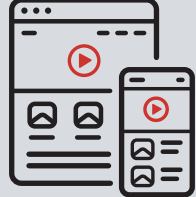


# Digital Video Tips

## Optimizing for engagement & revenue

The first rule of digital video is that there are no rules. There are, however, best practices. Here are five tips for creating more compelling videos based on CNN's 20+ years serving millions of streams:

### 1 Platforms What goes where?



#### Website

A full range of video stories that represents a mix of what you are covering.



#### Social Media

Breaking news updates, health and wellness, "feel good" stories – heroes, must-see, positive outcomes.



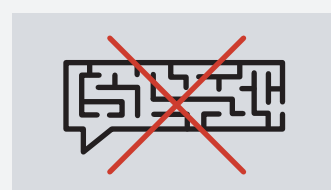
#### YouTube

Longer videos or playlists that create a cohesive topic thread or timeframe using multiple videos.

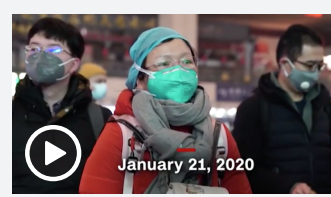
### 2 Content & Style

Your first question should always be: Why is this a video? If you can't answer that question it shouldn't be a video story.

#### How viewers consume content:



Don't try to explain complex stories that people can read more easily.



Choose stories that are visual.



Audio may be turned off. Use slates to convey story points that encourage viewers to turn on sound.

#### Give people a reason to watch:



Identify emotion in every clip if possible.

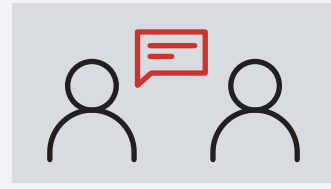


Not every clip needs narration. Let good videos breathe with natural sound from the scene.



Use compelling raw video to give a sense of immediacy.

#### Tone of voice matters:

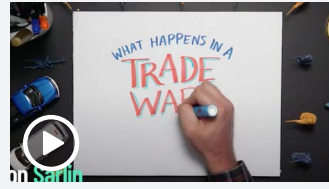


Narration should sound like you are telling a story to a friend.



Tell people what they will see and why they are seeing it.

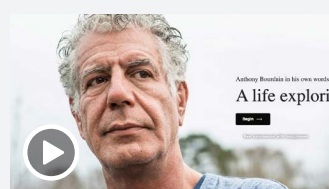
#### Find new ways to tell stories with videos:



Visuals don't have to be slick and polished. DIY props and graphics can attract attention and set the right tone.



Use graphics to illustrate points and make videos pop.



Merge text stories and video into an interactive format.

### 3 Length

People are busy and distracted. Keep your videos short and pay attention to where they are being viewed:



#### Desktop

Create video collections so people who want to watch video can easily find more.



#### Mobile Web

Keep it short and make sure there is reason to watch and share.

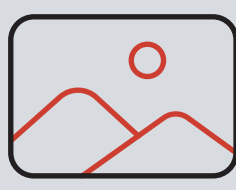


#### Apps

Same short length as mobile web. This is your most loyal audience so connect them to your reporters/anchors.

### 4 Programming

It's all about capturing viewers' attention quickly:



#### Thumbnails

Use the best possible thumbnail to attract attention to the clip.



#### Headline

Headline for the video should tell viewers why they should watch and make them want to click — it does not have to be a summary of the story.

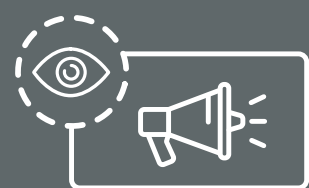


#### 3-5 Seconds

You only have 3 to 5 seconds to get someone to watch — put that one riveting moment at the top, even if you have to tell the beginning of the story later.

### 5 Revenue

Ads pay for video:



#### Interest

Get people to watch past the ad to earn value.



#### Length

Make sure video is longer than the ad — no ads on videos less than :30.



#### No Ad

Skip the ads on videos with violent or otherwise disturbing content.