

INFLUENCE OF EXPLAINER VIDEOS IN MARKETING COMMUNICATION FOR TOURISM AND HEALTH SERVICES

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Abstract Digital marketing has been gaining more attention in last years. Several researchers have shown that it is a very powerful tool in the field of storytelling. In the last decade tourism has changed from typical destination marketing to approaches that often use storytelling, augmented reality, the sharing economy, all-year tourism, etc. Most of these tourism offers can be best promoted via digital media. Especially when it comes to the younger generation, social and digital media are crucial for success. Our research focuses on explainer videos and their importance in marketing for the tourism sector aimed at young people. Our research was conducted with a group of Slovenian students. The results show that explainer videos have great potential in field of destination marketing, event promotion (such as for sport and cultural events) and services (such as sharing-economy systems and health services) among the student population. Our research has also shown the content and animation/images used in explainer videos are the most important elements in attracting and holding the attention of younger generation.

Keywords:

explainer videos,
storytelling,
tourism,
health services,
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1 Introduction

In today's business environment, digital marketing has been gaining attention and increasing in popularity. Video is widely seen by academics and professionals as the most efficient tool that can capture the attention of the target audience, and help companies and their offers become more visible in the digital world (Krämer & Böhrs 2017, LinkedIn 2020, Sedej 2019). LinkedIn (2020) notes that in 2018 Cisco predicted that 82% of internet traffic will be video by 2022, driven by increases in bandwidth and processing power. More video content is created every 30 days than the major US TV channels have created in 30 years.

Since video marketing is also becoming increasingly essential, there is a need to choose the type of videos that will provide value and have unique appeal to target audiences. Sedej (2019, 37) explains that in the 21st century video marketing has been becoming the centre of attention with regard to strategic marketing planning, and the trend is still on the rise.

Video content has become a powerful way to send messages to customers. Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 254) confirm the importance of video content and explain that the development of the video-hosting platform YouTube shows the growing interest in online video.

Explainer videos have a special place among the various different types of videos, because they offer great value and outstanding potential in B2B and B2C marketing (LinkedIn 2020, Reiss et al. 2017, Sedej 2019). Reiss et al. (2017, 519) note that explainer videos are a commonly used medium for giving a short overview of the focal, while Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 254) state that more and more people use videos not only as a source of information, but also as a learning tool.

2 The rise of video marketing

2.1 The video marketing

It is clear that video content has now become a necessity for every organization, no matter the size or sector, and many authors (Mangold & Faulds 2009, McCue 2018, Mowat 2018, Sedej 2019) agree that video marketing is becoming more significant every year. Sedej (2019, 46) notes that research confirms that the trend of video communication is still on the rise.

Video is a versatile and engaging content format, and Mowat (2018, 11) states that video has become an entirely new marketing option on its own, driven by technology and customer preferences.

Videos are a great way to engage potential customers and familiarize them with a firm's core business, although it is important for a company to have a clear idea of what it wants a video to accomplish. Mangold and Faulds (2009, 357) explain that because it is a visual medium, video can be used to teach complex concepts or motivate and inspire actions.

Video has a power to bring an organizational vision to life. McCue (2018) believes that marketing via video is the best way to reach people today, while Mowat (2018, 11) agrees and explains that it engages people's emotions.

Retention rates for information - which is both seen and heard - is higher when watching a video compared to reading a text. Sedej (2019, 46) explains that one of the main reasons why video is extremely popular is that our brains are programmed to retain visual content better than text.

2.1.1 The immense potential of explainer videos

There are many different types of videos, and to create an effective content marketing strategy it is important to have a solid understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of these.

Despite the wide range of options, explainer videos have been insufficiently integrated into marketing strategy plans. While the awareness of the potential of good video content is high, explainer videos have not yet been fully exploited, and this is one of the main reasons why they present an opportunity for organizations to explain their products, services and other issues in an appealing and effective manner. Reiss et al. (2017, 520) strongly believe that the relevance of explanatory videos in both education and practice has been rising.

