How brands can create the right video content for each platform

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Don't let them tune out

Video is all around us—on mobiles, laptops, tablets and TVs. The challenge for **brand**s is making sure video messages engage consumers across all devices. One headline finding from Millward Brown's global **AdReaction Video** study puts TV ads ahead of **digital** on receptivity, but there are ways that **brand**s can overcome this.

The first step is to give viewers control. When people feel they have greater control over ad exposure, they're more receptive to **digital** ads than those on TV. This applies across all devices, but particularly to smartphones. It's strongly preferable to work with ad types that give consumers the chance to skip, such as **YouTube**'s TrueView format.

However, making this consumer-controlled environment work to maximum effect requires **brand**s to deliver in two key areas: process and structure.

First, **brand**s need to be clearer about their content creation process. **Digital** video works best when it's **design**ed with a clear platform in mind. This means one of two things needs to happen: either the media or the creative must come first.

If the creative team first constructs videos optimized for a given set of platforms, the media team can then ensure the best possible placement and prices based on those assets. Alternatively, as some big **brand** companies now do, media comes first and the team identifies the best platforms. The creative team then knows what formats the video will need to work in before they start development.

The worst of both worlds can occur when the media and creative processes run alongside each other without strong coordination. The result can be creative that's not a good match for the sites and formats selected by the media team.

Second, **brand**s need a much better understanding of the skippable media landscape, and the implications for creative structure. The skippable landscape is complex. Not only does the point when the ad can be skipped vary by format, but also when **brand**s have to pay.

TrueView ads, for example, can only be skipped after five seconds. **Brand**s pay on the basis of the cost per completed view (CPCV), when the full ad or at least 30 seconds has played. On **Facebook**, auto play videos can be swiped past immediately. These can be bought on the basis of either cost per impression (CPM), just after the video starts playing, or cost per view (CPV), after approximately 10 seconds of viewing. Other providers, like Teads, offer all three buying approaches.

Ads that capture immediate attention and deliver instant **brand** impact may be better suited to a CPM model, whereas ads that require more time to tell their story may be more cost effectively bought using the CPCV model.

The AdReaction Video study suggests it is generally better for consumers to know what's coming rather than to hold back the **brand**. Not only does a **brand** "reveal" result in a missed, free **branding** opportunity among the people who skip the ad but there is also a risk that non-skippers could be annoyed when they discover the ad is for a **brand** or category of no relevance to them.

What works for every **brand** and campaign will differ, so advertisers should test their content for specific media formats, be that **YouTube**, **Facebook** or others. Testing is worth the cost and effort to help navigate the world of **digital** video. Millward Brown's Cross Media database suggests that getting creative right can deliver improvement in **brand** outcomes by a factor of eight.

When we look specifically at **digital** channels we find that the best ads—those with a clear correlation between the creative power of the ad (enjoyment and difference) and their impact on key **brand** health metrics ranging from online awareness through to purchase intent—make a big difference. Video can be extremely powerful on **digital** channels when **brand**s make the right format and creative adaptation decisions.

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