

YouTube Marketing UNCOVERED



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Section 1: The Truth About YouTube

It sounds like a marketer's dream: Start out making a quick, spur-of-the-moment video in your kitchen – and end up being the most subscribed-to channel on [YouTube](#), with over 1,000,000 subscribers.

In fact, your videos become so popular, you end up with a movie deal!

If you're casting about in your mind, trying to figure out which of the top marketers or celebrities has done just that, don't bother. The perpetrators of this astonishing feat were two high school students, Ryan Higa and Sean Fujiyoshi, just having some fun with buddy Joshua Butler and the odd assortment of friends helping out behind the scenes. They called themselves "Nigahiga", and specialized in humor that had my 13 and 15-year-old relatives in stitches – and eagerly sharing Nigahiga video links with everyone on their Facebook network.

How did the boys achieve **over 1,000,000 visitors**? By creating true viral videos that people (especially teenagers) just couldn't wait to share with everyone they knew. In other words, Nigahiga was outrageous, irreverent – and made people laugh.

Is your marketing or promotional video likely to go "viral" – that is, be spontaneously promoted in a rapidly-expanding pyramid of enthusiastic link-forwarding to the tune of over 1,000,000 subscribers?

The bald truth is... not likely. Unless you manage to do one of these three things:

- A.** You use irreverent, crude humor and lampoon highly popular celebrities, movies or books (paying no attention to copyright issues, YouTube's own conventions and rules, and U.S. slander laws).
- B.** You show something truly amazing – “Norah the Piano Playing Cat” comes to mind, as well as the man who ate Mentos and drank Cola, then “exploded”; or the world’s most gigantic Lego “snowball”, (which garnered such attention, the popular TV show Mythbusters devoted an entire show segment to proving the video was faked).
- C.** You pay a highly sophisticated video marketing company the equivalent of a small Hollywood budget (6 figures) to professionally promote – forget about making and producing; that’s extra – your video

That, folks, is the reality. Unless you have more than a penchant for lowbrow comedy, a frog who can sing Broadway tunes, or a million dollars, you’re not going to rival Nigahiga any time soon.

That being said, what can you do with YouTube video? Can you expect to see your YouTube marketing or niche video go truly viral?

The answer is yes; perhaps not to the tune of 1,000,000 views – but there are many ways you can help your video go viral. The scale is not going to be

as expansive as Nigahiga (unless you lampoon the celebrity scandal of the moment without any regard to copyrighted material or the laws of libel), but it's still more than possible for you to significantly boost your marketing efforts or your company brand.

(What is a "viral video"? It's an irresistible one that instantly "connects" with people and gets naturally, organically and feverishly passed on to others without any incentive other than its own value.)

And as for business, marketing or career-related tasks you can do or goals you can achieve using YouTube video... well, viral videos are just the tip of the iceberg.

Making Money with YouTube

If your interest lies in sales or marketing, you might describe YouTube as a combination of social networking and article directory.

All the same rules apply to it as to any other marketing mode:

1. Do your research

2. Pay attention to SEO (by using proper tags, i.e. keywords)

- 3. Make sure you give your video a powerful title that actually begins with your keyword**
- 4. Target it to the right niche (by placing it in the right category)**
- 5. Direct traffic by promoting it in multiple ways**
- 6. Include your website URL at the beginning and end of your video**
- 7. Include a call to action**

As you can see, it's no revolutionary new miracle technique – just good, solid internet marketing principles applied to yet another form of media. As with social networking, article submission, press releases, Minisites, blogs or any other marketing technique, YouTube video holds the potential to allow your video to be as brilliant or as inept, as successful or as ineffectual, as you can make it. And as with other marketing techniques, mastering the basics along with a few specific “insider” tips and secrets – as well as avoiding certain common mistakes – can greatly increase your chances of gaining new subscribers (and fans), as well as genuinely boosting your sales.

There are some things you can't do: You still can't use someone else's copyrighted music, photographs, images or video clips without permission.

As with any social network, check YouTube's guidelines before you do anything at all. Violating these terms may mean instant suspension.

Can You Use a Video Sales Page on YouTube?

Yes you can. But most marketers agree that **creating a video sales page** that is too blatantly a sales page doesn't result in high conversions unless you already have a huge list and fan base – short videos tend to “rush” the potential customer, unless they've arrived via a landing page, first.

