animated videos add whimsy to branded topics without crossing the threshold of unprofessional.

Before creating an animated video, make sure the concept matches your branding. You don't want to create something childish or off-brand that confuses or isolates your audience. This point is especially true when incorporating humor into your video content. You might find something hilarious, but others might find it dumb or offensive.

LIVE VIDEO

As apps such as Periscope continue to grow and Facebook expands its live-video streaming program, more companies are testing live video. This form of content is particularly popular at conferences where the company is a sponsor or where the CEO is speaking, but live video is also found in the production process and for office tours.

Live video content also works with roundtables and webinars. Many companies — CopyPress included — host live webinars, which are then converted into YouTube videos. This type of content generates the buzz of a live event with the staying power of a scripted video.

TEXT

The last form of multimedia video content is text videos. These videos can either be tutorials that offer instructions and come with images or ones that convey messages over a moving soundtrack. Upworthy often shares text videos that talk about a moving story or injustice, which is highly shareable on Facebook and Twitter.

Most social media sites such as Facebook have autoplay functions where viewers can preview the video silently before clicking on it. Including text and subtitles in your content is a great way to generate views and drive interest in a way that a traditional interview might not.



Infographic Content

Infographics, from quick charts and images to long-form discussions about a particular topic, are some of the most shared content on the internet.

However, you can find multiple ways to add interactive elements to your visual content that makes it more engaging.

QUIZZES

In moments of weakness, almost everyone has taken an internet quiz to learn which Harry Potter house they belong in or whether they would survive the zombie apocalypse. Internet quizzes are popular for a reason: They tap into our inner narcissism to align ourselves with our heroes or images that reflect our values.

On the brand side, creating personality quizzes or trivia challenges that test the knowledge of responses is fairly easy. Your audience may not be interested in learning “Which Digital Marketing Strategy Is Best for Your Cat,” but they will enjoy a test like “Spot Which Statistics Are Fake and Which Are Real.” This type of interactive content is more knowledge-based and lets audiences learn as they engage with the questions.

FLOWCHARTS

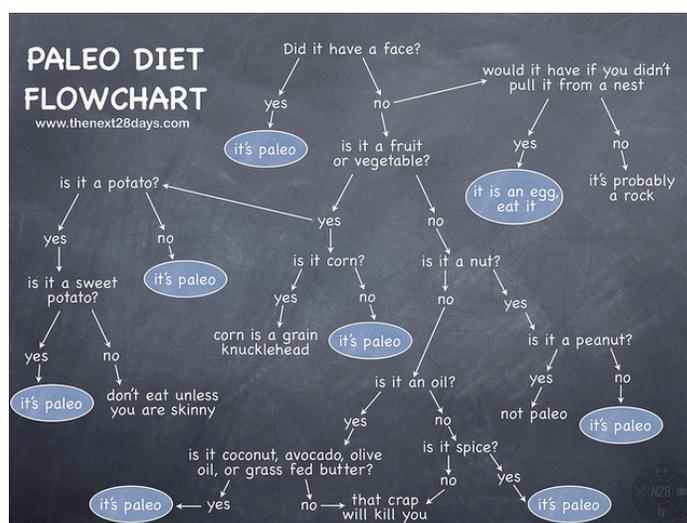


Image via [Flickr](#) by thenext28days

Flowcharts are one of the easiest ways to turn a blog post into engaging multimedia content. If you have a long-form article or list post with hooks such as “# Signs It’s Time to ...” or “# Ways to Tell If ...,” then you can grab those ideas and break them into a flowchart.

For example, “10 Traits of a Bad Employee” can become a flowchart called “Is It Time to Fire That Employee?” Flowcharts can be made about everything from flu season to water filters and offer an interesting way to discuss problems or issues. The best part is that brands can position themselves as the solution to these issues at the bottom of the flowchart when audiences reach their results.

MAPS

Many theories exist about why [maps are so popular with audiences](#) and why they have been since before the internet existed. Primarily, maps tap into our visual learning style and allow our brains to consume images faster and in a better way. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words, so why would you spend several minutes explaining something that you can draw?

Maps also tend to resemble art. Unlike a flowchart where audiences have a beginning, middle, and end, audiences can interpret maps vertically or horizontally, depending on the audience and layout. Finally, maps tap into our inner curiosity and childhood fantasy. Whether we’re staring at a treasure map or a voter law visualization in America, we’re imagining other lives and far-off lands where the culture is different.

TIMELINES

Timelines also tap into complex subjects and simplify them in ways audiences can understand. Think about the timelines in your history class that might have covered a few years or a few centuries. You probably found skimming over these events more interesting than reading and memorizing the dates of each one.

In a way, timelines sum up everything about why multimedia content works: Your audience could read about it, but why would they when visuals are so much cooler?

STATIC VS. INTERACTIVE CONTENT

Once you have reviewed your multimedia options and decided which type you want to use, your content creation departments must decide between a static or interactive creation.

For example, an interactive flowchart is a fun way to engage customers with a series of yes-and-no questions that lead to an interesting result. They need only to click a few times before they’re given a result and can enjoy the bunny trail the quiz takes them on. However, static flowcharts are great for sharing and printing. Audiences can also appreciate multiple paths and choices that they have if they answer one way or another.

When deciding which type of content you should create, no right or wrong answer exists. The decision between static and interactive content depends purely on your brand, goals, budget, and vision.

