THE GORILLA GUIDE TO...®

Lead Generation and Content Marketing Opportunities with ActualTech Media

INSIDE THE GUIDE:

- Discover the capabilities that make ActualTech Media a unique firm in a crowded field

- Learn how time-tested multi-vendor webinars can transform your funnel

- See how an approachable Gorilla can help you achieve thought leadership dominance in your space

- Find out how ActualTech Media has solved the consistent content cadence dilemma

HELPING YOU NAVIGATE THE TECHNOLOGY JUNGLE!

ActualTech Media
www.actualtechmedia.com

THE GORILLA GUIDE TO...

Lead Generation and Content Marketing Opportunities with ActualTech Media

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ENTERING THE JUNGLE

CALLOUTS USED IN THIS BOOK

The Gorilla is the professorial sort that enjoys helping people learn. In the School House callout, you'll gain insight into topics that may be outside the main subject but are still important.

This is a special place where you can learn a bit more about ancillary topics presented in the book.

When we have a great thought, we express them through a series of grunts in the Bright Idea section.

Takes you into the deep, dark depths of a particular topic.

Discusses items of strategic interest to business leaders.

ICONS USED IN THIS BOOK

DEFINITION
Defines a word, phrase, or concept.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK
Tests your knowledge of what you've read.

PAY ATTENTION
We want to make sure you see this!

GPS
We'll help you navigate your knowledge to the right place.

WATCH OUT!
Make sure you read this so you don't make a critical error!

TL;DR Just the Facts

Sometimes, you just need the facts. That's where this chapter comes in. If you want the *full* ActualTech Media story, grab a cup of coffee and head on over to **Chapter 2**. In this chapter, though, you'll be getting the short roundup.

Who We Are

ActualTech Media is an innovative content creation and lead genera‑ tion firm focused squarely in the enterprise IT space with a mission to connect eager IT buyers with the right vendor solution.

What We Do

Our services are broadly broken down into two categories:

- Content development
- Lead generation though webinar events and content syndication

Our Services

The following sections provide general overviews for each of our services.

Multi-Vendor Webinars

	MEGACAST BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA	ECOCAST BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA	ENTERPRISE IT VIRTUAL SUMMIT BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA
MINIMUM LEADS	800	400 (150 for vertical events)	1200
VENDOR PARTICIPANTS	5 to 8	2 to 6	7 to 12
PRESENTATION LENGTH	20 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A	20 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A	20 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A

Figure 1: An overview of ActualTech Media's most popular event types

MEGA RESULTS WITH MEGACAST

68% of our audience say they use MegaCasts as their primary way to learn about different vendors technologies

- **High** Minimum Lead Guarantees

- **Exceptional** Live Attendance Rates

- **Highly Responsive** Audience = Qualified Prospects

- **Low** Effective CPLs

- **Consistently** Exceed Min Lead Goal by Live Date!

Single-Vendor Webinars

Single-Vendor Webinars are exclusive one-hour events. It's the client's hour to structure how they see fit, be it a PowerPoint presentation, product demonstration, or an interactive Q&A webinar with one of our industry experts.

We provide an expert event logistics coordinator to help clients understand exactly how the event works. We host the registration page, as well as the presentation platform. We provide the client with a video of their final presentation to use as they like after the event.

Nurture Webinars

Nurturing Webinars are a paid follow-up opportunity added on to any MegaCast or Summit event. How it works: During a client's MegaCast presentation we'll ask the audience via a poll question if they would like more information on that client's company. For those that respond, we'll invite them to a Nurturing Webinar that will be scheduled just after the MegaCast or Summit. This is an excellent opportunity for a client to take the next step with these hyper-interested attendees.

Gorilla Guide

Gorilla Guide is ActualTech Media's premier content brand and, with 50-plus books in the market and more than 25 in production, it's a growing content opportunity.

Every Standard Gorilla Guide includes:

- 40- to 70-page print and eBook (Kindle and EPUB included)

- 1,000 printed copies of this 5.5" x 8.5" book delivered right to you for gated programs, sales tools, tradeshows, and other in-person events

- Blog post about the book launch with social promotion

- *Permanent, unlimited, and unrestricted rights to the eBook. No annual renewal fees!*

- A-Z production: full writing, editing, and layout/design services

Gorilla Guide Express Edition

ActualTech Media's Gorilla Guide Express is a PDF and small form-factor book that helps you get the word out on a targeted topic or technology area.

Gorilla Guide Express eBooks are the perfect snackable asset for content syndication, gated programs, events, sales tools, and more.

Gorilla Guide Express is available as:

- An eBook only (and, as with the Gorilla Guide, we grant an unrestricted license to you to use the book in perpetuity)
- A mini print book (500 copies) + eBook bundle

Gorilla Guide Silverback Edition

When a topic needs more attention than 60 or 70 pages can allow, we have our premier Silverback Edition Gorilla Guide with the following:

- 100+ page print and eBook (Kindle and EPUB included)
- 1,000 printed copies of this 5.5" x 8.5" book delivered right to you for gated programs, sales tools, tradeshows, and other in-person events
- Blog post about the book launch with social promotion
- *Permanent, unlimited, and unrestricted rights to the eBook. No annual renewal fees!*
- A-Z production: full writing, editing, and layout/design services

Whitepapers

Whitepapers are six- to 10-page papers that dive in-depth into a topic to allow a client to provide an expanded view of a technology, feature, product, or thought.

Tech Briefs

Tech briefs are four- to six-page short-form assets that provide readers with an introductory overview of where client companies and solutions fit in the market. They can also be a look at the general architecture that defines client products.

Blog Posts and Blogging Program Management

We're also expert bloggers and, between all of us, have written well into the thousands of blog posts with our individual earliest work published as early as the year 2000. So you could say that we've been around the blogging block!

We're also experts at helping clients devise entire blogging programs that get results. So whether a client needs a bundle of individual blog posts or they need someone to manage their entire blogging program, we're up for the challenge!

360in180 and Gorilla Guide Videos

360in180 is a video series where we give viewers a comprehensive look (360 degrees) at a topic in three minutes or less (180 seconds). It can feature a talking head or it could be a quick whiteboard drawing, demo, or it could be a Buzzfeed-style video interview with text or … well, anything else!

Gorilla Guide video is a similar series, but may be a bit longer and more in-depth, but will still always be less than five minutes.

An Introduction to ActualTech Media

It was a dark and stor … oh, wait. This isn't that kind of book. In fact, this book may be *the most important book you read all day.* Why? Because you'll get to learn about ActualTech Media and why we've been privileged to serve the content and lead generation needs for more than 125 enterprise IT companies, from the smallest startups to the biggest global brands.

How We Came To Be

In the year 2012, history was made. The holder of all the world's knowledge, the Encyclopaedia Britannica, suspended its print edition as Wikipedia became the go-to source for the world's information. "Gangnam Style" took YouTube by storm. Disney bought Lucasfilm so that it could eventually remake Episodes IV to VI with new actors and slightly tweaked storylines that constantly keep the rebellious underdogs alive and legions of "Star Wars" fanatics opening their wallets for an unending parade of sequels and new stories.