There are many definitions of explainer videos, with Sedej (2019,155) noting that the definitions focus on one or more key characteristics of them. Reiss et al. (2017, 519) describe explanatory videos as short animated videos that are used to explain a complex issue. Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 255) state that explainer videos effectively convey complex facts to a target group within a very short time. Similarly, Sedej (2019, 150) believes that explainer videos translate complex issues into simple stories, which people enjoy watching.

Effective explainer videos ones are focused, concise and have one main goal – to engage viewers. Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 255) report that explainer videos are usually one to three minutes long, and rather than going into detail they focus only on the most relevant facts. Sedej (2019, 160) agrees, and explains that with explainer videos companies can explain a business idea, product, or project in a one-to-three-minute-long video with informational, educational, and even entertainment value at the same time.

Reiss et al. (2017, 519) state that one of the many advantages of explainer videos is that they can enable better understanding and increased memory performance among viewers. Sedej (2019, 160) agrees, and explains that the use of engaging visuals and clear animations make them the best type of content that stimulates our memories and increases rates of retention, much more so than text or still images. Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 264) provide evidence that explainer videos not only improve the knowledge level of the users, but also increase consumers' involvement and activation potential.

Storytelling remains a fundamental approach in the sharing of ideas, concepts and knowledge in video format. Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 255) agree, and note that explainer videos tend to make use of storytelling and multisensory elements.

Explainer videos are designed to grab people's attention, with Krämer and Böhrs (2017, 255) noting that such visualizations often include animated illustrations, graphics, or photos.

3 Storytelling in tourism

Storytelling is widely researched in the literature, and therefore we can find several definitions from different points of view (Howison, Higgins- Desbiolles & Sun 2017, pp. 328).

Stories present what we do as humans or companies in order to make sense of the world. They usually contain characters and their relationships, and chronological development, and this is what develops the meaning of a story (Escalas 2004).

Several authors (e.g. Cihan Yavuz et al., 2016, pp. 71) argue that a storytelling approach can be used for strategic destination identity development, branding and marketing in a long-term, multi-actor and multilevel process. Therefore destination management has to establish active multidisciplinary group efforts in the tourism industry. Successful communication between visitors and destinations can best be transmitted by verbs, objects, experiences, places and characters. Stories can thus be used as a framework for organizing and presenting key destination components (Cihan Yavuz et al. 2016, pp. 71, Frost et al. 2019).

Tourism storytelling means stimulating the desire to tell a story and make someone want to own the narration of a potential and/or actual experience. This has two effects: the company-customer relationship is better, and the company can involve customers emotionally by using the most truthful and credible testimonials (Bassano et al. 2019, pp. 18).

By tapping into the power of storytelling, brand marketers can inject greater meaning and emotion into their brands (Baker 2007). Baker (2007) also claimed that storytelling is often undervalued in tourism and destination marketing, although we argue that this has changed over the last decade.

Some important storytelling elements are trust-building, character development, inspirational content and the quality of writing (Hulda & Gray 2009). Digital narratives can play a special role in tourism in each phase of the customer experience (Bassano et al. 2019, pp. 18) with regard to: awareness (which is connected to identity and reputation), valuation and the decision-making process, and post-sales services (sharing stories through digital media improves trust in customer relationships).

Stories in tourism can be presented in several different ways: (1) stories about a destination explained by tourist guides presented through audio-visual presentations, guidebooks and digital platforms; (2) activities that encourage tourists to enact their own personal stories, and (3) transmedia stories explored in different media and locations (Moscardo 2020, pp 3).

The types of stories in tourism can also vary. Stories used in promotion are co-created by tourists and tourism practitioners, stories in tourism planning are presented by tourism practitioners and destination communities, and stories in experience co-creation and tourist management are created in collaboration among tourists, tourism practitioners and destination communities (Moscardo 2020, pp 3).

Some studies (Su, Cheng, & Swanson 2020, pp. 8-9) have shown the great impact of emotional factors on the tourism industry, and these can also be achieved through storytelling, such as that presented via explainer videos. Bassano et al. (2019) claim that there are four important categories in story-building: (1) value categories, (2) interpretative patterns, (3) informative units and (4) sharing, and their research shows that storytelling has an important role in helping firms achieve greater overall competitiveness.