The preferred method lies in creating “How To” videos demonstrating a product actually (and easily) being used, with a call to action or – more commonly – a simple link somewhere in or with the video; usually more than once.

There's a great deal of wisdom in using this latter approach. When you show someone how to use something complex – easily – and save them time, aggravation and money, you create a grateful potential subscriber or customer (while establishing yourself instantly as the “savior” of that niche.)

You can also create **a promotional video**. Liz Tomey did this when introducing a new membership site. The video consisted basically of Tomey showing viewers her favorite places to relax and walk, her house, and talking about herself. She did this to both show viewers what it was possible for them to achieve too, through online marketing, and to let them get to know her in a friendly, informal way.

This is not the only way to make a promotional video, of course. You're really limited only by your imagination. (We'll talk more about promoting yourself, your brand or your product later on in this Special Report.)

The real question to ask yourself is...

What Is YouTube Best Used For?

If you've been in marketing for any length of time at all, you'll know that different arenas of distribution are better for different messages – and niches. For example, there are times when a press release will carry more weight than an article – and vice versa. There are times when a blog will get your message out and generate sales more effectively, and times when a minisite does a better job.

Also, if your product is a set of videos on DVD, the obvious way to promote it – to video-loving niche members – is via YouTube.

On the other hand, if your market is all dial up customers and you've called yourself "Bare Bones Low Speed Marketing", you'll probably have such minimal success telling your subscribers to check out a video, it's not worth the investment of time or effort.

Suit your message to your market. The best way to do this is to ask yourself first:

● ***"Where do my subscribers and potential buyers usually hang out?"***

No matter what your niche, most marketers "hang out" at YouTube – for both business and personal reasons. This being the case, it makes solid common sense not to ignore this additional method of business or product exposure.

So when should you specifically make a video, rather than write an article or send out an email to your list? Let's look at the most effective and popular ways marketers successfully use YouTube for the answer...

1. **Enhancing your marketing** – a YouTube video is just one more area of exposure, when you're promoting a product or your services. It's not always the best way in every case – but the more methods you use, the more people you'll reach (including those who never bother with article directories or blogs, preferring videos instead).
2. **Online Tutorials** – anything that is best shown or demonstrated in action rather than explained is a ripe candidate for a YouTube video. Instead of reading up on the latest whiz Traffic Finding tool, for example, many people will go straight to YouTube, input the product's name, and actually search for tutorials on it. (Hint: Call your video "Product Name" + "Tutorial".)

Likewise when they want to see what their favorite marketer is up to: Many people will input the marketer's name and search YouTube, before they'll Google them and go read a web page or article on or by that marketer.

3. **When you've got something visually amazing or unique to share** – And when you do have something visually amazing or unique to share, first ask yourself the question: "Is this something that directly relates or will help promote me or my products?"

For example, if you really did have a frog who could belt out Broadway Tunes, you might want to make a sensational video of him impersonating Liza Minelli. And you would be certain to have your website URL prominently embedded either in the video, or in the information YouTube displays.

(The danger with this approach is... while you may easily get a million views from people who want to see your singing frog, not one of them might be the slightest bit interested in checking out your “Adsense For the 21st Century” site.) Keep it relevant – and if the clip is really too phenomenal to ignore, make it relevant – somehow!

What is the Single Biggest YouTube Marketing Mistake?

This answer will vary, depending on who you talk to – but you can take your pick of 3 glaring mistakes that kill more YouTube video promotion efforts than all the rest combined:

- 1. Forgetting to include your URL and call to action with or in your video**
- 2. Not making effective use of tags (keywords) and categories**
- 3. Making a “Talking Head” video**

Point number 3 is a major bugbear for many people. It has been argued (and rightly so) that people make “talking head” videos – videos of themselves sitting in a static room and talking to the camera – because they don’t know what else to do...

...or they don’t have a creative bone in their bodies. (Either, or both, can be true!)

However, making a “Talking Head” video is not always a losing technique... if it’s a deliberate move on your part – say, to appeal more to a left-brain, analytical market segment; the sort who think fantasy novels are a waste of time, and who want just the information, with no emotional involvement – it may actually work much better than annoying them with screen shots of tropical beach locations fading inspiringly in and out of their screens as you talk.