And, in September, during VMworld, of that same year, at a restaurant in San Francisco, David Davis and Scott Lowe pressed the submit button on "GetYerLLC" to officially create ActualTech Media. We started ActualTech Media to provide our clients—companies that provide IT products and services to organizations around the world—with the very best in educational content.

Over time, our content focus was augmented by growing lead generation capabilities, which have become a significant part of our business,

as well as key drivers in the success of the 125+ clients we've worked with over the years.

What started as a barebones set of services has evolved into a fully realized set of services—with even more on the way, but there's a critical driver behind *everything we do*. It's what we call our Marketing Manifesto.

A TRIVIA QUESTION

Do you know why we're named ActualTech Media? Send a note with your answer to triviacontest@actualtech media.com with the subject line "Your name!" and, if you're one of the first 100 correct responses, we'll send a $20 Starbucks gift card your way.

ActualTech Media's Marketing Manifesto

It's time for something different in technical marketing.

We believe the time has come for technical marketing to truly commit to focusing on actionable education. The days of "which box should I buy?" marketing are over and, in the modern era, that approach isn't fitting where most prospects truly live. Why not?

Consider: Decision makers in the data center are staring down the barrel of a bona fide epochal change in how they can now deliver services to their internal stakeholders and customers. Many of them are under tremendous pressure to chart a strategic path and vision as soon as possible and adjust that path and vision as the business, the market, and the technology world continuously evolve.

Put yourself in their shoes for a minute:

Your infrastructure is aging rapidly after years of capital cost tightening. Demands from internal departments and branch offices are constantly escalating, leading to a squeeze on operational budgets. Your organization is under pressure from the top to be more "agile." Questions like "Why aren't we just moving everything to the cloud?" are coming up almost monthly.

Developers inside your organization have decided to stop waiting for you to thoughtfully deploy the environments they need and have built outside environments of their own. You're hearing a metric-ton of conflicting advice and murky buzzwords hyping new data center technologies like "software-defined," "hyperconverged, "multi-cloud," and "containers." You know you need to be on top of this stuff, but how? The marketing firehose puts you into a constant state of paralysis by analysis.

How will you manage to develop a strategy for your data center while still constantly putting out fires? How will you piece together an actionable understanding of your options and decide what to investigate, evaluate, and procure? How will you get the business to truly understand the various options so that your company can forge ahead?

At ActualTech Media, we get these pressures because we've personally been there, facing these same challenges. We've actually been CIOs, IT Managers, and Infrastructure Architects. We've lost sleep due to outages; we've fretted over backup and recovery; we've created paths forward for businesses large and small.

We've also seen how traditional technical marketing has skipped right over the most immediate needs decision makers have: to get a solid understanding of these technologies and the options they can open up. We believe this has to come before the marketing pitch, and ideally, it needs to come from a trusted third party that has been there, that knows the legacy challenges IT has to deal with and the pushback they might receive as they begin to effect real change in the data center.

Time and time again we've seen that the vendors who pause to educate, who step back and think about how they can truly help decision makers are the ones who earn the trust and in turn, earn the business.

We've built our entire company around the belief that education leads to sales; that if you reward people with information they can really use, they'll engage with you, share with you and invest with you. We're here to help you educate and connect with key decision makers and bring them into your world.

What We Do

Our goal is to **educate** and to **connect**. We're masters at creating compelling, creative content that speaks to IT pros and decision makers alike. We've become event maestros extraordinaire as we develop and host single- and multi-vendor webinars that have become must-attends from the dedicated members of our audience. Our content **educates** and our webinar events **connect** our vendor partners with eager IT buyers.

"We created $2.2MM in sales opportunity pipeline after just TWO MegaCasts!"

LEADING CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE VENDOR

"Our Gorilla Guide has been directly responsible for $2.54MM in sales opportunities in the last 12 months."

TOP HYPERCONVERGED INFRASTRUCTURE VENDOR

Figure 2: Mmmillions of satisfied customers! Call now!

WHAT WE DO

- **Webinars and lead generation.** Our MegaCast, EcoCast, PanelCast, and Summit webinars have become true events for our audience, who rave about our vendor lineups and thank us for providing them with a set of vendors to consider for upcoming projects. Our events get true results for our clients, too. We're told consistently that we rank at or near the top of our clients' internal scorecards in the quality of the people we send their way. We're also able to leverage our formidable lead generation services to help clients with content syndication needs, as well. Whether with client content or content we create, we can help drive the demand that keeps the sales cycle alive.

- **Content generation with a twist.** Sure, we do blogs and papers and the like, but we've also developed an increasingly popular book line called The Gorilla Guide Book Series, as well as compelling assets, including papers, videos, live-streamed conferences, and a number of other resources that have long-term impact in helping clients achieve their goals.

Content by ActualTech Media

Does this sound familiar?

You know you need engaging content, but your SMEs are too busy or aren't natural-born writers, or maybe you're looking for that next "hero asset" or for a way to implement content on a cadence, but just don't have the internal resources to make it happen ... if any of this sounds familiar, read on ...

A consistent flow of good technical marketing content that turns readers into buyers isn't easy to get your hands on.

You don't just need content, you need content that's:

1. Evergreen and useful throughout the different stages of the buyer's journey

2. Easily updatable to keep pace with the improvements in your solution's underlying technology

3. Consistently on-message, but is also trustworthy (IT people can sniff "self promotion" from a mile away)

4. Written by respected technical experts who know what they're talking about (but also write like a real person)

5. Telling a story that goes beyond just talking about the "speeds and feeds," and instead demonstrates what makes your solution different, unique, and better than your competition

The Reality

If you're a busy IT marketer, maybe these content development challenges sound familiar:

- A lack of internal technical staff with available time to write or with the ability to write well

- A shortage of available hours in the day to manage the content creation process, the internal or partner stakeholders, and the approvals needed to get things finished properly and launched on time

- Difficulty accessing authors with the "street cred" needed to get the attention and trust of skeptical IT prospects

- Limited access to professional editing and graphic design services needed to make the finished product truly shine

The bottom line: You could really use some trusted help to strategize, develop, and deliver effective content for IT buyers that's insightful, actionable, and consistent.

Our Story

Every one of our clients has smart people inside that have stories to tell. What they don't always have is time to tell them, or the storytelling chops to relay them in a way that resonates with technology buyers. It's incredibly easy to push content to the back burner when other priorities arise … and they *always* arise. If we had a nickel for every time we've heard our friends in client marketing departments say, "We have super smart people, but they're too busy to write," well … you probably wouldn't be reading this book right now because the entire ActualTech Media team would be retired and living off the investment gains from our offshore accounts.

