



START SMART, SCALE UP, AND STAND OUT WITH VIDEO!

Results and best practices from Content Marketing Institute's
2015 research on video creation for content marketing.

CONTENT MARKETING INSTITUTE research shows that the best way to be successful with video is to develop internal processes and basic competency, experiment, and build experience over time.

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Here at GoAnimate, we love video. We have always assumed everyone else did, too. The marketing hive mind is committed to a very near future in which video is the new text, the new email, the new post, the new tweet. So we had to ask ourselves, “Why hasn’t the world turned into one giant video production studio?” The answer was “barriers.” Our first value proposition was, “Making a video used to be difficult, time-consuming, and expensive. Not anymore.” Later, we got cute and changed it to, “Making a video shouldn’t be a drag ... it should be drag & drop!”

But the point is the same. Video production needs to be enabled for everyone, at scale, right now.

We first waged war against these barriers as a tiny company. Tiny companies have to have belief. They have to believe, without hard proof, that the problems they are solving are real. There are no market research budgets, nor time to ponder research. Just “sense problem, solve problem.” Thankfully, we solved enough problems in our first few years to grow into a slightly larger company—one that now has a market research budget. And we could think of no finer partner than Content Marketing Institute to help us determine the underlying need to make videos; the size, shape, and nature of the barriers to doing so; and the profile of a video-best-practice-enabled company. We hope you enjoy this report, and find time to visit us at <http://goanimate.com>.

INTRODUCTION

Video – The Big Challenge & Bigger Opportunity

Video on the Web is popular. Yes, we state the obvious—but video has truly emerged to become both a huge opportunity and challenge for brands in their content marketing efforts. In terms of how big the opportunity is for B2B marketers in particular, consider that a recent study by Forbes and Google found that 75% of senior executives watch work-related videos on business-related websites at least weekly¹. Additionally, these videos are driving action. In that same study, Forbes and Google found that 65% of those executives have visited the provider's website after watching a video. Furthermore, 53% conducted a search for the solution after watching a video².

The biggest challenge, of course, is that the success and popularity of video isn't a secret to anyone. Brands not only compete with other marketing videos, but with every other type of video being uploaded to the Web as well. Google estimates that more than 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute³. The number of platforms for video consumption is growing as well, with mobile video becoming huge. Mary Meeker's *Internet Trends 2015* found that video now accounts for 55% of all mobile traffic—up almost 10% in just three years⁴.

Content Marketing Institute's (CMI's) own research found that nearly 80% of B2B companies are using some form of video in their content marketing⁵. This percentage has been steadily increasing over the last three years (70% in 2013, 73% in 2014, and 76% in 2015). Furthermore, B2B marketers rate videos as one of the most effective content marketing tactics they use (60% who use videos say they are effective at helping them achieve their content marketing objectives).

So, how do today's marketers rise above the noise? As we started to explore this question, three overarching challenges emerged:

1. How do businesses empower themselves to create videos (cost effectively) in the first place?
2. Once they are creating videos, how do they scale this ability across the business?
3. Once they have a functional process for creating videos, how do they use this new skill to differentiate the content they're producing?

In short, how do marketers start smart, scale up, and stand out by using video as an intelligent piece of a content marketing approach?

To address this challenge, we decided not to look at how marketers use videos after their production, but rather how they go about creating them. We chose to look here because many marketers have told us that one of the biggest barriers to using video is getting started. Our hypothesis was that **to achieve success with videos as a content marketing tactic, businesses must first develop new competencies and distinct processes for creating those videos**. This research study sought to test that hypothesis.