Another time the “Talking Head” approach may be indicated: As a briefer-than-normal intro to a sales page (and embedded *in* the sales page). Even then, if you use this approach, the people left on dial up (and there are more than you may think) are likely to skip it. If they can’t close the video they may give up waiting for it to load, and close your page. This is especially true if you don’t give them an option to play or not play the video. If you learn nothing else, don’t embed videos that play automatically when your sales page loads in. The close rate from those on dial up or in a hurry will be instant!

But applying any “rule” to YouTube has a direct parallel with art: Many people don’t realize that famed Cubist painter, Pablo Picasso, completely mastered representational, realistic drawing and painting first, before he ever turned to abstract art. At the tender age of 14, he abandoned realism (having produced some of the greatest drawings the world has ever seen) because he felt there was nothing original left to say in that medium and style. It no longer excited or moved him, and he instinctively felt he did not “connect”.

He certainly captured peoples' attention with his Cubism, since he was the first artist to invent it. He even "pre-qualified" his patrons and fans, by creating a style they would be drawn to either love or loathe.

In other words, you've got to completely learn and understand a rule (and the principles behind it) before you decide – deliberately – to break it.

The last word on "Talking Head" videos?

- Make sure that what you're actually saying really packs a punch, when it comes to valuable information.
- Keep it even shorter than usual. WAY shorter.

The Unique Advantages of YouTube

You may be thinking, "Hm, making videos for YouTube is just another task to add to my list. Is it really worth the effort?"

To answer that, let's look at some of You Tube's special benefits:

- 1.** It's free
- 2.** You can do what you like ("within reason and law", as cartoon character, The Brain, once famously said to sidekick, Pinky)

3. You can optimize your video with keywords – especially ones that draw in highly-rated **related videos** – a secret advantage you don't have with many other marketing mediums.
4. There is an audience pool of over 1 billion visitors to draw from
5. It can put a "face" (yours) to a name. It can help you make a personal connection with your viewers not possible through ordinary channels.

The Biggest Disadvantage

Search engines cannot yet read data contained in the actual video itself (just as they can't read words displayed in an image). But this is easily overcome with a little kindergarten-simple SEO, such as making sure you include those tags and a clickable URL in non-video areas of your YouTube page.

Section II: Making a YouTube Video

Big Budget or Home-made?

Did Nigahiga have a huge budget? Apparently not. They used props made out of household items such as paper plates, paper bags, markers and brooms – and their videos rapidly went viral to the tune of 1,000,000 subscribers.

The whole charm of YouTube lies in the way it allows “ordinary” people to express themselves – or capture wild and exciting “real time” events on film.

What does make a “home-made”, low budget video become wildly successful?

Two things: **Content** and **connection**...

Nigahiga **said what they wanted to say quickly and well** (or, to be accurate, quickly enough and well enough for it to work – a professional movie director would probably flay their scripting and production values alive.)

They also said it directly to their target audience – older kids and teens. They were on the same wavelength, despising and being captivated by many of the same things as that audience.

They **tapped into wildly popular trends, celebrities and sensations of the day**. (“Emo chicks”, Harry Potter, the “Twilight” series, “Titanic”)

They created **consistent, memorable “signature” series**:

- **“How To Be”** (a gangsta, an Emo chick, a nerd, a ninja)
- **“Movies in Minutes”**

(My young relative excitedly calls me now and again to say: “Nigahiga’s done another “Movies in Minutes”, you gotta go see it right now!”)

What is a “signature series”?

It’s one where the designation instantly tips you off as to exactly what format the movie is going to take, and what topic or type of subject it’s going to deal with... as well as in what manner. When you get a notification about a new Nigahiga “Movies in Minutes”, you know you are going to see an outrageous parody of a currently wildly-popular movie, celebrity or trend.

Although technically there were many things movie professionals and marketers could criticize and pinpoint, these two talented boys also did many things “right”, and its worth taking some pointers from them.