If you've felt like you have great people with great thoughts, but with not-so-great availability or with not-so-great writing skills, never

fear! That's why we're here. We know technology and we know how to tell stories. Literally! Our content team is a collection of professional storytellers and technology experts.

Here's another cruel fact: As a vendor, no matter what you write, there's an unfortunately large segment of your target audience that will just ignore it. Now, between you and us, we know that you're honest and telling the truth, but a more nefarious set of marketers came before you and poisoned the authority well forever by printing materials that were slanted too far in the direction of just *happening* to support their products, rather than focusing on the salient points of the overall market and helping educate the reader.

We, however, are perceived differently by readers. As respected independent industry experts, readers view our thoughts and writings with a different lens. Over the years, we've cemented ourselves as reliable arbiters of truth, carrying cachet that's very difficult to achieve as a vendor.

But the content itself is just one way that we separate ourselves in the market.

Our Content Development Process

Let's face facts. Anyone with a job they want to leave can quit and hang out a shingle on the Internet to start a "content agency" today. But it takes a special combination of factors to create a content **powerhouse** that constantly creates compelling stories that are relevant, that educate and inspire an audience, and that are delivered *on-time* and *on-budget.*

This is where we come in. Over the years, we've developed a robust content development process. Although we assume most of the project effort, our collaborative process ensures that the inputs we get from you help shape a final work that gets results. We start every project with a kick-off discussion that ensures the final work addresses the

right audience, is on message and on brand, and is tailored to meet the marketing objective at hand. Along the way, we schedule client review opportunities so that we can adjust course in the unlikely event that we're drifting away from expectations.

Our process includes professional editing, an independent technical review of the content (to get a second set of eyes and make sure the plumbing doesn't have any leaks), and beautiful design that can be modified for each individual client to ensure our independent book series more closely align with their brand.

TECHNOLOGY CONTENT COMBINED WITH TECHNOLOGY KNOWHOW GETS THE JOB DONE

But there's much more to our secret sauce: We "get" the content. When clients engage with us, they're not working with typical authors, editors, and project managers. They're dealing with a team that is steeped in technology and that understands the context of what we're doing. That means that the hand holding and "explain it like I'm five" overviews most content agencies require is unnecessary. Our clients don't need to teach us the basics of the industry before we can get started.

In terms of editing, we get that, too! With editors that have technical chops, you're not just getting a grammar review. We'll make sure that the grammar is on point, but we'll also make sure that the final work makes sense and has maximum impact with your audience.
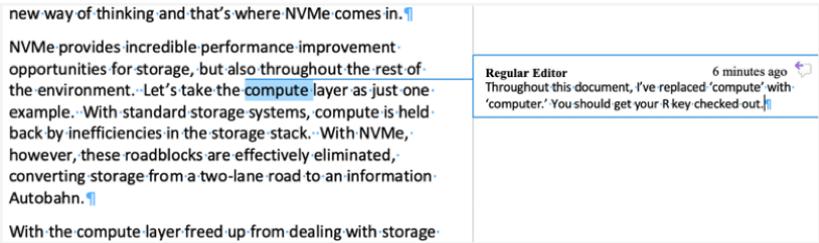
Figure 3: A regular editor fails to understand the technical nature of the work we all do
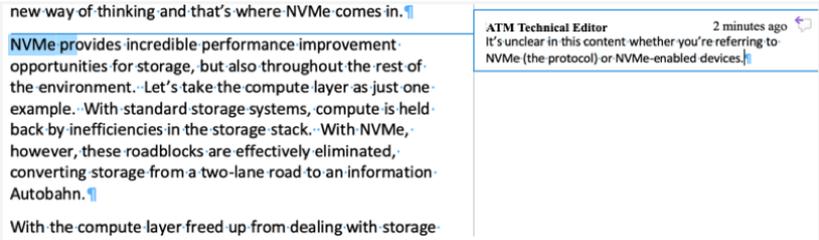
Figure 4: An ActualTech Media technical editor, however, understands the nuance

Content Options

As a full-service content creation firm, we support content needs ranging from blog posts to books to videos and everything in between.

Written Content

The next few sections provide a bit more depth for each of our primary content offerings. We'll start by discussing content that starts its life as a written asset (although it's commonly repurposed into a full mixed-media campaign). Then we'll discuss content that begins life as a video or audio asset; again, we may refactor this content into written pieces later on.

The Gorilla Guide To...

Our Gorilla Guide is a series of printed and electronic books that we've released in various editions. The Gorilla Guide was born as the result of a client request. They had just completed a book in a different series and asked if we could "create an asset that would follow what they just did and tell the next part of the story." Always interested in new opportunities to help our clients,

Figure 5: Our friendly gorilla mascot wants to educate your audience!

we accepted the challenge and, rather than create a one-off book, we developed a new series.

The Gorilla Guide is intended to operate in what we see as a "sweet spot" in the book market. In fact, in a survey we did of our Gorilla Guide audience, almost 90% say that the Gorilla Guide was the right level of depth for them. It slots in between very basic content from the series with the cute little guy on the cover and the insanely technical content from the publisher with random animals and objects on its cover. Of course, a Gorilla Guide can also handily target those ends of the spectrum for clients that want to tell a multi-book story that spans audiences and technical depth.

Since its inception, our Gorilla Guide Book Series has enjoyed consistently increasing levels of success with clients raving about results. For example, one client shared with us that their Gorilla Guide generated a multi-million dollar pipeline for them thanks to the perfect balance of educational and outcomes-centric content that we include in each and every book.

From the Audience

We asked our audience to provide their thoughts on their Gorilla Guide experience. Here's just some of the feedback we received:

- "The Gorilla Guides are usually more to the point [than other books], and more concise. Plus, it has a gorilla on the front, and everybody knows gorillas are cool."

- "I assume the Gorilla Guide is written to a technical audience, but the same can't be assumed for a [competing] book."

- "Focus on education seems stronger and more effective in Gorilla Guide [compared to other books]."

- "It plays an important role in helping me read and understand new technologies."

- "The book is simple to understand and covers key points about the technology."

- "I feel the content is more technical in a Gorilla Guide, and as an engineer, that's what I'm looking for."

- "I prefer to be thought of as knowledgeable and capable, I don't get that feeling from [competing] books."

- "I would choose Gorilla Guide since it is geared more to people that have some knowledge of the topics."

To meet the needs of different clients, we have three different Gorilla Guide variations:

- Our standard Gorilla Guide is a 40- to 60-page book (in 8.5" x 5.5" layout), delivered to you in both electronic and printed forms.

- The Gorilla Guide Express Edition is for those that have budgetary constraints or that want to tell a shorter story and is a 4" x 6" book of about 20 to 25 pages. The basic Gorilla Guide Express includes an eBook and printed books are available as an add-on.

- The Gorilla Guide Silverback Edition is the granddaddy of them all and weighs in at 100 to 120 pages in an 8.5" x 5.5" layout and is also delivered in both electronic and print editions.

The grid shown in **Figure 6** is an overview of the assets available in each edition of Gorilla Guide.

