

THE TECH BEAT | BY JAMES HARDING

Make YouTube Work for You

Just over a year ago, I left my job in Louisville, Kentucky, and joined Riverton Piano Co. in Phoenix. Though Riverton was a larger (and older) company than the one I left, I quickly discovered that our social media presence needed some attention. Each platform was disconnected from the rest. We had no schedule or strategy ... and we had no consistency in style, branding or “feel” to our content. This was especially noticeable with our YouTube channel. Some of our videos were short and engaging. Some were long and dry. In short, viewers had no idea what to expect from Riverton.



Keep your YouTube videos compelling, clever & no longer than 8 minutes in length

In the last few months, however, I have watched our YouTube audience grow to 16 times what it was the day I came on board — but that didn’t happen by accident. Here are five things we did to rapidly grow our channel:

- 1. Find a Feige.** You can say what you want about Disney’s Marvel movies, but there is no question that President of Marvel Studios Kevin Feige has forever changed the way movies are made. Thanks to his leadership, dozens of movies across a variety of genres have come together to build one of the largest franchises in cinema history. It’s important to have a passionate person overseeing your brand. Find someone who can coordinate all your social media platforms. They may not be creating everything, but they can make sure each entry supports your overall message.
- 2. Consistently create good content.** This is harder than you’d think. Spend some time brainstorming as a team. Decide on a number of topics that you want to produce videos about and test them against these criteria: Are they entertaining? Are they interesting to people who don’t know or care about your business? Do they answer questions or meet needs that your customers actually have? Do they help your clients feel more like a part of your family? If so, then you have some winning ideas. Work to make your videos short — six-to-eight minutes max, compelling and clever. Show your sense of humor, and then decide on a release schedule.

3. Build brand recognition. If you have never used the web service Fiverr, I highly recommend it. You can affordably hire someone to animate your logo and set it to a piece of music. Why not hold an in-store competition and have local musicians write your theme for you? Come up with a slogan and make sure to include

your logo, your slogan and your company’s personality in every video you make.

4. Coordinate your social media release schedule. I schedule all my YouTube video releases for Thursdays. This means that every Thursday, viewers will see a new video, and my Twitter followers will see a tweet about the new video. Friday, that video will go up on my Facebook page and my personal LinkedIn page. Saturday, I’ll pin the video to my Pinterest page. Include them in an overall social media strategy.

5. Collaborate with local influencers. This one has been a tremendous amount of fun for me. I’ve made arrangements with local musicians, piano teachers and social media influencers to perform for my YouTube channel. In return, I’m promoting them and their social media. Nobody is getting paid, but everybody is working together to grow their audience. As a result, I’m getting some truly impressive performances for my channel and building positive PR in my community. Plus, I’m gaining exposure to new followers. Everybody wins.

There are a host of ways you can grow your YouTube audience, but these five have helped me grow faster and more consistently than ever before. At this rate, Riverton’s YouTube channel will quickly surpass the one I spent 10 years building in Kentucky. **MI**

James Harding is the director of sales and marketing for the Riverton Piano Co., a social media expert, web designer, pianist and avid blogger. Email him at jamesh@pianoshowroom.com.