To summarize:

1. **Create a “signature series”**, all following the same format (so people know what to expect) – and give it a catchy, unique name. (Remember, human beings love repetitive patterns, and consistency!)
2. **Tap into, tune in and speak only to your target audience.** Don’t waste time worrying about whether or not your video should have been professionally produced – worry instead about whether or not your target audience would prefer it professionally produced.
3. **Whenever you can, tie your message into a relevant trend.** One way to keep on top of this: set up Google Alerts or Google News Alerts. Keep your eyes and ears are open. What is your target audience talking about on Twitter? On Facebook? In the forums? In blogs?

More Mistakes

What shouldn’t you do, when making decisions about video quality?

Well, it's alright for your video to have a "home-made", "it's happening right now!" peek into your life, if this is relevant to your target market – but no matter what quality of equipment you use – a top of the line camcorder and microphones, with professional floodlighting... or a simple, cheap digital camera... make sure your **light source** is adequate for the job. Nothing makes a video disappointing or unwatchable more rapidly than bad lighting.

The second big mistake: **Making your videos too long**. Again, people on dial up will have a problem with this – and impatient types will take one look at your 45 minute 262mb. Playtime, and click on the next best similar video instead.

Long videos are best sold directly as video courses and downloaded from your download page. If they absolutely have to be long, one public arena you may have better luck with is Google Video, which has a different focus than YouTube (even though both are now owned by Google.) YouTube is really all about short videos.

However, do consider using a short excerpt from your course on YouTube to promote it!

And the video length that seems to work best? **5 minutes – or less.**

Unless there is some powerful, compelling reason to spend thousands of dollars on having a professional company make your video for you, suit your equipment to:

- A. What you have available (**i.e.:** cameras, floodlights, tripods, camcorders, microphones, etc.)
- B.** Your skill level
- C.** Your current budget

Don't sweat it if you don't have the latest video equipment. An hour spent browsing YouTube will show you what a huge difference there is in

production values. (This huge difference means there is no set standard – only what works for your specific list.)

Enhancing Your Video

Even if you use your old digital camera and plain, old Windows MovieMaker (the program that comes for free with most PC's) for your video production, there is one extra way to enhance many videos...

...a **good soundtrack!**

You can obtain music and sound effects for your videos from both free and paid sites. Just double-check the licensing rules, just as you would when visiting any directory site or paid membership. Avoid lifting copyrighted material!

Windows MovieMaker allows you to easily drop sound clips into a second track, while editing. You can trim these sound clips, adjust the volume, apply effects such as “fade in” (or out) and re-position them to start at any point in your movie.

There are, of course, more powerful programs you can buy for movie editing – but don't worry about not being able to turn a movie shot with your old camera into an MP4 file: YouTube automatically does that for you.

How not to use a soundtrack?

Just last night, I clicked on a YouTube link to a new product, hoping it would be a tutorial. Instead, I got a static screenshot of that product – and 26 seconds of music. Needless to say, I felt somewhat annoyed that I had wasted my time accessing a clip that offered me zero value, and I did not click on the embedded link – obviously the only reason that “video” was on YouTube.

That sort of sloppy marketing is a waste of everyone’s time.

Movie Making Software

You’ll find the following software suggestions helpful if you’re not a video professional wizard. Any software not listed here you can assume:

- A.** I don’t recommend for beginner-immediate level movie makers
- B.** I haven’t yet heard of
- C.** Receives regular complaints from amateurs re: Being “too complex”
(e.g. Adobe – with the exception of Adobe Elements)

[Corel Digital Studio 2010](#) – currently listed at \$79 – 99 (*free trial)

[Sony Movie Studio 9](#) – currently listed at \$99 (I’m including this link to Mike Stewart’s internetvideoguy.com because it comes with a free video tips report and 14 free, high quality sound clips on sign-up. Also, he offers solid support.) Similar to Adobe – but easier; and not \$799!

[Movie Edit Pro, Movie Editor Pro Plus](#) – (*free trial) Currently \$49.99 and \$89.99 respectively

(Mostly) Free Sound Clips

[FreeAudioClips.com](#)

[PartnersInRhyme](#)

[Stonewashed](#)

[Soundsnap](#)

[Soundbible](#)

NB: It is up to you to practice “due diligence” and check the legality and licensing restrictions of any free sound clip you download.