DEVELOP YOUR OWN IMPRINT

The Gorilla Guide is a fun, whimsical, strong, and approachable brand, but we know there are clients out there that need or want content that's tied more closely to the company branding. For these clients, we're able to develop a "house imprint" that leverages our book design and content development capabilities, but with the twist that we create a series *unique to that client.*

Our content team will work with you to create a completely custom series, even down to creating your own mascot!

One of our guiding principles around content is striving for reusability. To that end, we also deliver our Gorilla Guide books in Kindle/EPUB formats for use on tablets and eReaders. All client books are also featured on our book-centric content site located at https://gorilla.guide.

		Gorilla Guide Silverback Edition			Gorilla Guide Standard Edition			Gorilla Guide Express		
		Basic Bundle	Standard Bundle	Turnkey Campaign	Basic Bundle	Standard Bundle	Turnkey Campaign	Basic Bundle	Standard Bundle	Turnkey Campaign
BASIC	eBook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Print Book	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Kindle Version	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2 x white papers broken out from the book		✓	✓		✓	✓			
	Launch blog post	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	In-house promotion (from ATM)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STANDARD	Podcast interview with the author		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Author video interview		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Author video interview (transcribed)		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Panel Discussion		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
	Video- BuzzFeed style		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
TURNKEY	Registration page			✓			✓			✓
	Ad creative			✓			✓			✓
	Email creative			✓			✓			✓
	Social copy			✓			✓			✓

Figure 6: Assets available in Gorilla Guide bundles

Blog Articles

We can write blog posts or run client blogs on our client's behalf! We've been tremendously successful with our clients on this front. We can write articles on a regular cadence for client blogs or even run their entire blogging program for them! We have a bench of authors with varying areas of subject-matter expertise, so no matter the topic, we can get the right skill set on the topic almost immediately and churn out great blogs on a consistent cadence.

Even better, for clients with teams barely keeping their heads above water, we can keep that blog floating for them. With blog management services, we deliver the soup-to-nuts publication experience for a blog that appears to run itself. We schedule routine check-in calls so there are never any surprises and so that the blogs we create for our clients always hit the mark with their audience.

Tech Briefs

Sometimes, a whitepaper is too long, but a blog post is too short. This is where the ActualTech Media tech briefs come in. These are short-form papers with a tightly defined topic and are a quick two to four pages

in length. Tech briefs also form the foundation for our unique content subscription service, described later in this book.

Whitepapers

When there's a focused story to tell that can't fit within the confines of a tech brief, clients turn to our whitepapers, which are longer-form reports—typically eight to 12 pages—that have more opportunity to delve into the details.

Custom eBooks

Our Gorilla Guide book series has taken flight in a serious way, but we know that there are clients that have unique needs that the Gorilla Guide may not be able to fill. For these special circumstances, we're able to create a bespoke eBook that takes any shape and size that our clients can dream up! From custom buyers' guides to educational assets hundreds of pages in length to anything else that can be dreamed up, we're ready to meet even the most significant content challenges!

READ THIS If You're Doing Account-Based Marketing (ABM)

EXECUTIVE CORNER

Effective ABM strategies rely on a steady feed of customizable content that can be used at every touch point to nurture interest within your target account. Many organizations have the operational mechanics in place for ABM, but are lacking the sheer quantity of quality content needed for all of the touches required to stimulate and nurture interest. ActualTech Media's content offerings can help you split and maximize your content assets in ways that will help you keep your ABM funnel full. Ask us for details!

Video and Audio Services

Video has become front-and-center for marketing campaigns and is used for everything from building awareness to lead generation. We've developed quite a few different ways to leverage video and audio to help our clients spread the word without words on a printed page.

The 10onTech Podcast

The ActualTech Media 10onTech podcast is a short-form podcast that crams high-value interviews into 10- to 20-minute chunks. We're closing in on 100 episodes published, and we're consistently thanked for producing this show. Participation in the 10onTech podcast series is either by request, invitation, or is included in several of our content and events packages. For clients that want to join us on our informative podcast, just email 10onTech@actualtechmedia.com with a proposed guest and topic.

The Gorilla Guide Podcast

This is a new podcast coming in 2020! More details to follow. Keep an eye on actualtechmedia.com for information.

The 360in180 and Gorilla Guide Video Series

We do research. One of the research projects we undertake on an annual basis revolves around asking our audience for their thoughts on certain kinds of content. This and countless other studies have shown that short-form video content wins the day. To that end, 360in180 was born. **360**in**180** is a series of short videos—around three minutes (**180** seconds!) per video—that provides a **360**-degree view of a tightly focused topic.

360in180 videos are intended to focus on content and are not recorded in a studio. They're eminently sharable on social media and are the perfect length for viewing with a content depth that meets any need.

These videos are among the foundational content items present in our content subscription bundle, too. Our content subscription service is described later in this book.

Gorilla Guide videos are a similar service but with different branding and slightly loosened time constraints. Our goal with Gorilla Guide videos is to tell a complete story in less than five minutes and provide viewers with answers to their most burning technology questions.

Discovery Campaign: In-Studio Analysis

Short-form social-centric videos are fantastic, but they can't always tell the whole story and they often can't go into enough depth on a topic to help the audience understand the full scope of the discussion. That's where ActualTech Media's Discovery Campaign service comes in. This service provides clients with a multi-hour in-studio recording session during which ActualTech Media's independent analysts will record a series of videos that help clients spread the word around their messaging, products, new announcements, and more. Discovery Campaign sessions are an opportunity to record six, eight, 10, or even more professionally produced videos with independent analysts.

We actually drag a complete set—custom desk, backdrops, virtual whiteboard, and all supporting equipment—to the shoot location, and then record video over the course of a day or two.

As a part of this service, ActualTech Media works with clients ahead of the shoot to discuss content planning, including defining a general discussion framework. In general, we don't do down-to-the-word scripting because the goal of these recording sessions is to enable a free flow of conversations and allow a discussion to proceed naturally. Viewers can sniff out video that's overly planned from a mile away and they'll just move on to the next video in their queue if the discussion appears to be completely scripted.

Our Discovery Campaign videos are professionally edited and during the edit for each one, we also look for 30- to 45-second snippets we

Figure 7: We enjoy hosting clients on our Discovery Campaign set to dig deep on their company's vision and products

can pull out that might be suitable for social sharing as a way to drive viewership to the main video. As always, our goal is to enable copious content reuse to help clients maximize their investment.

ActualTech Media Live

There has been a big jump in the number of companies that have launched their own user conferences. These conferences typically have a goal of maximizing visibility for the companies that host them, as well as providing opportunities to connect with partners, customers, and prospects. Amplification of these visibility efforts by an independent third party means that more people get their eyes on the great content that comes from the show. For clients that host conferences, ActualTech Media Live was born!

