

Engage and Attract Your Target Audience with Visuals

Summary/Checklist

Introduction

- ✓ Visual content is essential to any marketing strategy for engaging your audience and keeping their interest.
- ✓ With modern tools and techniques, a business of any size can create excellent visuals.
- ✓ This course will show you how to create and implement a visual content strategy.

Why Invest in Visual Content?

- ✓ Visual content is memorable.
- ✓ Visuals can be taken in at a glance.
- ✓ Visual content is highly engaging.
- ✓ You can show rather than just tell.
- ✓ Visual content elicits an emotional response.
- ✓ Visuals can be used everywhere.
- ✓ There's no language barrier.
- ✓ Visuals are essential for branding.
- ✓ There is a wide variety of visual content you can make.

Course Learning Objectives

- ✓ Explore the benefits of using visual content in different areas of your business
- ✓ Identify where you can reach your audience with visuals
- ✓ Set goals for your visual content
- ✓ Identify the visual content you'll create first
- ✓ Define how your branding should be incorporated into your visual

content

- ✓ Create the most effective visual content for your audience
- ✓ Protect and publish visual content for maximum exposure to your target audience

Identify the Visuals that Resonate

- ✓ Successful visual content resonates with its audience.
- ✓ The first step is to understand your audience well.

Learning about Your Audience

- ✓ Businesses create an audience persona to understand their target market
- ✓ For this course, create a basic profile related to how your audience consumes visual content.
- ✓ Start by figuring out where your audience spends time and consumes content online.
- ✓ Identify demographic traits and personal attitudes of your target audience.
- ✓ If you have more than one major group, create multiple personas.

How to Discover Your Target Market

- ✓ Make an educated guess based on your business and its products
- ✓ Look at your existing audience
- ✓ Ask people through surveys what visual content they like
- ✓ Study your competition and see what content their audiences like
- ✓ Use Google Analytics to identify traffic sources and time spent on your content
- ✓ Listen in to your target audience wherever they're talking online

Choosing Visual Content that Resonates

- ✓ Follow members of your target audience and see what visual content they like
- ✓ Note where patterns emerge; for example, they may love humorous

memes

- ✓ Pay especially close attention to engagement; in other words, likes, comments, shares, and so on
- ✓ Post visual content on your website to see what gets the best engagement
- ✓ Create categories to define the types of content your audience likes

Research Competitors

- ✓ Your competitors offer a goldmine of information on what your audience likes
- ✓ Choose competitors with large, engaged audiences that have been marketing for a while
- ✓ Look at your competition's websites, blogs, ads, social media profiles, and other content
- ✓ Use the content you see for ideas on what your audience likes as well as ideas for content you can share
- ✓ Figure out ways to set yourself apart from your competition so that you offer your shared audience something unique

Plan Your Visual Content Focus

- ✓ Start planning your visual content by defining goals, such as:
 - Increase engagement with your audience
 - Grow your online audience
 - Drive traffic to your website
 - Increase sales
- ✓ Make your goals specific and measurable wherever possible
- ✓ Define how your visual content marketing goals fit in to your overall business

Identify the Types of Visuals You'll Create

- ✓ There are many types of content you can create
 - Simple images
 - Image with quote

- Images for blog posts or other online content
- Infographics
- Graphs and diagrams
- Videos
- GIFs
- Cinemagraphs
- Memes
- Calls to Action
- Presentations
- Sliders
- Visual Quizzes
- Cartoons and Comics
- Screenshots
- Advertisements

Leveraging Existing Content

- ✓ Go over old content to see if there is anything you can brush up and use
- ✓ Consider whether each piece of old content would be relevant to your audience today

Repurposing Old Content

- ✓ Take old content and repurpose it into visual content
- ✓ Repurposing involves taking a piece of content and transforming it into a new version or format. For example:
 - Turning a "tips" article into an infographic
 - Turning article's most important points into quotes
 - Turning an article into a slideshow presentation
 - Video screenshots to create visual content
 - eBook into a long interactive slideshow presentation
 - Podcast interview summary points turned into infographic
- ✓ Repurposing is creative, versatile, and time-saving

Developing Your Content Creation Plan

- ✓ After considering old content you can re-use, determine what content you need to create

- ✓ Refer to the data you've accumulated about your audience and its tastes

Enhance Engagement with Your Branding

- ✓ Visual content can help you with branding
- ✓ Your brand is the image of your company in your audience's mind
- ✓ Simple tweaks on your visual content can go a long way in branding

Identifying Brand Elements

- ✓ Brands use the same elements for the sake of consistency
- ✓ Brand elements should align with a company's core values
- ✓ Brand elements could include:
 - Logos
 - Colors
 - Fonts
 - Layout
 - Framing or borders
 - Style
- ✓ Although a minor part of your design, a branding element can make a tremendous difference