A final two words:

1. Don’t confuse Sony Movie Studio 9 with Sony Vegas: the latter has more features – but is correspondingly more complex to use, if you’re a technophobe.
2. The sound clips and music loops on the free sites previously list vary widely in quality. If you want top quality, professionally produced and original sound clips, sign up for Mike Stewart’s [TwoBuckThemes.com](#) membership site. Not only is it inexpensive, you’ll build up a nice collection of professional, high-quality music tracks for all occasions, and he is very obliging about creating custom tracks, if you suggest topics in the TwoBuckThemes free membership forum.

Of course, if you're an expert video maker and you're just reading this book for the YouTube and marketing aspect, you'll already have your own favorite pro software resources.

Embedding Links

One way to make sure people know where to find your sites and enable them to click-and visit is to put your website URL (the one you want connected to that particular YouTube video) at the beginning and end of every video you make.

Another way is to actually embed links that are clickable into your video. There are pros and cons to embedding links this way...

Pro – if people embed your video directly on their site, your URL is still clickable or copy-able, if its embedded within the video itself

Con – your URL is not searchable by Google, when it's in the video itself.

The solution, of course, is to have both your URL embedded in your video... and entered in your Channel information, so people can easily find you.

Embedding your Link into Other Peoples' Videos

I won't comment here on the legality and ethics of inserting your link into other people's videos that you embed on your own site, but it is done.

Frankly, I don't know enough about the legality, and your ethics are your own. One free-of-charge way to do it is to visit [LinkedTube](#), which will walk you through placing a button "in" the video showing your link or URL. (It's a question of creating, getting and saving a piece of code.)

The one time this is always a great technique to use? When it is sanctioned as a way to put your specific affiliate link into your vendor's video.

If you don't like the way this looks, you may prefer a "bubble" instead from [BubblePly](#).

Watermarks

There are programs that allow you to "watermark" your video with your own website URL displayed faintly but continuously all through your video. It's not considered a good strategy unless you want to stop people from "stealing" and embedding your videos on their own sites – which totally nullifies the whole purpose of viral videos!

Section III: YouTube Video Promotion

While it's true that you should promote your videos much the same way you would promote other projects you've created – through blog posts, forums, social networking, Squidoo and article directory submissions (with links straight to your video in the resource boxes) – there are specific ways you can boost your video's visibility and increase its chances of going viral.

Leaving Video Feedback

Don't overlook this crucial step in promoting your video. It's very simple – and it doesn't carry the sort of penalties Google may visit on your site for backlinking to the wrong blog (there are no “no follow” tags to contend with, either).

I'm talking about cruising through other, similar or related videos in your category, **rating** them and **leaving comments**, as well as inviting like mind to be become “friends”.

This is the single most important method of building up your views quickly on YouTube, and it should be your first step in promotion with every video, just as a matter of course.

The key to success?

Choose only videos from **relevant channels and groups** to comment on.

As with blogging, keep your comments specific and relevant. Comments like: "Great movie, bud!" may be mildly gratifying to the recipient (if you're lucky), but won't result in a subscription or much interest.

And although you will inevitably get dim-witted, inane and occasionally even downright offensive comments, use this comment section as your personal tracking and feedback database. Take it seriously, and take note of requests, criticisms, hits and misses.

(And don't be afraid to go ahead and delete anything really inappropriate.)

Other Online Methods

I'm not going to insult your intelligence here by laying out details on blog posts, article directories or social networking: Presumably, if you've gotten to the stage of wanting to add videos to your marketing mix you already have a grasp of these subjects: However, take all your assumptions out and re-examine them, to see if there are any "cracks" you've missed, to spot possible promotion techniques when using the medium of video.

Weigh them up against the length of time it will take you to institute them. If your time would be better spent doing other tasks, you can even outsource some of these other promotion methods: For example, paying a

VA who specializes in article submissions to send articles to directories for you.

And when it comes to the reverse of article marketing, there is one video-specific tip I can share with you. Mind, I haven't yet tried it myself, but it looks worth checking out, at least: And that's article-to-video conversion, done for .97 cents per article turned to video at [ArticleVideoRobot](#). (There is a free trial, and plenty of samples.)

But above all, when it comes to applying the usual online promotion techniques, don't just fire things off in a hit-and-miss fashion – that's the way to leave yourself feeling frustrated and mentally fatigued, dimly aware there are “holes” here and there in your marketing strategy (but you're not quite sure where).

