

IDEAS

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THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

CREATING YOUTUBE CONTENT

In January's "Tech Beat" column, I outlined a number of compelling reasons for independent retailers to spend some time and energy building a YouTube channel. For those of you who already have a channel — congratulations! You've taken the first big step. Now it's time to create videos.

Coming up with high-quality content can be a challenge — especially for those of us who have a business to run. Yet, high-quality content is what brings people back to your channel. It's what helps your channel build momentum, rank higher in search results, and pull together the subscribers you need to drive actual business into your store.

So, what kinds of videos should your YouTube channel contain?

The first thing you need is a vision. Think of your favorite television channel. What is it that draws you to keep watching it? You certainly wouldn't watch a channel that only plays one show. You need a variety of "shows" to help your channel build an audience. And, luckily, these "shows" can also help your business be more efficient.

Consider these ideas for your YouTube channel:



High-quality content attracts viewers to your YouTube channel time and again

PRODUCT OVERVIEWS BY "BOB"

Why not create a humorous character who — though quirky — happens to know everything about the instruments you carry? For now, we'll call him "Bob." Maybe "Bob" is an old rocker (complete with long hair and a "Wayne's World" accent) who can show your "dudes" all the cool new gear coming to the stage these days. Maybe "Bob" has a

catch phrase, a lucky hat or an affinity for action figures. The important thing is that "Bob" is fun and relatable — even if he's a bit over-the-top. You can use "Bob" to review new products and help potential customers see why they need what you sell.

WORSHIP WISH LIST

Visit local churches and talk to them on camera (with their permission, of course) about the problems they face in their ministries and how the equipment you carry could help solve them. You could have your Twitter or Facebook followers suggest their churches for your next video.

What a great way to get people to watch your channel while you simultaneously build relationships with the house of worship community!

TEACHER FEATURE

Do you have lessons in your store or strong relationships with teachers in your community? Why not interview them and give them a chance to "sell themselves" on your channel? After you've done enough of these, you might even link to the playlist from your website, so your customers can easily find

the best teachers in their area.

KIDS BEAT

Of course you'd have to get written permission from the folks involved, but consider filming clips from recitals and special events in your store and highlight some of the great performances students in your area are giving. You could even host a competition where students submit videos to you, and the videos that get the most "likes" win a prize. Now that would grow your channel!

YouTube gives you the power to be your own producer. All you have to do is spend some time determining who you want to reach out to and how this powerful tool can help you provide better service to your customers, grow your company's brand, and drive people into your store.

Just like regular television, not every "show" will be a hit, but with time and determination, you'll find the ones that work. Before you know it, your customers will come in asking to buy from you — or maybe from "Bob." **MI**

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