Applying Brand Elements

- ✓ There are many ways to incorporate brand elements into your visuals such as including a small logo or a similar border for each piece
- ✓ Choose brand elements based on the preferences of your audience
- ✓ Choose brand elements you can incorporate into each and every piece of content
- ✓ Your brand elements can evolve over time as you produce visual content

Create Your Attention-Grabbing Visual Content

- ✓ Use the many tools available to create your visual content

- Canva and PicMonkey are robust overall design tools with many features
 - GIFMaker is a tool for making animated GIFs
 - Adobe Photoshop is the industry standard and a slightly more advanced program
 - Gimp is similar to Photoshop but offers a wide range of tutorials and guides
 - Desygner is a simple tool for specific types of content like banners, social media posts, Facebook cover photos, etc.
 - Type Genius offers a wide range of fonts and typography options
 - Word Swag allows you to create, edit, and post visuals to social media on your mobile
 - The Stocks is a stock image site that pulls images from all over the web
 - Piktochart offers a great library of infographic templates
 - Unsplash sends stock images straight to your email inbox
 - Infogr.am is an easy infographic tool
 - Creately helps you make diagrams and other visualizations of statistical data
 - Skitch is a simpler and more user-friendly screen capture software
 - BeFunky allows you to edit images online without needing to register
 - WeVideo is for video editing
 - SnagIt is the industry standard screen capture program and can also be used for image editing
- ✓ Try out each tool before you start using it
 - ✓ Use free trial versions before you buy
 - ✓ Read online reviews before you buy

Outsourcing Your Visual Content Creation

- ✓ If you don't want to spend your own time and energy creating visuals, hire a freelance service provider
- ✓ Make sure you communicate to your provider everything you need done

Guidelines for Graphics

- ✓ Be aware of standard sizes and resolutions of each platform you'll use

Fonts

- ✓ Use the same fonts you're already using to keep your brand consistent
- ✓ Choose fonts that are clear and easy to read over ones that are artistic but hard to read
- ✓ Make sure headline fonts make the headlines stand out
- ✓ Consider how your fonts harmonize with other design elements of your visual content
- ✓ Experiment with font combinations to see how fonts play off each other

Colors

- ✓ Use the colors that resonate best with your audience
- ✓ Bright colors attract attention
- ✓ Too many colors or colors that clash can destroy your visual content
- ✓ Use colors that go along with the theme of the content you're creating

Imagery

- ✓ Make sure you have the right to use images and attribute them to their creators wherever necessary
- ✓ All of the imagery you use should be relevant to your visual content

Tips for Great Graphics

- ✓ Make sure your different visual elements don't clash
- ✓ Contrast gets attention so aim for contrast
- ✓ Choose fonts that are uncommon or unique
- ✓ Use text as sparingly as possible so that it doesn't distract from the visuals
- ✓ Experiment with text placement to find a good balance and rhythm
- ✓ Aim for simplicity so that your image and its message don't get lost in the clutter
- ✓ Think outside the box and try to make your visual content as unique as possible
- ✓ Use borders for images with a pale or white background so that they stand out
- ✓ Take advantage of filters to change the mood or improve your images

- ✓ Try out transparent icons, which place a transparent image over your main image
- ✓ Learn a little composition to make major improvements in your visuals
- ✓ Crop your images to improve the composition and make them fit sizes
- ✓ Teach people something useful with your visuals to set them apart from competitors' visuals that just get attention or cause an emotional response
- ✓ Tell a story with your visuals
- ✓ Use stock images carefully so that your images aren't generic
- ✓ Tailor your visuals to the platforms on which they'll be published

Publish Your Visual Content for Maximum Visibility

- ✓ The final step is to publish your content in different places, based on your goals for the content

Stamp Your Content with Your Logo

- ✓ Stamp your content with your logo to make it harder to steal
- ✓ Your logo should be large enough to be legible but small enough to be out of the way
- ✓ Make sure your watermark doesn't disturb the composition of the image

Use the Highest Quality Possible

- ✓ Use the highest quality possible for each format

Image Formats

- ✓ .PNG can be shrunk to very small sizes without losing resolution but file sizes are usually large
- ✓ .JPG is the industry standard and offers high quality and low file size
- ✓ .PDF is a format that shows a consistent image when downloaded on any device
- ✓ .TIFF downloads well but there's no compression so file size tends to be large

- ✓ .GIF files are images with animation that are low resolution but load quickly

Publishing Your Content

- ✓ Go back over your notes and publish your content where your audience will see it
- ✓ Look at the data you get from social media to see what's working and what's not
- ✓ Seek feedback directly from your audience to see what they like
- ✓ Consider split-testing to see what design elements perform the best
 - Split-testing involves running two versions of the same content with one element changed, and seeing which performs better
- ✓ Monitor your visual content's performance and make changes for future content