Instead, have a plan – even before your video is created, if possible – for exactly how, when, where and to whom you'll market your video

Make your video and its promotion a strong part of your sales funnel and business plan.

Offline Promotion

Don't neglect this area of promotion for your videos, too.

- Add the link to your video under your signature in relevant business cards and brochures.

- Send a press release to your local paper (just remember, you have to focus on slanting your press release to offer them a good story that will appeal to their readers, in order to have it published. (Put the link to your video in the resource box allowed by the newspaper.)
- Offer to guest on your local radio show, discussing a topic that is both relevant to your video and relevant to your radio host's readers. Most radio hosts will plug, or allow you to plug, your product or link in exchange for the interview – but it doesn't hurt to spell that out in advance, and see exactly how many times, and where in the show, your host will allow you to promote. (The ideal is one-third into the show, and again at the end.)

Section IV: YouTube Marketing Strategies

One component this report doesn't have space to include is a blow-by-blow description (with screenshots) of exactly how to upload your new video to YouTube.

For one thing, you don't need that. Once you register, YouTube walks you through the whole process simply enough: You'll have your video uploaded in no time.

However, there are some finer points it really helps to know before you ever get to the "upload" stage...

Your Channel Name

Your channel is simply the name of your YouTube account and "page".

Right away, you'll need to decide if you want to call it by:

- 1. Your personal name**
- 2. Your "branded" name**
- 3. Your product name**
- 4. A keyphrase**

Yes, you can have more than one account (each associated with a different email address) so you could theoretically have one account named by your keyphrase – “sillyvideosecrets” or “newmarketingtricks”, or whatever. You can have another under your own name (or the pen name you serve a certain market segment under). And yet another under your branded product name: “WobblyWidgets” or “BigBananaBlowouts”, or whatever.

Just choose the one you think will work best for your niche or list. And be sure to add your logo, photo or custom background, if it helps your “brand.”

Categories

When it comes to YouTube, the category you place your video in is crucial. One element you don’t see a lot of in internet marketing is humor – yet British comedian John Cleese, of “Monty Python” fame, made a killing (and a whole new career) putting together funny training videos teaching serious business principles for large corporations.

And “Comedy” is arguably the most popular category on YouTube. (Just think of all those “forwards” you get, bugging you to check out the latest “Cat Juggling Chickens” video!)

In other words, if you have any sort of gift for conveying vital points in a funny manner at all – and if that sense of humor relates to your business, as John Cleese’s certainly would – you might want to consider promoting yourself in this category.

Of course, the flip side to this particular coin – the competition is huge! You'd have to have a video that is truly memorable and unique, in order to rank well in a large, generic group such as "Comedy"... and you'd have to promote it really aggressively.

And then again, there are rumors about more than one famous internet marketing guru who has very deliberately paid the sort of fortune most people only dream of for viral videos they, themselves, did not create, just so they can "hook" their list into checking out the "cute dancing parrot" video (which, if you're sharp enough, you'll notice has a link to their video marketing product at the end of it.)

But whichever group you decide your video belongs in, pick wisely for your niche and goals. Choosing a category that's less popular will position you more strongly (with less competition) from the start. Dominating a popular category with huge competition can vault you to superstardom.

Here is a list to help you plan, containing current YouTube categories:

- Autos & Vehicles
- Comedy
- Education
- Entertainment
- Film & Animation
- Gaming
- How-to & Style
- Music
- News & Politics
- Nonprofits & Activism
- People & Blogs
- Pets & Animals
- Science & Technology
- Sports
- Travel & Events
- Comedians
- Directors
- Gurus
- Musicians
- Non-Profit
- Partners
- Reporters
- Sponsors

Your YouTube Account

When most people sign up for YouTube, they pick the “Standard Account”. (Many are not even aware there is more than one type of account.) If there is a specific type of account targeted to your niche topic or mode, you should seriously consider upgrading your account to one of the specialized accounts. (Less competition, for one!)

You can choose from:

Guru Account – for experts in any field

Director Account – for those to whom video making is a primary business element

Comedian Account – Literally for comedians, though you don’t have to be making a living as one to choose this type. You can promote yourself quite openly here as a comic.

