



STRATEGIC 2011 STATE OF VIDEO STUDY



MEASURING SUCCESS FOR HIGH-TECH VIDEOS

Last year a client asked us to help set a metric for a YouTube video we were working on for his company. He wanted to know how many views would be considered successful, so we decided to find out.

According to Google, the median video on YouTube gets about 500 views in the first month. What does that mean? Well, for a B2B high tech marketer, nothing. Most YouTube videos are personal, rather than business-oriented, which is of little use when trying to answer the question about metrics. In order to determine what constitutes a successful B2B marketing video, we designed our own study.



METHODOLOGY

We assigned two employees to take a look at the top high-tech brands and evaluate each of their videos. Our goal was to understand the state-of-the-art with regards to online videos as of December, 2010.

We went to each company's YouTube page and watched every video they had posted. We tracked a wide variety of metrics, including:

- Date uploaded
- Days on air (at the time of analysis)
- Length
- Video type (briefing, case study, etc.)
- Total comments
- Total likes
- Total dislikes
- Video resolution
- Production quality
- How deep or shallow the video was in terms of content
- How promotional the video was
- What kind of call to action the video had

Some of this was subjective (for example, production quality). For that reason we did two passes. By the end of the first pass our employees were pretty good judges of quality, so we had them run through each video again and adjust their quality scores.

In the end we evaluated 2,080 videos from 51 high tech vendors. Here is what we learned.



KEY FINDING #1: Average Views

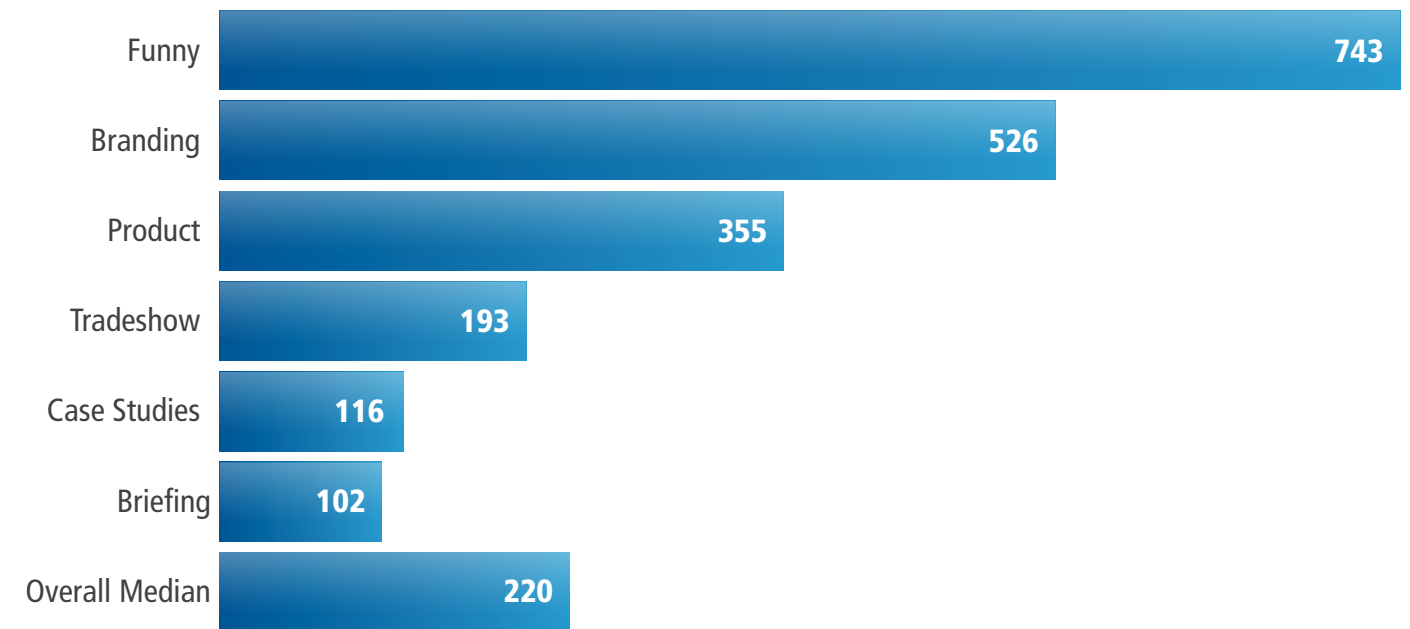
The median number of views for a B2B high tech video is 220. The range, however, is huge (from a couple of views to 1.3 million views). If you break it down further, by video type, here are the average views:

- Funny 743
- Branding 526
- Product 355
- Tradeshow 193
- Case studies 116
- Briefing 102
- **Overall median 220**

Based on these results, we created a classic grading scale based on percentages:

Letter Grade	Views Required	Percentile
F	< 350	60%
D	350-599	60-69%
C	600-1,099	70-79%
B	1,100-2,999	80-89%
A	> 3,000	90+%

Average Views

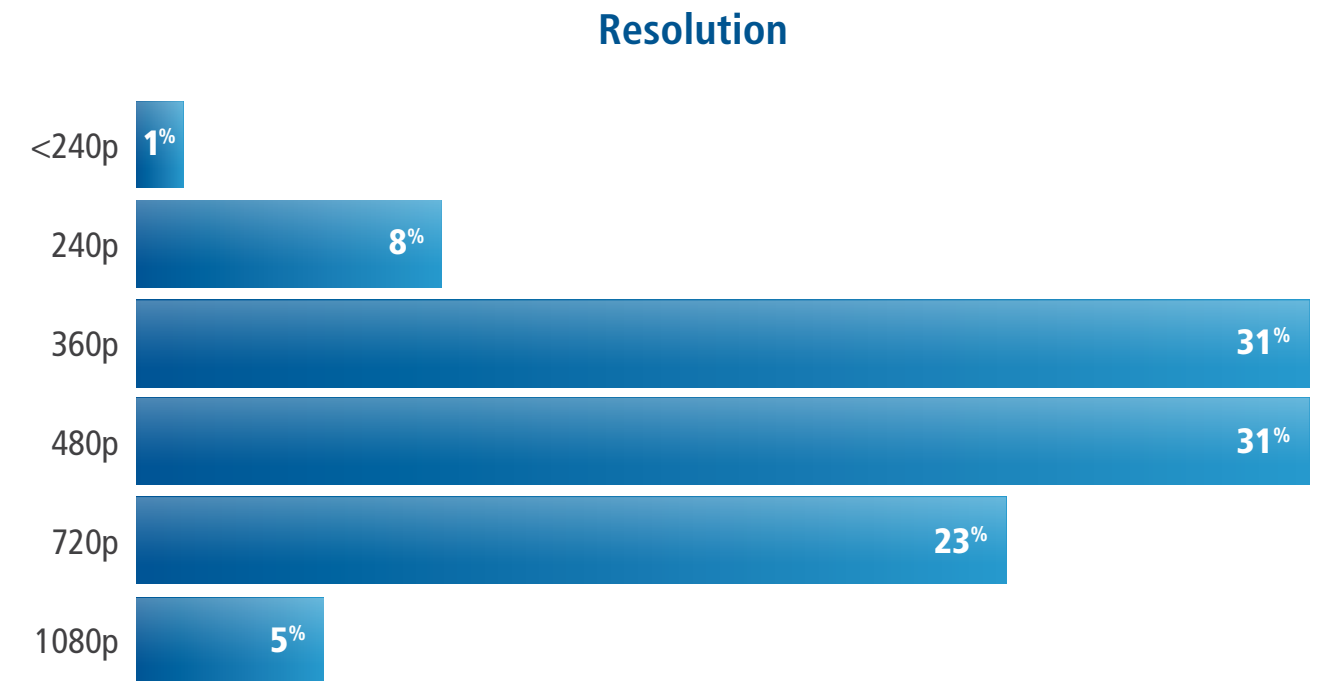


KEY FINDING #2: Resolution

A common question our clients ask is to which encoder settings should we produce our videos? We decided to see what the standard was.

The median was 480p, with 59 percent of the videos encoded at this resolution or higher.

720p seems the prudent choice, as most businesses today have the bandwidth to view that resolution comfortably.



KEY FINDING #3: What Drives Views?

The big question is what video producers can do to maximize the number of people who view their videos. We ran correlation analysis on all of the factors we measured – production values, resolution, content depth, and so on.

The answer? *None of it mattered.*

For example, you would think production quality would make a difference, but this was not the case. In statistics, the coefficient of determination is a measure of how much one value (in this case, production quality) matters when predicting another value (views). Statisticians say that a value below .85 means the first variable really doesn't have much to do with the second value.

In our case the coefficient of determination was 0.01. There was no correlation at all between production values, or any other value we measured, and number of views.