As with Discovery Campaign videos, we bring along a complete set—custom desk, backdrops, virtual whiteboard, and all supporting equipment—to the show location, set up, and shoot video over the course of the show. One major difference with Live is that the majority of the video activity is, as you might have guessed, live streamed across all of

Figure 8: Our innovative "virtual whiteboard" sessions are always a hit with the live audience

ActualTech Media's pertinent social channels, as well as on our website and wherever else our client might like to embed the stream (such as their own site).

ActualTech Media Live isn't just a series of one-to-one interviews. Rather than subjecting our live audience to endless talking head interviews, our Live service includes a smorgasbord of video styles, including:

The aforementioned interview videos

- Videos featuring our virtual whiteboard, which is perfect for architectural discussions or other discussions for which a diagram plays a key role

- Panel discussions moderated by an ActualTech Media analyst

- "Person on the show floor" videos in which we grab someone at the show and grill them relentlessly on camera about their thoughts about what they're seeing

- Anything else you might be able to dream up!

After the show is over and everyone goes home, we'll send the client all the video footage we've created broken down and edited so that it's immediately usable. As a part of this service, we'll also write up our own "concluding thoughts" about the show and what we heard and send it the client's way.

Lead Generation and Webinars

Content is the cornerstone of a marketing strategy and it comes in many forms—written, electronic, and video, but also in the form of educational webinars. And, regardless of the form, the goal for content is to generate opportunity and, ultimately, sales. ActualTech Media's content assets and services are a perfect foundation for a content strategy and, when coupled with our lead generation capabilities, real magic happens. There are, in fact, a number of wizards behind the curtain at ActualTech Media that, for years, have helped client organizations meet and regularly beat their marketing and sales goals. We are thrilled to receive continual feedback that the leads we generate are valued highly by our clients because they drive more opportunities than many of our competitors'.

Need Recognition → Research → Evaluation → Decision

Figure 9: ActualTech Media provides content and services to empower clients through every step of their buyer's journey

About Our Lead Generation Capabilities

ActualTech Media has a whole slate of lead generation services available, from content syndication to incredible events that bring together as many as a dozen vendors to provide our audience with the latest developments at the cutting edge of technology.

✅ **100,000!?!?**

In 2019, we've collected close to *100,000* registrations from across all our webinar events, including our MegaCasts, EcoCasts, Summits, PanelCasts, and single-vendor webinars. To say that we're extremely proud of this milestone is an understatement! We're always on the hunt for innovative vendors to introduce to our audience.

ActualTech Media's Audience

Our highly engaged audience is diverse and hails from organizations large and small. About 52% of our audience includes companies of more than 1,000 employees, while about 48% comes from organizations with fewer than 1,000 employees.

In terms of decision-making authority, 57% of our audience comes from the management ranks while 43% are staff members that influence buying decisions.

Our Webinar Event Planning and Logistics Process

We're big believers in the fact that a strong and client-centric process leads to great results and every client-facing process we have in place is intended to be an instantiation of this belief. Every element of friction we remove from our client makes it that much smoother for the client and that's what we want for everyone.

Our webinar event planning process includes a dedicated event manager—a constant companion throughout the entire process. We schedule content planning calls to help clients define their content, and we schedule dry runs to make sure client staff participants are comfortable with the webinar platforms we use prior to the day of the event (depending on the event, we use either GoToWebinar or INXPO).
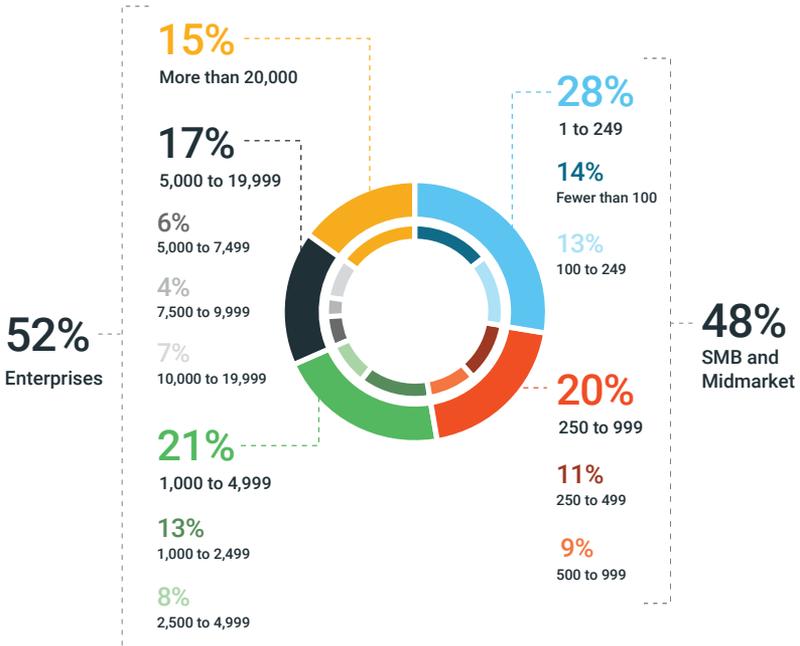
Figure 10: ActualTech Media's audience composition includes representatives from the entire spectrum of business size
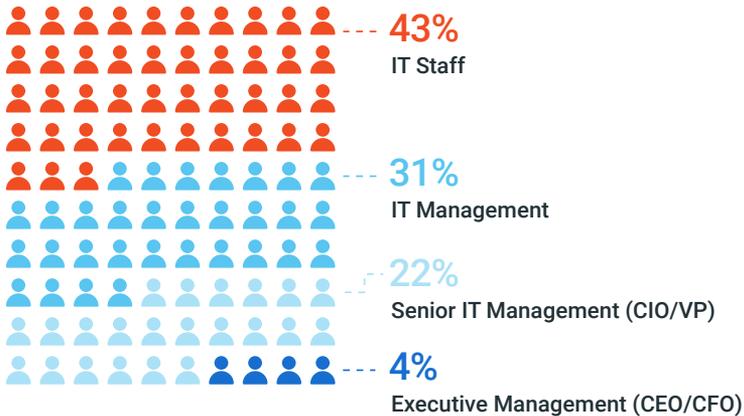
Figure 11: ActualTech Media's audience composition includes both decision makers and decision influencers, allowing clients to reach all parts of the buying group

Lead Generation Services

We have a great lineup of services that can help you drive the leads you need to succeed. From our market-leading MegaCast multi-vendor webinar events to single-vendor webinars to content syndication capabilities, we're ready to help you drive your lead counts through the roof! The following section includes a brief overview of each of our main lead generation offerings.

MegaCast, EcoCast, and Virtual Summits

Our MegaCast events are where it all began in our multi-vendor webinar crusade and, to this day, they continue to be lead generation *machines* for our clients. We host a minimum of one MegaCast per month. If that doesn't sound like a lot, consider that each event carries a minimum goal of 800 leads and there's never been a MegaCast for which we've missed this goal.

"We created $2.2MM in sales opportunity pipeline after just TWO MegaCasts!"