1. http://www.forbes.com/forbesinsights/video_in_the_csuite/
2. http://www.forbes.com/forbesinsights/video_in_the_csuite/
3. <https://www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html>
4. <http://www.slideshare.net/kleinerperkins/internet-trends-v1>
5. <http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2014/10/2015-b2b-content-marketing-research/>

METHODOLOGY

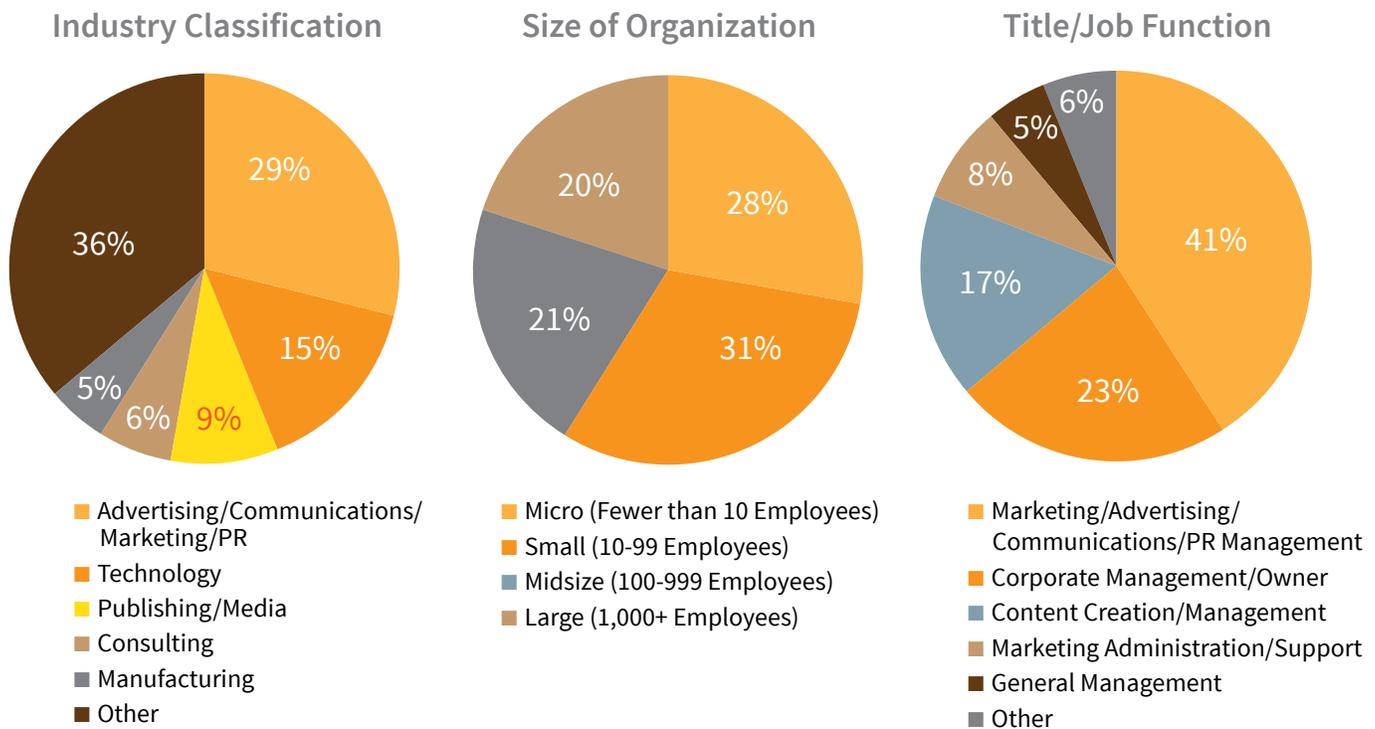
To better understand how marketers are creating videos, CMI electronically surveyed a random sample of marketers across the broader CMI audience. Fielding took place during April 2015. Of the 232 respondents, 82% said they create videos for content marketing purposes.

Of that 82%, nearly half (45%) said they are successful at creating videos. The remaining 55% rated themselves as less successful.

We then examined the differences between these two groups (the “most successful” video creators and their “less successful” peers).* The purpose was to understand the gaps and identify best practices for video creation as a content marketing tactic.

Additionally, we identified and separated those who are not creating videos.