Musician’s Account – If sound and music are your main area of interest, this is the one for you.

Section 5: The Juicy Extras

Video Making Tips

Cut out the Fluff – Remember that the shorter and more succinctly you deliver your message, the better received it will inevitably be. Get to the point. Don't go off on tangents. Above all, don't dish out too much information about you – focus on your viewer (just as you would with any blog post or sales letter).

That being said, sometimes the “human” touches and the small flaws are what separates interesting videos from “put-you-to-sleep” ones.

It's a fine balancing act. But remember... you can always edit a video down – even in Windows MovieMaker... even if you have just one overlong clip.

(One way you can do this: Just keep dragging the same clip into the bar at the bottom of your work screen; crop around the section you want; drag the same clip again (it will still be up in your “collections” area, no matter how many times you drag a copy to the work area) next to the previous edited version, and isolate/crop the new segment you want to join in. You can do this multiple times.)

Some people find it helpful to use a **script** or a **storyboard** – map out ahead of times the points that need to be covered.

For others, “winging it” works best.

Just start actually making your videos, and your own style will soon emerge.

Let Your Title do the Talking – Your title is one of the most important keys to ranking more highly on YouTube, so its worth repeating this point. One solid technique is to make sure your keyphrase begins your title (the position is important.) So, for example, if your key phrase was “business mistakes to avoid”, you would call your video something like: “Business Mistakes to Avoid: #1 – No Promotion” – **not** “#1: No Promotion – Business Mistakes to Avoid”.

If there really is no keyword phrase strong enough to use in the title, opt for intriguing your reader, and packing an impact. Short and punchy is the way to go.

If you’ve created a “signature series”, always begin your latest video with the phrase your signature series is most often located by: For example, if you’ve created a signature series called “Marketing Blunders 101”, make sure that phrase is at the beginning of your title, like so: “Marketing Blunders 101 – Dissing Other Marketers”

The “P.S.” – You’re probably aware of the power of a “P.S.” in a sales letter. In fact, many copywriters deliberately save their best selling points to put in one or more “P.S.”

Well, while researching Nigahiga's popularity, I came across a small site belonging to one of their fans, a teenager who added a "P.S." in her very first video, "Pumpkin Gore". All this "P.S." consisted of was an "extra" 2-second clip of "movie" – delivered unexpectedly after the credits.

It was typical enthusiastic, politically incorrect teenage fare, but as with Nigahiga, "Pumpkin Gore" got me thinking about the marketing value of this technique: Out of the entire movie, the P.S. "afterthought" following the credits stayed with me the most strongly. And I found myself thinking: "What a great place to put **an extra call to action** – especially if you can do it in an entertaining way."

(And the other interesting but totally irrelevant thing about this particular video? The teenager utilized and credited free music clips from InternetAudioGuy.com!)

The "Forbidden" Element

This brings us to another important trend to notice on YouTube: the power of the "forbidden" element. Popular teen sites like Nigahiga and Neil Cicierega love to tackle subjects they can be sarcastic about, cut up, make fun of or lampoon – for **nothing is more merciless** than a teenager who sees through someone else's bad behavior, hypocrisy or mediocrity.

Teenagers are also more prone (or drawn) to flouting rules and guidelines, indulging in creative but questionable techniques such as creating “mashups” – cobbling together popular music, without regard to copyright.

I hastily add, I am in no way saying “all teenagers are bad”; neither am I condoning the unauthorized use of anything – but what studying the most popular videos on YouTube taught me (a huge portion of which consists of videos made by teenagers) was to begin to see true creative flare at work, rather than the “structured”, plodding, left-brain, step-by-step procedures taught to us by most “how to make a video” tutorials.

Striving for the spark that connects – that element you can’t see (in teenagers, often enhanced by the sheer naughtiness of what they’re doing) – plugs you into the passion in making a video: And make no mistake, the pure, instinctive passion of these viral videos plays a major part in what makes them such wild hits, in the first place!

The lesson is, kids like Ryan Higa and Sean Fujiyoshi make videos for pure fun, often inspired by their own heroes or villains. They don’t often set out to teach, moralize or sell anything.

And these videos blow the socks off the YouTube viral volcano.

What “forbidden elements” can you intrigue readers with in your videos? (Not illegal elements, of course.. but things people would secretly like to know more about?)