Our research focuses on storytelling through explainer videos, which can be categorized under digital storytelling, which refers to online communication practices through technologies where individuals or companies have the main role of storytellers in order to build relationship experiences (Robin 2008, Kim & Hall 2020).

Digital storytelling has become increasingly important in travel and tourism marketing, entertainment, adventure and cultural tourism (Wu 2006, Pera 2017, Bassano et al. 2019, Chen, Mak & Kankhuni 2020, Kim & Hall 2020).

4 Storytelling in health sector

Several authors (Day 2009, Gubrium 2009, Haigh & Hardy 2011, Houston 2015, Marin et al. 2017, Patel 2017) see the great potential of storytelling in the health sector, through which information can be presented in an understandable and pleasant form. For example, Patel (2017) strongly believes that the most effective communication strategy in the public health sector is a storytelling communication strategy.

Nevertheless, storytelling has a power to inform, explain, learn, and persuade. Moreover, it has a power to build relationships and make people care, filling them with energy and inspiring them to act. Haigh and Hardy (2011), among others, explore the foundation, techniques, skills, and role of storytelling in health care and the use of storytelling strategies in nurse education.

In today's environment, with an overload of information always available, good storytelling can raise awareness and understanding in the health sector. Day (2009) promotes the use of storytelling in the health sector with the main purpose of increasing health literacy, especially among patients, who have a desire for an experimental learning approach.

Many authors (Gubrium 2009, Marin et al. 2017, Moreau 2018) have a clear focus on digital storytelling. Gubrium (2009) discusses the use of digital storytelling in practice, its benefits, and challenges, in health promotion research. He defines digital storytelling as visual narratives lasting from three to five minutes, which include text, illustrations, videos, voiceover and music to create a captivating experience.

Moreover, as stories disarm us and prepare us for the main message, Moreau (2018) reviews and examines the reasons for using digital storytelling in the health education sector, although his focus is also on the impact of stories on health professionals' learning and behaviours. On the other hand, Marin et al. (2017) explores the possibilities of digital storytelling as a pedagogical strategy for the construction of professional identity in health, social care and education.

Storytelling has the power to stir up people's emotions and establish a positive attitude towards the information they receive. Haigh and Hardy (2001) discuss the importance of technology in communication, such as internet discussion boards or digitally facilitated storytelling, which has an evolving role in building relationships with patients. Patel (2007) lists digital storytelling, virtual games, photographs, audio as well as social media applications as platforms that can be used to communicate health information with community and practitioners.

Different approaches towards storytelling exist, and we can divide them into traditional and digital. Patel (2017) also discusses the various communication possibilities that are now available, but emphasizes that storytelling using digital technologies is not user-friendly for all age groups.

5 Research methodology

Since explainer videos are especially important and often used with the younger generation, we conducted an online study using a population of Slovene students.

A total of 200 students were involved in the research, 60% of whom were female and 40% were male. They came from all different parts from Slovenia, their average age at the time of the survey was 21, and they were enrolled in bachelor's, master's and doctoral study programmes, and thus the sample is representative of the student population in Slovenia.

The research data was analysed using SPSS, and some basic univariate analysis was conducted.

A recent study of destination brands' promotional videos (Alegro & Turnšek 2021, pp 9) shows that 84% of such videos on YouTube include at least one sequence of tourists performing generic, common tourism activities, such as sightseeing, visiting museums, and hiking, and thus there is relatively little creativity in these, with most videos being rather similar. This is why our research focused on explainer videos, with special emphasis on:

- the role of explainer videos in tourism and health services among Slovene students,

- the media that is the most frequently used among Slovene students, and
- elements of explainer videos that are understood as the most important in among Slovene students with regard to tourism and health services.

6 Research results

According to our results (Table 1), explainer videos are quite popular among the student population in Slovenia, with 33.5% watching them once a week, 17.5% see them three times a week, and 6.5% every day.

Table 1: How often the respondents watch explainer videos

Frequency	Number	Percentage
Every day	13	6.50%
Three times a week	35	17.50%
Once a week	67	33.50%
Once a month	50	25.00%
A few times a year	33	16.50%
Have never seen one	2	1.00%
Every day	13	6.50%

Source: author's own data.