Respondents ranged widely over a number of industry classifications, size of organization, and job title/function. B2B, B2C, and nonprofit marketers were all represented; however, the majority of respondents were North American content marketers from B2B companies. We may revisit this for the EMEA and Asian regions at a later date.



*The “most successful” were those who rated their organization a 4 or a 5 in terms of success at creating video on a 5-point scale, where 5 was “Very Successful” and 1 was “Not at all Successful.” The “less successful” were those who rated their organization a 1, 2, or 3.

FINDINGS

What's the Big Deal with Video?

Video is a proven way to engage visitors. It can be one of the most effective ways to tell a story that will hold customers' interest along all phases of the buyer's journey.

Like other studies, our research confirmed that marketers use videos most consistently at the top of the funnel. The vast majority of our survey respondents (77%) use videos to create brand awareness, while more than half use them to promote social media/community engagement (63%), communicate brand story (58%), and generate leads (51%).

There was no appreciable difference between the most successful video creators and their less successful peers in terms of what part of the buyer's journey they are most likely to create videos for.

However, when we looked specifically at B2B companies, we saw that they place more emphasis on using videos to generate leads when compared with B2B+B2C respondents (58% vs. 42%). They're also more likely to create videos of customer testimonials (47% vs. 33%).

When we examined success metrics, the results were not surprising. We found that 72% of the most successful video creators have one or more metrics in place to measure the success of their efforts vs. 33% of the less successful video creators.

Another finding is that experience breeds success: 48% of the most successful video creators have five or more years of experience creating videos. In contrast, only 25% of less successful creators have five or more years of experience, and 48% have fewer than three years.

Reasons Why Marketers Create Videos

Create brand awareness	77%
Social media/community engagement	63%
Communicate brand story	58%
Lead generation/top of funnel.....	51%
Customer testimonials/reviews.....	41%
Sales/sales enablement	40%
Recording live events	37%
Lead nurturing/mid-funnel	36%
External training/support/help	30%
Conversion	28%
Internal communication	23%
Other	5%

How They're Getting it Done

When we asked marketers whether they outsource video production or create videos in-house, 45% said they use both methods.

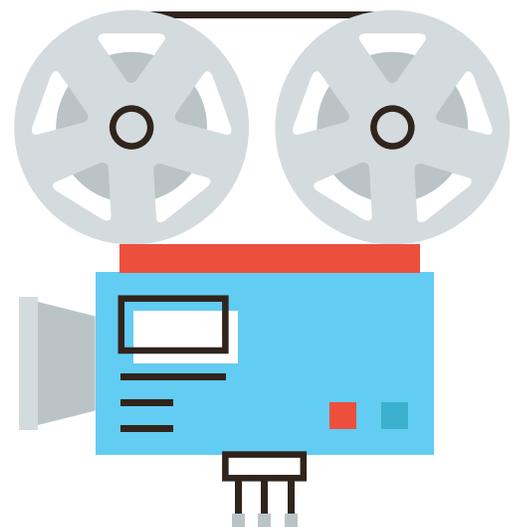
However, company size plays a role: Organizations with fewer than 100 employees are much more likely to produce videos in-house-only (52%) when compared with large companies with more than 1,000 employees (21%).

Insourcing vs. Outsourcing of Video Creation

	Total Sample	1-99 Employees	1,000+ Employees	Most Successful	Less Successful
In-house Only	39%	52%	21%	43%	36%
Outsource Only	15%	12%	21%	11%	18%
Both.....	45%	34%	57%	46%	45%

Almost half of the most successful video creators (46%) use a combination approach, much like their less successful peers (45%). Note, however, that the more successful are more likely to create videos in-house only (43%) when compared with their less successful peers (36%).

As with most other forms of content production, finding the right balance between insourcing and outsourcing video creation can have a big impact on overall success.



How Much to Produce?