How to Choose the Right Multimedia Content



While many different types of multimedia content exist, not every option is ideal for your brand. Plus, not every type can work for your business goals. Companies should always create content with set goals and KPIs (key performance indicators) in mind: Why are you creating this content? What do you want to get out of it? When will you know that you have achieved your goals?

IDENTIFYING GOALS FOR YOUR MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

When you approach your content strategy, set [quantifiable goals and metrics](#) that you hope to gain with your multimedia piece. You should clearly outline what your average traffic is on a content piece and what expected traffic bump you plan to receive. Additionally, you should list an expected number of new social media followers added, email addresses collected, and leads generated.

By tracking these four KPIs, you can determine the success of your large content project. If the average blog post receives 10 shares, then you can set your goal of 100 shares for an infographic. With this goal, your social media and outreach teams know to keep promoting the content until you hit that goal.

SOME CONTENT FORMS REQUIRE SPECIFIC KPIS

Along with the above KPIs, look at your content and [identify specific metrics](#) that apply to it. For example, video content creators will want to track average view time, not total views alone. Some tools count a “view” as watching more than 15 seconds, which doesn't provide insight into a 40-minute webinar.

Time on the site is also a useful KPI for infographics, especially when compared with other blog content. You want to make sure you're not only driving more traffic to your visuals, but also driving better traffic. Set goals to make sure people are spending more time appreciating your handiwork instead of bouncing after a quick skim.

RUN A FEW TESTS OF DIFFERENT CONTENT TYPES

If this experience is your first foray into multimedia content, then you might want to test multiple forms to get an idea for your base KPIs. Essentially, these content forms serve as a first pancake where you can get through the kinks of content creation and learn how your audience responds. After this first one, you can set goals to improve your views, shares, and leads with your next multimedia project.

NOT ALL MULTIMEDIA CONTENT IS LEAD GENERATING

As you choose your various multimedia projects, make sure you understand the behavior of your audience when they engage with your content. For example, a highly sharable quiz might generate a ton of traffic but few leads. Conversely, a thoughtful timeline might continue to generate leads months after you publish it.

This concept can be incredibly frustrating for budget companies and finance departments that want every marketing tactic to produce a strong ROI. However,

nonlead-generating content is still an important part of the sales funnel. Viral multimedia platforms [build awareness and interest](#) in the brand, which eventually brings customers closer to a sale. Just because these platforms are not part of the closing process doesn't mean this content isn't important.

Using the Right Multimedia Creation Tools



Ideation is a large part of the creation process, but it's useless if you lack the right tools for production. Most companies have three options during the creation process: They can hire an outside agency for their multimedia

content, work directly with a contractor, or bring someone onto the team who specializes in digital media. Each of these types has its pros and cons.

Companies that are starting off will probably want to try the first two options before creating a specific content position. This strategy allows them to test the waters before they solidify their multimedia production plan. Whichever way you choose, here's what you need to know about using the right tools for the job.

SET A CLEAR PRODUCTION BUDGET

Before you create a multimedia project, make sure you're setting the right budget to get you from start to completion. Budgeting isn't only about agreeing with your finance department; it also helps you track ROI. It's easy to go over your budget when creating a video tutorial, but if the video generates only a few sales, then you might be discouraged from creating more.

If you're unsure about what kind of budget you need, then talk to a few agencies or contract firms that specialize in content creation and ask about their rates. Look at what they've created in the past and compare that work to their cost. Talking to multiple people will give you a feel for the industry standard so that you're not lowballing contractors or getting overcharged.

TEST DIFFERENT DESIGNERS AND CONTENT CREATORS

Tools are useful, but a good graphic designer, developer, or video editor is priceless. Not only are you looking for someone who has the necessary skill set, but also someone who understands your brand and works well with you.

If your multimedia tests work well, you could end up working with this person for the next few years. While that person may not be an employee, you will still have regular contact with your content creator. Make sure you're both in sync with feedback style and creation process to prevent friction in the future.

MAKE YOUR BRANDING CLEAR

An added benefit to shopping around for different content creation agencies and contractors is testing content styles to see how they match your brand. Every creative will approach your brand differently, and some will understand your company better than others.

Before they begin, give each new vendor complete brand guidelines for what is OK to use and what topics to avoid. Mention content that you like or dislike and share existing graphics on your blog. This sharing will give your contractors a strong foundation for what you expect and what they should create. Part of your judging criteria should be based on your vendors' ability to follow your style guide.

The Future of Multimedia



In many ways, the digital world is just now starting to explore the world of Multimedia. We started with static infographics and expanded to interactives and games. Video production has moved from a complex process to something almost any brand can take

advantage of. There is so much more to experience in this world, making content marketing an exciting field to be in.

One of the next major trends in multimedia will be Virtual Reality. As VR headsets become cheaper and more consumer-friendly, brands will start to take advantage of this technology. Augmented Reality is another frontier for companies to explore. Anyone who has downloaded the Pokemon Go app can see the power of harnessing gamification as a means to engage the public. Very few institutions are taking advantage of these media types right now, which means there's a whole world out there for creativity and exploration.

While multimedia content is certainly one of the most popular options out there, it's hard to create and even harder to do well. Fortunately, if your team comes armed with set goals and the right tools for the job, you can make a big viral splash and get noticed by your peers and customers. When moving forward, remember to choose the right content types for your brand, test different creation methods and styles, and always have set goals in mind before starting a project. If you keep those points in mind, your multimedia content should turn a profit in no time.

COPYPRESS

CopyPress is a full service content marketing company with over 5 years of experience creating and promoting digital content.