The results show that Slovenian students usually watch half of the content of explainer videos (45,69%) or until the end (40.61%), with just 13.71% stating that they only watch the beginning (see Table 2).

Table 2: How much of the explainer videos are usually watched by the respondents

How much is watched	Number	Percentage
Only the beginning (first 15 sec)	27	13.71%
Approximately half of the explainer videos	90	45.69%
Until the end	80	40.61%

Source: authors' own data.

Among those who answered that they do not watch explainer videos until the end, the following four reasons were given (Table 3): the duration of the explainer video (the average answer on a scale from 1 to 5 was 4.182), content of the explainer video (average 4.688), degree of personal interest in the content (4.453) and quality of the explainer video (4.600). The 80 students (in Table 2) who watched to the end did not answer this question.

Table 3: Factors that influence whether an explainer video is watched to the end, according to the respondents who usually do not watch until the end

Factors	Average score
Duration of the explainer video	4.182
Content of the explainer video	4.688
Quality of the explainer video	4.453
Personal interest	4.600

Source: authors' own data.

General videos and explainer videos are shared via different channels, the most common of which for the Slovenian students survey are YouTube and Facebook.

Table 4: Where the respondents usually watch general and explainer videos

Where the videos are usually seen	Average score (general)	Average score (explainer videos)
YouTube	4.556	3.888
Facebook	3.930	3.313
Instagram, Instagram TV	3.364	2.477
Vimeo	1.429	1.365
Snapchat	2.152	1.548

Source: authors' own data.

We also examined which elements attract the most attention when watching explainer videos (Table 5). The highest scored elements, on a scale of from 1 to 5, were: content (4.187), pictures (4.010), music (3.823), text (3.587), colours (3.347), tone of voice (3.323) and character of the animated figure (3.323).

Table 5: The elements that attract the most attention among the respondents in explainer videos

Elements	Number	Average score
pictures/ animations	197	4.010
colours	196	3.347
lightness	197	3.020
tone	198	3.323
music	198	3.823
tempo	198	3.066
text	196	3.587
rhetoric	198	3.197
content	198	4.187
animated figure (character)	198	3.323

Source: authors' own data.

We also listed several different occasions when explainer videos can be used, and the most common responses were for the promotion or presentation of the different products (3.628), promotion of different events (sport events, concerts, etc.) (3.558), promotion of different tourist destination (3.371), and promotion of different services (3.164).

Table 6: The most common uses for explainer videos, according to the respondents

Fields of use	Number	Average score
Presentation of business processes and activities	198	2.904
Promotion of products	196	3.628
Promotion of services	195	3.164
Presentation and promotion of destinations	197	3.371
Presentation and promotion of events (such as sports, health events and concerts)	197	3.558
Presentation and promotion of learning activities	197	2.843

Source: authors' own data.

7 Discussion and conclusion

Our research focuses on different explainer videos and their potential in promoting tourism and health services, with the survey carried out among a population of Slovenian students. We examined all the important issues and elements, and can conclude that explainer videos have huge potential with regard to tourism and health services in Slovenia. Our research has shown that explainer videos are mostly used and watched for presenting and promoting destinations, events (sport and cultural events) and different services (such as sharing details of systems used for tourism purposes and health services).

Storytelling is one of the clearest ways for a destination brand promotional video to stand out (Alegro & Turnšek 2021, pp 11), and our research shows that when preparing such videos the content and pictures/ animations used have to be considered carefully, since according to our research results these are most likely to attract attention.

YouTube and Facebook were considered as the most suitable channels among Slovene students for explainer videos, including those used for tourism and health services, and thus social media is the best platform for such content.

Since the travel and tourism industry, as well as private health services, are highly competitive, explainer videos can be a great aid for the online marketing promotion of such services, especially among the younger population that is constantly working and living online. Such videos have great value in attracting potential visitors, explaining problems and presenting solutions.

The appropriate text and animations need to be considered as a priority when preparing explainer videos for younger people, as these are very powerful tools to drive people's emotions. A positive attitude towards the information received about tourism and health can be developed with explainer videos, while explainer videos and digital storytelling in these sectors have an important and evolving role when building long-term partnerships with customers and patients.

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