If our survey results are any indication, it's not going to get any less noisy this year. Almost a quarter of all respondents (23%) plan to produce more than 30 videos in 2015.

For the most successful video creators, this is even more pronounced: 33% say they will create more than 30 videos this year and only 8% say they will create fewer than five.

The opposite is true for those who are less successful at creating videos: 37% say they will create fewer than five videos this year and 16% say they will create more than 30.

An interesting observation here is the lack of a bell curve altogether. Other than the “confidence” gap, there seem to be extremes at both ends. Most brands are creating fewer than five videos (24%) or more than 30 (23%).

However, everybody seems to agree that “more” are on the horizon. Nearly all respondents (97%) say that compared with 2014, the number of videos they produce in 2015 will increase or remain the same. This was independent of how successful the marketer is at creating videos. Even 96% of the less successful video creators say they will increase or maintain the number of videos they are going to create.

Overall, the results point to a growing hunger for more video—but there are no discernible answers to what the “right amount” currently is.

30 or more	23%
25-29.....	3%
20-24.....	6%
15-19.....	11%
10-14.....	14%
5-9.....	18%
Fewer than 5	24%
Average	15

How They're Deploying It

One of the interesting findings from the Forbes and Google study on video was that while a large number of executives said they watched work-related videos on a weekly basis, fewer actually watched them on YouTube. Of those who watched work-related videos weekly, 75% said they watched them on business-related websites vs. 52% who watched them on YouTube⁶.

While our study didn't look at the syndication of video to online publisher websites (such as third-party publisher sites), we did examine how marketers are using free hosting services (e.g., YouTube), vs. paid services that are free from advertising (such as Brightcove).

Currently, the majority (78%) make use of free services such as YouTube, 31% host their own videos, and 29% use external hosting services that simulate an internal infrastructure (such as Brightcove). There was no appreciable difference between what the most successful video creators are doing vs. their less successful peers, with one exception: the less successful creators are less likely to use paid external hosting services (25% use them vs. 34% of the most successful).

Hosting Techniques Used

	Total Sample	Most Successful	Less Successful
Use free external hosting services	78%	77%	79%
Host our own videos on our own servers.....	31%	31%	31%
Use paid external hosting services that simulate hosting on our own servers	29%	34%	25%
Use free services exclusively	42%	36%	46%
Use paid services exclusively	10%	11%	10%

When we examined where these creators are actually deploying their videos, our findings mirrored many prior studies. Eighty-five percent said they deploy videos via social media platforms. Beyond that, landing pages (68%), blogs (61%), corporate home pages (58%), and e-newsletters (48%) round out the top five. Interestingly, and relating back to the syndication model we discussed above, “paid content promotion services” was last on the list (19%).

6. http://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Video_in_the_CSuite.pdf

How They're Spending for It

In perfect alignment with the hunger for more videos, 94% of those who are currently creating videos say they will either increase or maintain their video creation budget during the next 12 months.

Marketers who have at least one metric in place to measure their success at video creation are more likely to increase their budget than those who have no metrics (56% vs. 32%).

Furthermore, the most successful video creation marketers are more likely than their less successful peers to increase their budget (54% vs. 36%).

In addition, the most successful spend the most on video creation annually (48% spend more than \$25,000 per year on video creation, whereas 44% of their less successful peers spend less than \$5,000 per year).

The survey results also indicate that it is relatively cost-effective to produce videos in-house: 68% of respondents say it costs them less than \$2,500, on average, to create one minute of video internally. On the other hand, only 30% report that external vendors quote less than \$2,500 to create one minute of video.

External Vendor Quotes vs. Average Cost to Create One Minute of Video Internally

	Typical External Vendor Average Quote for One Minute of Video	Average Cost to Create One Minute of Video Internally
\$10,000+.....	6%	0%
\$7,500 - \$9,999	3%	3%
\$5,000 - \$7,499	12%	2%
\$2,500 - \$4,999	34%	16%
Less than \$2,500.....	30%	68%

When we take into consideration our other finding that nearly half of all marketers use a combination approach of creating videos in-house and outsourcing—and that doing so really has no impact on overall success at video creation—it seems logical to conclude that **one way to scale video production (and get more bang for your buck) is to develop at least some competency at producing videos in-house.**

Why Aren't the Nonusers There Yet?

