

INTERACTIVE ● Show and tell

Generate online videos to broaden brand cachet

By YSETTE WITTEVEEN

The marketing world has grappled for more than a decade with how to effectively deploy Web-based tools and interactive strategies to attract attention and generate buzz for their corporate and product brands. And we've all seen how the emergence of such consumer Web sites as MySpace, Veoh and YouTube are driving businesses of all shapes and sizes toward Internet video.

Let's face it—most companies will never achieve the kind of YouTube-driven notoriety that could propel their brand into an overnight sensation. But, whether companies are aiming to affect business-to-business or direct-to-consumer sales, deploying online video is rapidly becoming an incredibly effective option. The question is, how can webcasting help your business?

Consider this: What's important to remember here is that it's quality, not quantity; so take the time to create useful content for video webcasting.

Marketers can create content that is every bit as creative as the most popular clips on YouTube, and can provide a dynamic, powerful presentation for a product launch or a major news announcement. But businesses have to approach video with the same care and consideration as they do with other traditional marketing communications mediums such as advertising, sales and marketing, and public relations.

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These days, video webcasting has matured to the point where advanced webcasts can be created quickly, and in some cases, right from a marketing professional's own desktop, eliminating the need to outsource production costs for multiple campaigns or to book time with media groups. In fact, many of the brands

that create or run a webcast for a one-off event find the best approach is to adopt webcasting as just another communications channel to integrate into their overall marketing efforts.

You can jump-start your own exploration into the world of webcasting. Consider these five basic reasons video webcasting should be a part of your marketing plan:

◆ **Enhance the interactivity of your products and brands to generate leads.** Whether you work for a small to midsized company or a large corporation, streamlining communications to ensure that your news announcements, product demos and even sales training initiatives have a look and feel appropriate to the company brand is crucial. Video webcasts can customize the look and feel of your branded online presentations and allow for better absorption on information.

In the past year, Interactive Video Technologies (IVT) worked with emerging and established consumer brands such as entertainment and media company ProElite Inc., based in Los Angeles, and Warrendale, Pa.-based clothing retailer American Eagle Outfitters Inc. to produce webcast events that incorporated audience interaction from polls, quizzes and surveys—each fully cus-

tomized with the company's logo and color schemes, reinforcing the brand in a dynamic way on thousands of consumers' desktops (in some cases for hours at a time). Also, new webcasting tools track how, when and where audiences view each webcast, allow-

ing brands to directly communicate with the viewers and sharpen focus and messaging.

◆ **Increase and deepen customer intimacy.** Using webcasting tools, brands can associate with the faces of their corporate leaders, popular public figures,

renowned subject matter experts and their own customers. This allows you to reach key audiences directly with compelling, high-impact presentations and clips. Large phar-

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