- LEADING CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE VENDOR

Figure 12: This is not a hero number. We hear this kind of feedback regularly.

MegaCasts provide clients with a robust lead commitment, as well as a 20-minute presentation slot followed by five minutes of Q&A. Every event includes serious engagement opportunities for our clients, too. We ask a lot of poll questions and during the Q&A, our clients generally enjoy a wide breadth of questions from an eager audience.

EcoCasts are more focused versions of our MegaCast events and feature a minimum commitment of 400 leads, but include the same 20-minute presentation slot followed by five minutes of Q&A. In 2018, we began testing a variation of our EcoCast, called a Vertical EcoCast. Vertical EcoCasts carry a 150-lead commitment, but are events focused on a specific industry vertical. In 2020, we have events dedicated to financial services, healthcare, and state/local government/education.

Our clients love the ability to tailor a message to an industry as an overall part of their webinar strategy with ActualTech Media.

Finally, we have the biggest events in our annual lineup—Enterprise IT Virtual Summits. Summits are broadly themed events that carry a 1,200-minimum lead commitment and, again, a 20-minute presentation slot followed by five minutes of Q&A.

We have an entire chapter in this book devoted to many reasons that our MegaCast, EcoCast, and Summit events have become irreplaceable components in many a client's lead generation strategy.

MEGACAST BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA	**ECOCAST** BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA	**ENTERPRISE IT VIRTUAL SUMMIT** BY ACTUALTECH MEDIA
• **Six-to-eight** back-to-back vendor presentations	• **Three-to-six** back-to-back vendor presentations	• Bi-Annual, full-stack events with up to 11 vendor presenters
• **800 minimum** guaranteed leads	• Deeper technology topic areas	• Up to 1600 minimum guaranteed leads
• 20-Minute presentation & demo slot	• **400 minimum** guaranteed leads	• A 20-minute speaking slot followed by 5 minutes of live Q&A
• 'Post-Event Action Report' with prioritized lead follow-up recommendations	• 20-Minute presentation & demo slot	• Post-event, we will send you a recording of your portion of the presentation
• Content asset or trial offer link placement	• 'Post-Event Action Report' with prioritized lead follow-up recommendations	
• Detailed audience polling and Q&A results	• Content asset or trial offer link placement	
• Full event and individual presentation on-demand recordings	• Detailed audience polling and Q&A results	
• Social media promotional graphics	• Full event and individual presentation on-demand recordings	
	• Social media promotional graphics	

Figure 13: A comparison of the major features of MegaCasts, EcoCasts, and Enterprise IT Virtual Summits

Post-Event Action Report (PEAR)

In 2019, we offered additional value to our multi-vendor events to help our clients improve their follow-up efforts so that they can maximize their efforts. We created what we call a Post-Event Action Report (PEAR) that's chock-full of actionable intelligence. In the PEAR, we identify those prospects who wish to be immediately moved to sales or the nurturing funnel. Of course, every registrant is still a follow-up opportunity, but we know that clients want to be able to engage with the most interested prospects as quickly as possible. **Figure 14** gives you a look at these reports.

PanelCast

We're always on the hunt for new ways to engage our audience and bring them together with our clients. We conceived our PanelCast event series as a way to bring a different kind of presentation. A PanelCast is a themed virtual panel discussion that carries a minimum commitment of 200 leads. Unlike our other events, participating vendors don't need to prepare a presentation. They just show up! During our audience-building activities, we request that registrants ask us their most burning question about the topic at hand. We then select the best
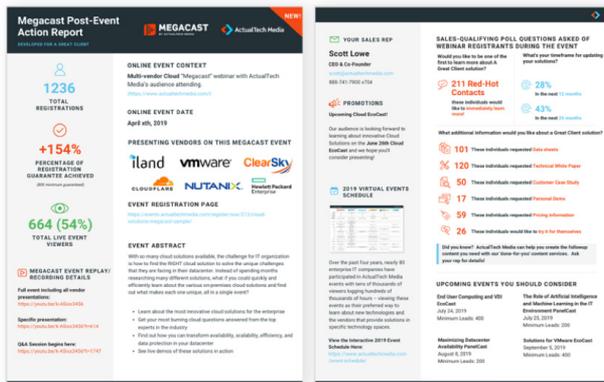
Figure 14: An example of a multi-vendor (Megacast) Post-Event Action Report

questions from the bunch and moderate a panel discussion between two to five vendor participants. Throughout the live presentation, we continue taking questions live from the audience, resulting in an event that is highly engaging and directly applicable to them.

Single-Vendor Webinars

Single-Vendor Webinars are exclusive one-hour events. It's the client's hour to structure how they see fit, be it a PowerPoint presentation, product demonstration, or an interactive Q&A webinar with one of our industry experts.

We provide an expert event logistics coordinator to help clients understand exactly how the event works. We host the registration page and the presentation platform. We provide clients with a video of their final presentation to use as they like after the event, too.

Content Syndication

Our webinars have become cornerstones for many clients, but that doesn't mean that it's the only way we can help drive demand. In 2019, we introduced an enhanced version of our content syndication service under which we can perform comprehensive lead generation for our clients using content they already have or using content we create on their behalf.

Regardless of whether clients need 100 or 2,000 leads, or whether they have a broad targeting approach or an ABM list, we can lend a hand with just about every content syndication need that arises.

Research Services

"Anyone can run a survey!" While that is true, there's a huge difference between running a survey and running a survey *well*. We've seen numerous examples of awful surveys with terribly devised questions and dubious methodology. Without adequate thought in the design of a survey, the results are ambiguous, at best. If a reader can't trust the findings, what was the point of the whole exercise?

We've run a dozen high-visibility research projects and know how to ask the right questions in order to get the best results. We know how to devise a survey that ensures good data quality, which is, quite frankly, way more difficult than it looks. We know how to plan a survey that will let clients slice and dice data into tons of interesting components to maximize content and analysis potential.

Quick-Hit Surveys

Sometimes, clients just need help getting a small survey off the ground, fielded, and quickly analyzed. ActualTech Media's Quick-Hit Surveys provide clients with a fully fielded survey using our platform and expertise in survey design. We'll also do light analysis on the results and put together a short eBook with survey results accompanied by our thoughts on the results. These surveys are a perfect fit for those who want to get data points to establish thought leadership and are interested primarily in having a light report based on those data points to use across social and lead generation campaigns.

Market Research Surveys and Analysis Reports

Heavy-hitting and in-depth research requires a level of understanding of the market and how to perform research that can be difficult to find. ActualTech Media develops comprehensive surveys and can field them to targeted respondents around the world. These complete service offerings result in a variety of content assets that target specific client needs. For example, the result can be an exhaustive research report that's 30 pages in length or it can be a series of smaller assets targeted at different audiences. Our services help enhance client brands while providing them with a buffet of content assets that provide long-term lead generation or awareness opportunities.