Finally, we looked at the nonusers of video and asked them why their organization doesn't create videos.

Lack of expertise (44%), lack of budget (41%), and lack of staff/bandwidth (32%) were the most often cited reasons.

When we asked the open-ended question, "What is the biggest roadblock that needs to come down in order for your organization to begin creating videos?" responses included:

"Ease of use to create and post without issues."

"Video production cost is still quite high compared to blog articles, case studies, eBooks, etc."

"Investments in time and money. Need a production process that is simplified, and isn't cost-prohibitive."

"Video production seems much more cost-intensive than eBooks or blogs. We need to investigate the added value of using video as a marketing tool. For now, there is no added value, so no need to create videos."

Even so, nearly three out of four respondents (74%) said they are likely to reconsider creating videos within the next two years. More than half (54%) said they are likely to create at least one video over the next 12 months.

These results align with our other findings that the hunger for video production is very high, independent of current success (or even current ability) to actually create them. It seems, then, that despite the huge number of videos being created, we are still in the "early days" of maturity in the space. Therefore, **opportunity is there for those who want to become skilled at creating, scaling, and deploying video content marketing.**

Best Practices for Starting, Scaling, and Differentiating

Our survey results indicate a promising future for brands that take the creation of video seriously. When we synthesized the findings, we saw some interesting patterns emerge. By combining those patterns with knowledge we've gained by working with brands that are already using video successfully, we developed three best practices:

- 1. Invest in the process—not just the output.**
- 2. Develop specific measurement plans for video.**
- 3. Use the competency of quality to drive quantity.**

1. Invest in the Process—Not Just the Output

One of the primary differences between content marketing and campaign-based marketing is that “learning how to fish” can be more advantageous than “buying fish.”

This is true with most content marketing, but particularly true with video because of the specialized skills needed to create it.

Investing in the ability to develop experience in-house, knowing what to outsource and what to create internally, and having a measurement system in place will enable an organization to use video much more strategically.

CMI has seen many businesses invest in creating a “video department,” subscribe to video creation platforms, or even hire full-time videographers. But without investing in a process, those efforts will be futile. The video strategy should be incorporated into the larger editorial calendar so the internal team can make sound decisions about which pieces of content will be “worthy” of creating high-quality videos around.

One example of this is a B2B manufacturing company we worked with. Two people in their marketing group are responsible for creating video for corporate PR purposes. They integrate the dates for their major “productions” with the company’s content marketing calendar. This enables them to leverage their shoots to capture more thought leadership, testimonials, events, and other marketing-driven videos. By aligning with the content marketing calendar, they can balance their needs; they know well in advance which pieces they will create in-house and which ones they will outsource—and how they will repurpose what they create.

Our research confirms that this is a smart approach. Developing internal experience appears to be a key ingredient to understanding how to balance insourcing vs. outsourcing, as well as creating cost efficiencies over time.

2. Develop Specific Measurement Plans for Video

Only half of the marketers we surveyed (51%) have at least one metric in place to measure the success of their video creation efforts. This percentage is higher, however, for the most successful video creators (72%).

Indeed, many businesses struggle with how to measure the return on their “video investment.” Too often, success is equated with “views” rather than “actions taken.” Views are, ostensibly, the “hits” of the early 1990s website world. But for brands, it’s not sufficient just to get more eyeballs to watch their videos. They need to engage and motivate those eyeballs. What’s important is the action taken after watching the video.

One framework that we at CMI have seen work is the 3 X 3 Method. This framework aligns video around three purposes, and then aligns each of those with a measurement framework. Then, each purpose is aligned with three categories: the corporate calendar, the marketing campaign calendar, and the content marketing calendar.

