

Guide

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# Don't shoot yet!

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## Introduction

*As a video marketing and production agency we at Impact Ideas work on video projects at various stages of development. Often the project is almost fully formed, and all we have to decide on with the client is a filming date. However we also come on board at the very earliest stage, which is often something along the lines of: “we want to make a video, any ideas...?” We have a number of key considerations that we go through with our clients at this stage.*

### 1. What marketing objective will the video satisfy? In other words, what’s it for?

- Selling tickets?
- Building awareness?
- Key message to members of your organisation?
- As a tool to pitch for future funding?

The marketing objective informs everything about your video, from length to distribution method. If you can’t answer this simple question, it might not be time for a video.

Driving ticket sales for an event? Your video should have a clear and simple call to action on why and how to buy tickets, it should not be overly informative but quickly convey the essence and unique selling points (USPs) of the event, with show footage and/or audience reactions.

**Bottom line:** make sure you know exactly what the video should achieve and measure it where possible.

### 2. Who is the video for?

Your target audience buys certain publications, visits certain websites and responds to certain methods of communication. Similarly you must consider what kind of video they will respond to – not just create something you think looks great. High production value is pointless if your video doesn’t speak clearly to the target audience.

Say you are producing a promotional trailer for the second run of a performance, first time round ticket sales were high among the 35+ age group, but this time the goal is to bring in younger audiences too. You may want to consider focusing on young interviewees when shooting audience reactions in order to get the language and perspective that will speak to a younger age group.

Have a look at this cleverly targeted video from Sadler’s Wells for [Some Like it Hip Hop](#); not what you might expect from a Sadler’s Wells production but it’s clearly geared at getting an internet-savvy young audience talking about the show.

**Bottom line:** a good video isn’t a good video unless the target audience think it is.

### 3. What format of video will best suit your message?

Depending on the information or message you are communicating you might consider a variety of styles or formats to your video. For example an infographic-style animation is ideal for expounding a process or service clearly and concisely, and leaves loads of room for snazzy branding. Other formats suit different marketing objectives.

The National Theatre of Scotland had an interesting approach for their trailer for *Let The Right One In*. They produced a cinematic live action scene on location in a forest, to set the tone for an entirely stage-bound production. We could spend all day interlinking these individual considerations but this example relates particularly well to the previous point: Who is the Video For. Following two popular cinematic productions of the Swedish vampire movie, the NTS's trailer catered directly to fans of the movies in a bid to transition that audience to the theatre. The trailer has been re-edited for the production at the Royal Court this autumn and will be viewable on the [NTS's vimeo channel](#) imminently.

**Bottom line:** your video is first and foremost a marketing tool; artistic expression is important but content is king.

### 4. How will you distribute it?

- Website homepage?
- YouTube advertising?
- Email newsletter?
- Front of House?

The method of distribution has a huge bearing on your video in a number of areas, none more so than the length. Where and how someone has come across your video pertains to their interest and commitment to watching it. If the video has been developed as in depth content on an event or production, you will likely want to place it on your YouTube channel and push it on social media, where the attention span of your audience is likely to be quite long.

Alternatively, if you are producing a video with a view to engaging new audiences and driving ticket sales, you might want to seed it with YouTube's advertising service and in this case your video would be short and snappy, grabbing and holding attention in the first 5 seconds. Take a look at a YouTube ad we produced for the [Young Vic's production of A Season in the Congo](#) for an example of this type of ad.

**Bottom line:** strategise your distribution method early to suit your marketing objective as it will inform everything about the video.

## 5. Who will create your content?

Your gut reaction would be to do it in house if you have a video producer, or outsource to a video production company if you don't. But don't forget about your customers; user generated content can save you money, offer creativity, perspectives and insight that you would never have achieved on your own. If your objective is engaging your audience, what better way than challenging them to contribute to something?

We recently designed a campaign with the [International Youth Arts Festival](#) where all the participant theatre companies submitted their own trailers as part of a competition. We then selected the winners and cut a trailer of them to be seeded as an ad on YouTube. Shooting a project of this scale ourselves would have cost IYAF thousands they didn't have, by getting the participants involved we saved time and money and succeeded in representing the diversity of festival.

**Bottom line:** think about who might be best positioned to generate content (especially if the budget is tight).

## 6. A sustainable video strategy.

No matter how well targeted and relevant a video you have produced, if it grows old and lonely on a sparse YouTube channel it is ultimately in vain. If you're going ahead with a video project it should be part of a broader video strategy where regular content is created and distributed and its success measured. Engagement on YouTube is all about quality and regularity of content, as well as how often people interact with your videos. It could be the video you're planning can be easily edited into a series of short videos released at intervals to your audience. Check out the [National Theatre's fantastic YouTube channel](#) for an idea of how a channel can grow with regular, quality content.

**Bottom line:** don't be a one hit wonder, plan a long term strategy.

**Note:** this is not a progressive list. Each of the considerations detailed above interact with and inform each other.

### About CultureHive

*This case study was produced as part of CultureHive, a free knowledge hub where you can discover and share best practice in cultural marketing. Visit [culturehive.co.uk](http://culturehive.co.uk) for more great resources.*