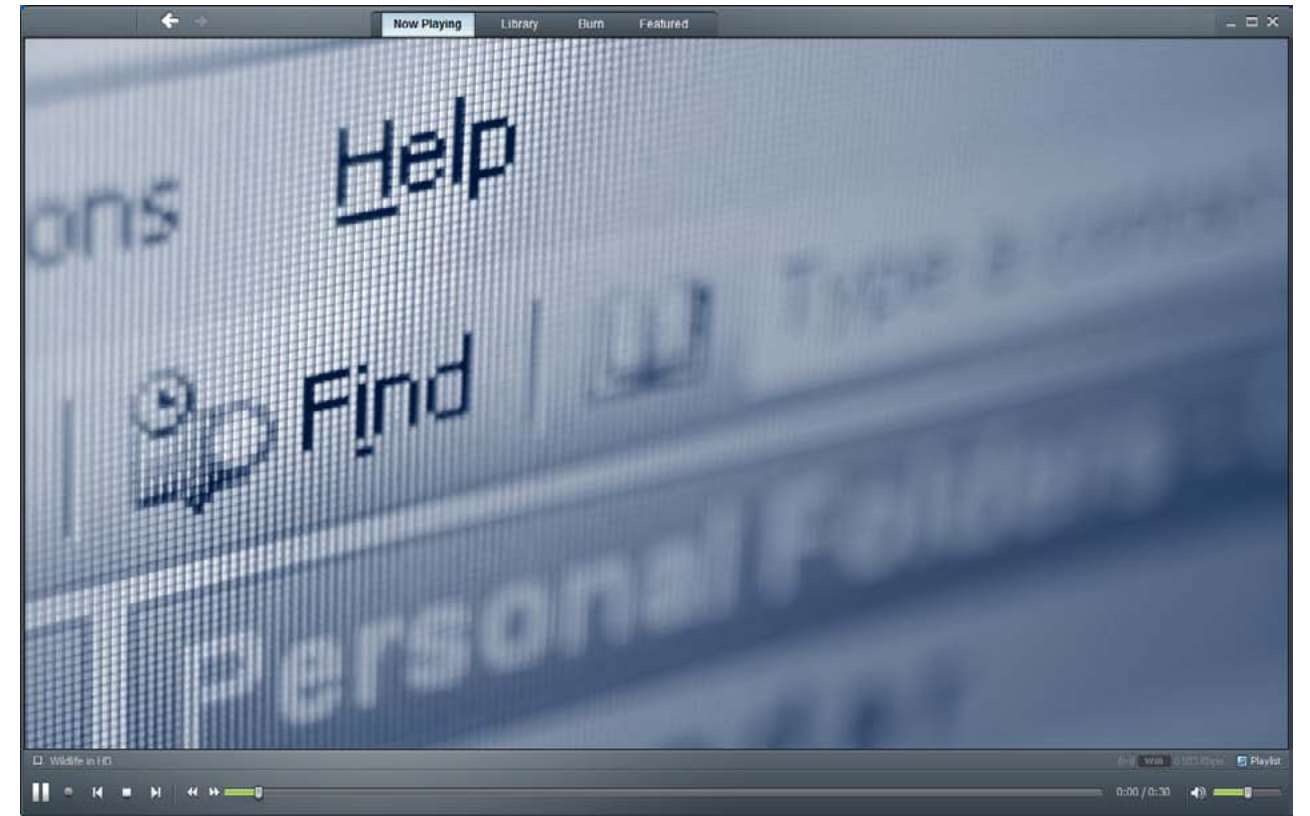
Value	Coefficient of Determination
Likes	0.22
Dislikes	0.08
Production values	0.01
Days on air	0.00
Length of video	0.00
Number of comments	0.00
Resolution	0.00
Content depth	0.00
How promotional the video is	0.00

This is all very mathematical, so here are a few examples.

Take a look at [this video](#), by Cisco. Is it a good video? The production values are extremely high for a YouTube video. It has professional music, actors, high quality cameras with dollies and a very intricate, creative storyboard. It may have cost tens of thousands of dollars to produce. And yet, when we did our analysis it had been online for about 3 months and had received only 5 views.

Or [this one](#), from Intuit, which is basically a TV ad in terms of production values, but only had 23 views (after 291 days online).

Contrast those video with [this one](#), from Dell. From a production value standpoint, it's not a good video. There is poor lighting, lots of ambient noise and the video is not very creative. This was rated as an 'F' from a production value standpoint, and yet it had received 6,644 views, while costing very little to produce.



This does not mean that the production value hurts the number of views, as evidenced by [this video](#) from Symantec. While Symantec has been a client for the past 22 years, we did not create this video for them. It has outstanding production values, and it got 582,190 views.

So if none of the things we measured had an impact on views, what does? Our hypothesis is that there are two key factors:

1. Subject matter
2. How you promote the video.

These just make sense. If you create a video on a subject that nobody cares about, it probably won't get many views. And, even if you get that right, if you don't promote your video nobody will even have a chance to watch because they won't know it's there.

In the case of the Dell video, a lot of people probably found that video by searching for it. They had an interest in that computer and because Dell did a good job tagging it, they found it.

With the Symantec video, migrating to Windows 7 is a huge topic in the industry. Good promotion on their part led to more than half a million views.