The Corporate Category—these videos are produced around the business. They include recordings of C-suite speeches, company events, internal training videos, etc. They are usually measured simply by getting them done on time and within budget.

The Marketing Campaign Category—the purpose of these videos is to sell or persuade customers to “buy.” While these may ultimately look more like “advertising,” they are assets that support a direct marketing campaign, a product launch, or some such selling campaign. They may include product demos, how-to’s, or ads. The main differentiator is the focus on the product/service and the sales-oriented call to action.

Measurement is marketing-metric based: How many leads did this video produce? How many clicks on the call-to-action? What was the cost-per-lead, etc.?

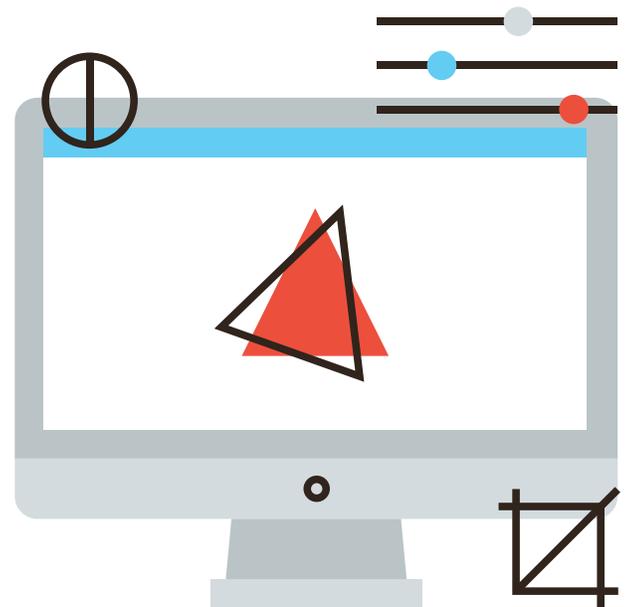
The Content Marketing Category—these videos are developed to educate, entertain, or in some way deliver value that is separate from the product or service. They may be educational or thought leadership-focused, or they may be fun, entertaining videos meant to inspire someone. Their main differentiator is the focus on the “story” or the “value” that is separate from the product. These videos should have a call-to-action to “subscribe,” or to “attend an event,” or to “watch another video,” but they are meant to drive the “approach,” not the “product” of the company.

These videos are measured by the actions taken to further the approach, or changes in consumer behavior that move the content marketing mission forward.

Examples of video-specific metrics include:

- Clicked play: tracking the number of plays initiated
- Attention gained: tracking the percentage of video watched
- Attention overall: tracking the number of videos as a whole consumed in entirety
- Action taken (e.g., form fills or clicks on calls to action embedded within the end of the video)
- Shares: number of times the video was shared

The video team can use these three categories to create and repurpose video based on a purpose. Once they align a calendar with the corporate, marketing, and content marketing calendars, they can plan for the “big rock” productions and determine how (or if) they can repurpose each video for the different categories. This will give each video a target to be repurposed for as many categories as possible, and give the team leverage to create different “versions” of the videos as necessary.



3. Use the Competency of Quality to Drive Quantity

One of the questions we get asked all the time is, “How much content should we produce?” The answer is simple: “As much as you can be great at.”

Whether you choose to outsource, completely insource your video, or maintain some balance, the key is to understand the strategy and the process so that video creation is developed as a true competency.

This means assigning resources and developing skills (through training and professional development). When we look at the best practices for creating powerful videos that stand out, some of the traits we most commonly see are:

- **Understanding the power of story**—understanding dramatic structure, and how to create something that sets up dramatic tension, creates a compelling through-line, and ultimately tells a story.
- **The benefits of storyboarding**—where you are not only scripting the video, but actually sketching out the major “scenes” of the video before you create it. Not only will this help you sell your ideas to noncreative types within your organization (who may need help visualizing), but it also will help the videographers understand the coverage that you’ll need. There’s nothing worse than editing a video and realizing you didn’t shoot something that would’ve really made it sing.
- **Understanding the technical details of audio and video**—poor audio can ruin a great video. Understanding how to capture audio, especially in a live environment, can be the make-or-break of something that stands out. Also, applying great music or sound effects can be crucial to producing a video that doesn’t sound (or feel) like every other one out there.