How We Sell Our Services

If you can dream it, we can do it. We aim for heretofore unforeseen levels of flexibility and utility in everything we provide to our clients. To that end, we have a series of ways that we engage with clients to make sure we're providing everything that's needed, when it's needed, and how it's needed.

Buy One

Want to do one event with us? Great! We're happy to send over a proposal for one event.

Need a single Gorilla Guide eBook edition? Great! We'll do that, too!

Almost everything on our product list is available as a one-off.

Buy a Bundle

As you can probably guess, we really want to engage with clients more deeply. We find that the longer we work with a client, the better we get at understanding their needs and the activities we undertake together become a well-oiled machine. To help encourage clients to engage more deeply, we are always happy to create a custom services bundle.

Content Subscription

In 2019, we launched a brand-new content creation model that is striking a chord with our clients.

A Sample Subscription Content Map

The structure of a content subscription is custom tailored for every individual program. Varying marketing objectives, audience targeting, and product messaging mean that every new program is an opportunity to create something unique and special. Here's a sample of what the content map for a fictitious subscription program might look like.
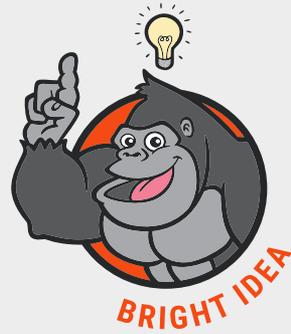
1. The Gorilla Guide to Hybrid Cloud Storage

    a. The Gorilla Guide [Express Edition] to Extending Enterprise Storage to the Cloud

        i. [Brief] Things You Should Know About Selecting a Cloud Storage Platform

        ii. [Brief] How Cloud Storage Differs from On-Premises Storage

        iii. [Brief] An Architect's Guide to Cloud Storage Migration

        iv. [Brief] Hybrid Cloud Storage Connectivity Best Practices

    b. The Gorilla Guide [Express Edition] to Hybrid Cloud Storage Operations

        i. [Brief] Setting up Monitoring, Alerting, and Reporting on Cloud Storage

        ii. [Brief] Cloud Storage Governance for Day 2 and Beyond

        iii. [Brief] Building and Testing Your Hybrid Cloud DR Strategy

        iv. [Brief] Managing Storage Performance in Hybrid Cloud Architectures

Our Content Subscription Programs are a yearlong, cohesive multi-media journey that outlines our client's story, delivering a consistent cadence of content that will culminate in a number of different digital assets—tech briefs, videos, Gorilla Guide Express eBooks, Gorilla Guides, and more. We don't just create the content; we help build the plan!

Each month we lay pre-planned building blocks across the buyer's journey using written and video assets. The goal is to use the assets to
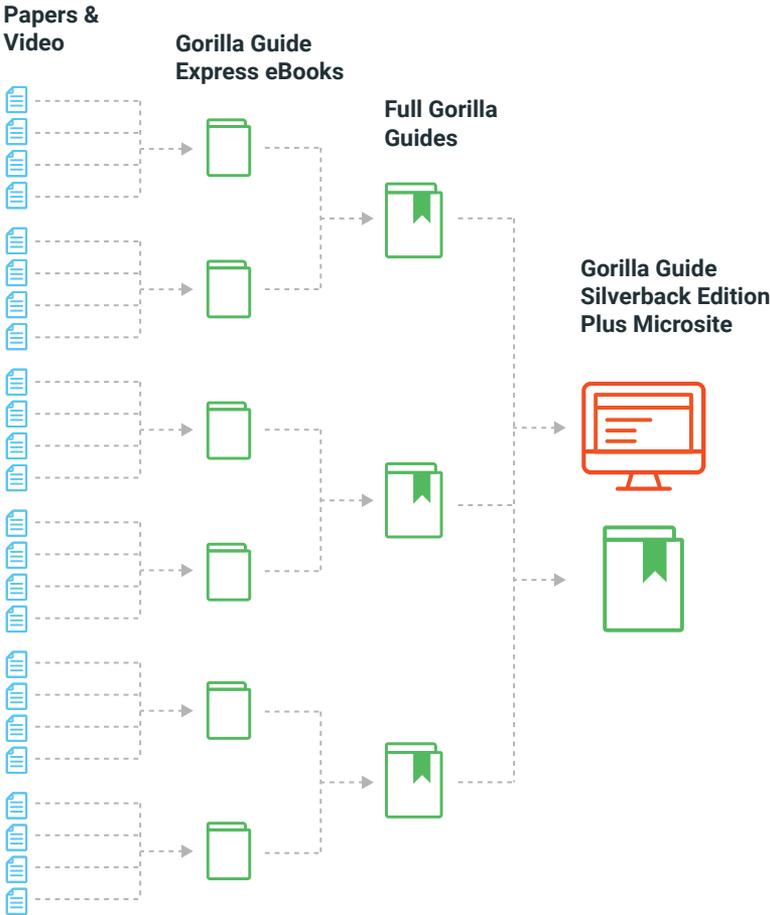
Figure 15: "Rolling up" content assets in the Content Subscription Program

dissect the audience, programs, and more with specific micro-touch messaging. Then after each audience segment has been touched over each quarter, we begin to reassemble the library of assets into cornerstone digital assets, eBooks, and more that tell the complete story. **Figure 15** illustrates how the papers form the building blocks of the service and "roll up" into broader assets to help our clients tell their comprehensive story.

Although the default model for these plans delivers over a yearlong period, the exact duration is configurable. As always, our goal is to meet the needs of our client.

The table shown in **Figure 16** provides an overview of our standard subscription offerings, but bear in mind that we also have custom packages available.

Content Subscription Program	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
Comprehensive Program Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓ (on-site)
Check-in Meetings	Quarterly	Monthly	Monthly	Bi-Weekly
Tech Briefs – 4-6 pages	8	12	16	24
Gorilla Guide/360in180 videos	8	12	16	24
Gorilla Guide Express eBooks – 10-30 pages	2	3	4	6
Gorilla Guide eBooks –40-70 pages	1	1	2	3
Gorilla Guide Silverback Edition – 125 plus pages	-	-	1	1
Microsite – Turnkey	-	-	-	1
Total Assets Delivered Across Entire Program	19	28	39	59

Figure 16: Standard Content Subscription Program options

Video in the Modern Age of Marketing

When you want to reach your B2B/IT audience, we all know that creating educational content is essential. IT marketers are also living in one of the fastest-changing industries there is. The company that's able to cut through the noise with impactful content, wins.

We wanted to know which content is the most valuable to IT audiences, so we recently surveyed them. As it turns out,[1] more than 90% of our respondents consider video one of their preferred ways to learn about solutions that matter to them.

Other data supports the powerful effect of video on B2B customers, too ...

The Current State of B2B Video Marketing

According to Google,[2] 70% of B2B buyers and researchers are consuming videos throughout their path to purchase. This means that video serves a bigger purpose than gaining awareness; B2B buyers rely on it throughout the entire purchasing journey.