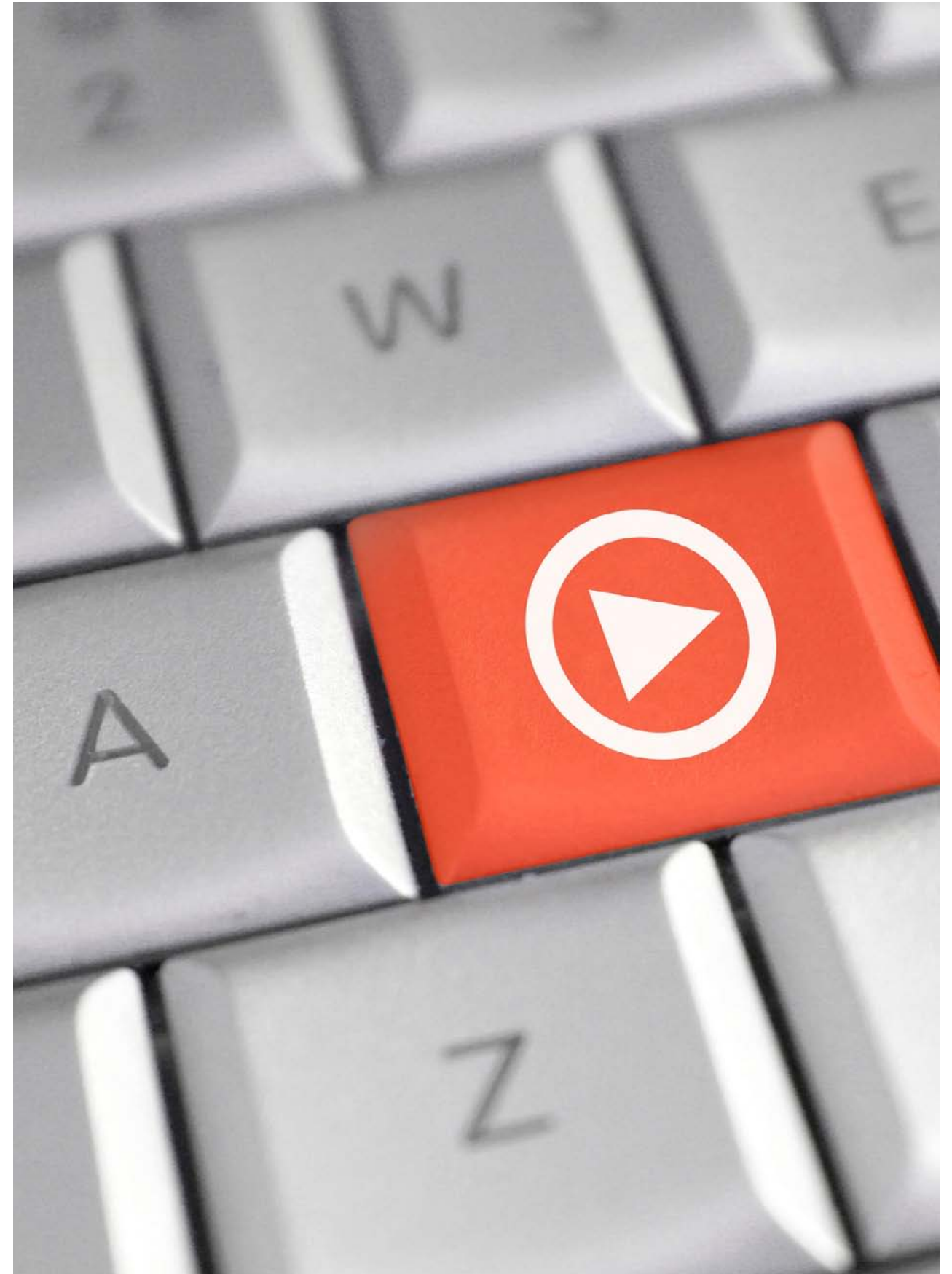


Recommendations

How do you make use of this information? Here are our recommendations:

1. Pay close attention to the subject of your videos. Make sure you choose subjects that will generate a lot of interest. Cloud, virtualization and mobility are captivating IT's attention right now. These would be good subject areas to mine.
2. Distribute your videos to more than just YouTube and your own site. There are at least a dozen other sites, like 5Min, that pull well. YouTube is the clear leader, of course, but one of our larger clients gets more than half their views from the other channels they post to.
3. Tag your videos carefully. Make sure people will find it when they search. Remember, YouTube is now the #2 search engine. For this same reason, make sure you upload the transcript of your videos where possible, to aid in SEO.
4. Make sure you feature your video prominently on your website. The more people who see your video thumbnail, the more views you'll get.
5. Similarly, embed a link to your video wherever you can. Social media releases, blogs, your Facebook page, etc., are ideal.

We have told our client that we now know how many views would be a successful number. We have set the bar at 1,800 views on average, and we are hitting that mark. Our next goal is to see how we can move that to 3,000.





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