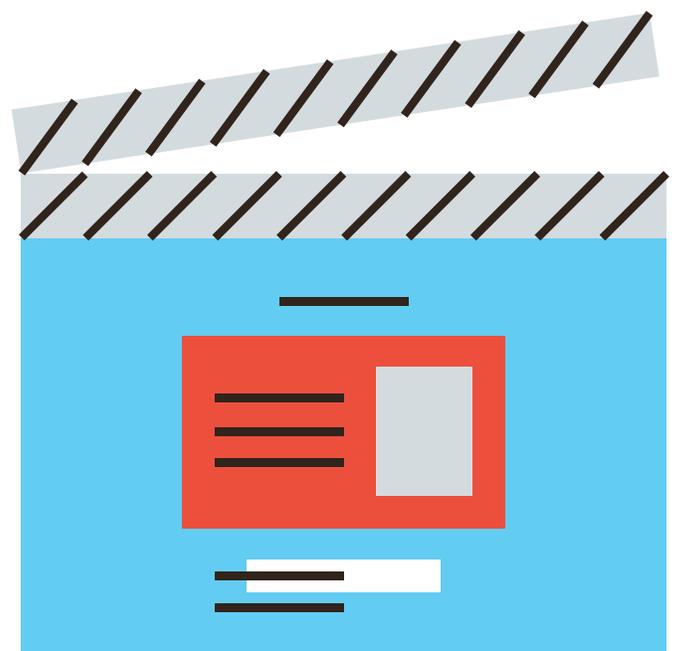
All of these (and certainly others) are competencies that your business may or may not be able to develop. The key is to identify which ones you WILL develop in order to know where to bring in outsourced talent over time. Truly understanding this competency will enable you to scale and create videos that will stand out from the crowd.

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that businesses are finding tremendous success with video. As we mentioned in the introduction, nearly two-thirds of the B2B respondents to CMI's annual content marketing survey who use videos say videos are effective at helping them meet their content marketing objectives.

However, this success assumes that the business was capable of creating videos in the first place. What this research illuminated for us was that creating video isn't "rocket science" relegated to only a small number of highly skilled artists and technicians in Hollywood or New York City. It is simply another content type that needs to be adopted and practiced. Brands that are successful with video experiment with it more frequently and get better at it over time. If the business can get over the "fear of flying" with video, it would appear that practice does, indeed, make perfect.

Action!



About Content Marketing Institute

[Content Marketing Institute](#) is the leading global content marketing education and training organization, teaching enterprise brands how to attract and retain customers through compelling, multi-channel storytelling. CMI also runs the [Intelligent Content](#) platform focusing on content strategists, and the [Content Inc](#) brand platform on entrepreneurs and startups. CMI's [Content Marketing World](#) event, the largest content marketing-focused event, is held every September in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and the [Intelligent Content Conference](#) event is held every spring. CMI publishes the bi-monthly magazine [Chief Content Officer](#), and provides strategic consulting and content marketing research for some of the best-known brands in the world. CMI is a 2012, 2013 and 2014 Inc. 500 company. Watch this [video](#) to learn more about CMI.

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About GoAnimate

[GoAnimate](#) enables people to produce a wide range of custom videos—from scratch—in the cloud—using drag-and-drop tools.

Businesses and educators recognize the power of video but find it difficult, time-consuming, and expensive to produce high-quality content. GoAnimate is the quickest, simplest, and most cost-effective solution for producing and sharing a professional-looking video.

See more at <http://goanimate.com>.