

BOOST VALENTINE'S DAY SALES WITH VIDEO

> Ah, Valentine's Day. Love is in the air, and your store is filled with roses, lilies and tulips just waiting to make someone's day. February can be an amazingly successful time for florists, but it's also a time when the competition pops up everywhere! How do you stand out from the competition and make sure it's your bouquet that sparks romance? Videos.

While video may not be a new tool, it's a trending one. According to Hubspot, 51.9 percent of marketing professionals internationally name video as the type of content with the best ROI. Shoppers who view a video of a product are 1.81 times more likely to purchase than non-viewers. Some experts even believe that video is the future of Facebook. They see posts of the future consisting only of video, with no text or image-only posts.

Choose the Right Option

To harness the power of video to boost floral sales for Valentine's Day, you must first understand two types of content: Pre-recorded and live.

So how do you decide whether to upload a pre-recorded or live video? Let's take a closer look.

Traditional videos on Facebook and video-hosting sites such as YouTube are pre-recorded: Someone recorded the video and later uploaded it.

Videos that don't benefit from real-time interaction (likes and comments) can easily be pre-recorded (e.g. event announcements). Also, if your Internet connection is inconsistent, pre-recorded videos should be your go-to.

Live-streaming became popular in 2015, with the launch of mobile live streaming apps Meerkat and Periscope. Facebook soon released Facebook Live, which quickly overshadowed its competitors. Facebook Live is gaining popularity thanks to its high engagement rate when compared to image and text posts.

Live videos are a good choice with interactive content, anything where you want people to engage in real time by liking, asking comments, responding to their comments. That could include limited-time offers, exciting or breaking news, product demos, behind-the-scenes tours, interviews and crowd-sourcing/surveying attempts.

Best Practices for Both

You can make the most of Valentine's Day sales with pre-recorded and live video streaming with tips that translate to both approaches.

1. Make a (flexible) plan. Consistency is key with social media, and video is no exception. I suggest sharing video at least once per week, whether you have a regular theme to the videos or just want to share the latest news and updates. Plan videos out just like you would any social media post, but make your plans flexible. For some live streams, you may want to give customers prior notice of when you'll be going live (e.g. if you are doing a live Q&A.) Other streams may be spur-of-the-moment, such as a video letting people know that a popular product will be selling out or that the store will be closing due to bad weather. Set goals and make plans, but always remember that those plans can change!

2. Give a call to action. All of your posts online should have a call to action: Clear directions on what you want a user to do next. If you want someone to like your video, comment on your video, share your video or come into the store and mention your video, be sure to make it clear! Users who are given a specific call to action are more likely to engage with a post.

3. Put people on the screen. People are what make the difference in big box vs. local. People want to see the people be-

THREE GREAT VIDEO IDEAS

Need some inspiration for video? Try one of these ideas:

- Have employees do a short Valentine's Day skit, and end it by saying Valentine's Day is better with {Store Name}.
- Invite people to a Valentine's Day open house.
- Show people how to DIY a personalized bouquet using flowers from your shop.

Get a dozen additional ideas for videos at safnow.org/moreonline.

hind their favorite stores. Many retailers tell me that they are intimidated to get on screen, so they opt for more product slideshows than actual video. Take my advice: Get over that fear! People want to see you. It builds the relationship between you and your customers and gives a face to your brand. It doesn't always need to be the store owner on screen, however. If you have a motivated employee who loves to be in front of the camera, they may just be the perfect candidate to star in store videos!

4. Keep it short and simple. It's no secret that we (as in everyone) have a short attention span. I have retailers ask me all of the time how long their videos should be. The honest answer is that it all depends. While videos that are shorter than two minutes typically perform better, a good rule of thumb is to make the video as short as possible while still giving viewers all of the information they need. Keep your videos short, simple and to the point, and focus less on the clock. 🎥

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