*Why **didn't** I study marketing videos, rather than teenage "fun" videos? I actually did. However, most of the video makers I use as specific examples in this Special Report are the ones who have truly massive subscriber numbers – apparently achieving that without paying a dime.*

Studying only marketing videos is going to tap us into nothing more than using the familiar, instead of exploring unexpected elements and innovative/creative techniques – opening ourselves up to true analysis and inspiration.

Biggest YouTube Mistakes

All those days researching videos for this Special Report did make me acutely aware of videos that put me to sleep or had me hitting the "close" button – or rather, often it confirmed what I already knew. There are certain common mistakes that can kill interest in your video faster than a pin can burst a balloon – no matter how awesome your tag (keyword phrase).

Here are 3 of the most common ones...

1. **Don't make a commercial.** Even if your video is all about your product, the whole focus should be how it can help the viewer – not about its wonderful features. Besides which, nobody surfs YouTube looking for commercials – I'd probably rank "blatant advertising" as cardinal sin #1!

People want entertainment, amusement or helpful instruction. Period.

- 2. Keep it Short.** Five minutes is the standard recommended maximum length – but you may wish to consider keeping it under four. I kept a tally of the number of views the marketing videos I studied ran to, and there was a noticeable difference between the comparative number of views garnered by videos in the 1 – 3:46 minute range and the 3:47-5 minute range. As in... the 1-3:46 range received almost double the views.

If you do have a long tutorial, it's far better to break it down into short chunks (separate videos), point by point, than have one long ten-minute video that may take someone on dialup (or even on satellite, in some high-use areas) forever to load.

- 3. Mistaking “poor quality” for “low tech casual”.** It's one thing to have a video filmed on your digital camera that looks a little rough around the edges, but delights people with an up-close, honest look at your life, or quickly teaches them clearly what they most needed to know right now: It's another thing altogether, when you can't see the special knot the horseman is tying because the barn is so dark, or the camera's wobbling around so much and the screen is so blurry, you can't read the words on the tutorial screenshot.

In other words, “low tech” should not equal “poor quality”.

Hot Tips

Having pointed out the negatives, let's end on an upbeat notes with some positive tips for creating better, all-round-watchable videos...

1. **Be your own worst critic.** In order to do that, you really should spend a day – or an hour every day for a week – browsing through YouTube videos. Make a note of the bad, the good, the downright ugly, the overly long, the annoying and the sublime. But more than that, use your time to comment on relevant videos (upload at least one of your videos first, however.) You can rate videos too – that's another good way to win friends and influence people – but skip the rating step if you in all honesty can't give a video a good rating.

Once you've got a fair idea of what makes a video a Hit or a Miss, apply those criteria to your own videos. Be ruthless. (Your audience will thank you for it – with repeat views and viral traffic.)

2. **Don't be afraid to explore "random".** One of the most popular types of video is the really "off-the-wall" video – the Giant Lego Snowball is a quick example of this category. If you can make a point in an off-the-wall manner – for example, demonstrate a marketing technique in dynamic Animé cartoon style – go for it! Try it out! You'll soon learn what's a Hit or a Miss for your viewers.

Another way to hit the “oddity” category – start out with something bizarre... then use it to quickly segue in to illustrate a marketing point.

(Though be careful with my Animé suggestion – if you take it too literally, you may end up with thousands of teenage Animé fans, but no members of your actual niche!)

3. **Use the “share” option.** Every time you upload a new video, you’ll have a chance to send notification about it to everyone in your address book via email – or on your list. (And it’s a simple, one-click function, so easy to do!

Read the Terms

A word of caution: You can find yourself removed from YouTube if you violate any of their terms – so do take the time to actually read them. After all, it’s much easier to spend 67 seconds now finding out what to avoid, then spending months trying to convince YouTube to re-instate you (and reload all your videos).

The Last Word

One final resource I'd like to introduce you to – YouTube's own internal free handbook. It offers solid tips and will help you find your way through this new medium of expression:

[YouTube Handbook](#) – Particularly pay attention to the links on the left, which are tools you can use.

Like any other modality in internet marketing, there is a lot more to YouTube video mastery. These are the most important basic tips to get you started.

Looking forward to seeing your video on YouTube!