Smart marketers have noticed this and are taking action. According to a study from Wyzowl,[3] video marketing is surging, and B2B marketers don't intend to stop anytime soon:

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[1] https://www.actualtechmedia.com/blog/where-to-spend-on-it-content-marketing-in-2019/

[2] https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/the-changing-face-b2b-marketing/

[3] https://www.wyzowl.com/video-marketing-statistics-2018/

- Video marketing is used by 81% of respondents, which is a 21% increase from 2016

- Nearly all businesses that used video in 2018 plan to continue in 2019, and 85% plan to *increase* their video marketing budgets

So, what kinds of videos are B2B companies already creating? And, more importantly, how can you take a unique approach?

Video That's Moving the Needle in B2B Right Now

Most commonly produced videos[4] are product videos, demos, explainers, and webinars. This is no surprise; our research[5] has shown that webinars and explainer videos are highly useful to those evaluating technology or vendor solutions.

Here's some excellent news: Most valuable videos according to our research—one-to-one and whiteboard-style videos—are hugely underused. For example, only 7% of businesses have invested in chalk/whiteboard videos.

This is where you can win. Videos that feature industry experts diving deep into the nuts and bolts of a topic are your ticket to differentiating yourself and carve out a market advantage.

The reality? Many companies focus on brand-specific video content. They talk about themselves, feature their executives, and conduct interviews that are uninteresting at best. The problem with this is that, more often than not, this isn't what people want to see.

Brand-centric video content will likely perform well as B2B buyers get closer to making a purchasing decision. There is a wide gap leading up to that time, and it's the one you can fill with an **audience-centric** video content strategy.

[4] https://www.impactbnd.com/blog/new-video-marketing-statistics-2019

[5] https://www.actualtechmedia.com/blog/where-to-spend-on-it-content-marketing-in-2019/

Types of Videos Businesses Have Already Invested In

Type	Percentage
Product Videos	63%
Demos	59%
Explainer Videos	54%
Webinars	45%
How-to/Educational Videos	42%
Social Media Videos	38%
Customer Videos	37%
Livestreams	24%
Culture Videos	23%
Vlogs	13%
One-to-One	12%
Chalk/Whiteboard Videos	7%

Source: Demand Metric State of Video Marketing, November 2017, Demand Metric, Sponsored by Vidyard
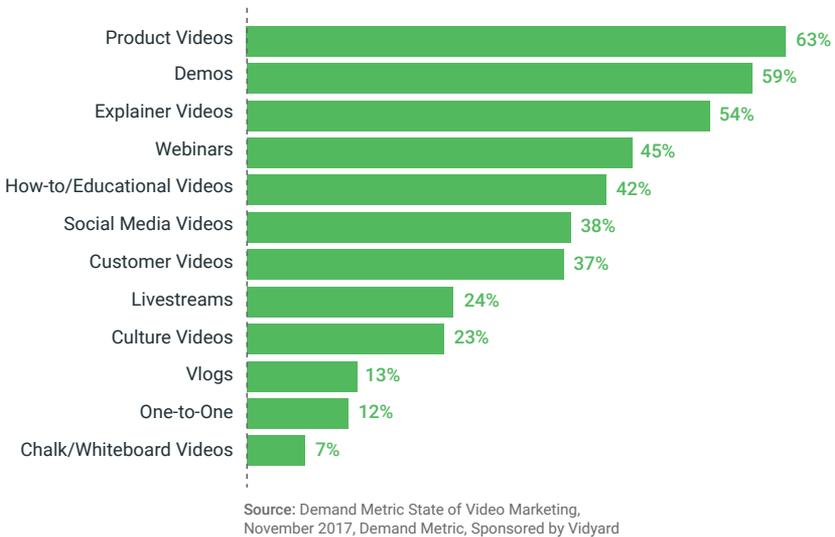
Figure 17: A majority of the competition is using product videos and demos already. But how many have a one-to-one interview or a whiteboard video?

Creating video content that your audience wants to see,[6] rather than creating content first and then looking for an audience for it, is the key to making an impact with your content.

If there's someone B2B marketers can learn from when it comes to this, it's companies that sell directly to consumers. Selling to businesses, after all, still means you're selling to real people with real challenges and not faceless brands.

[6] https://www.actualtechmedia.com/blog/video-marketing-data-points/

Content-Centric

Create content then find an audience for it

VS.

Audience-Centric

Identify an audience then create content for them

What companies want to talk about.

What audiences want to hear.

Content-centric strategy inherently limits audience size ...

... but companies wish their media could play on this side.

NO AUDIENCE

MAXIMUM AUDIENCE
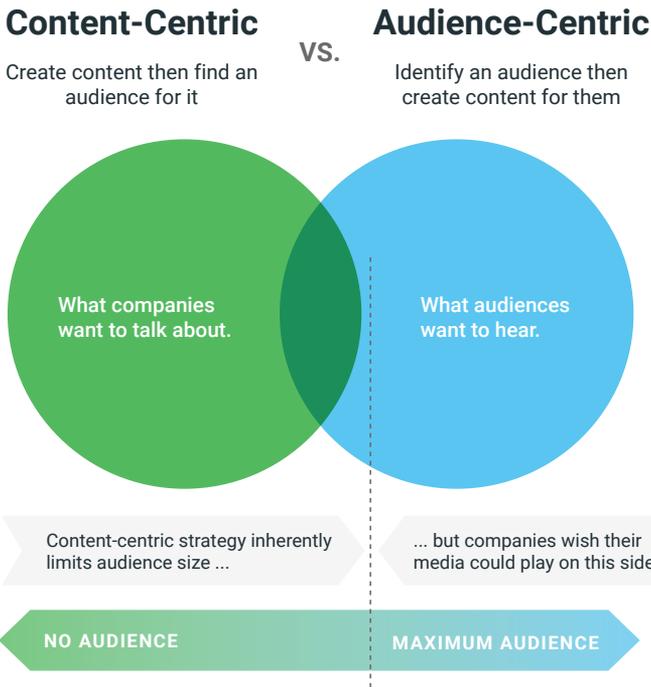
Figure 18: ActualTech Media helps our clients plan and deliver content that their audience actually wants to consume

The B2C Video Marketing Approach You Can Steal

A 2019 report from Content Marketing Institute[7] revealed that 69% of B2C marketers have increased the use of visual content such as videos, live streams, and webinars.

The same report also uncovered that 81% of B2C marketers agree their organization is concerned with creating content that builds loyalty with existing clients and customers.

[7] https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/2019_B2C_Research-FINAL-PDF-12_10_18.pdf

Consumer-focused marketers have mastered the art of tapping into emotions and behaviors to reach an audience that resonates with content's key messages. Here are the main tactics our clients should be applying to their B2B video marketing:

- **Use storytelling.** A story is what gets viewers hooked on a video. It emphasizes crucial moments in a video and creates anticipation. While B2C videos often delve into intense emotion to deepen the story, B2B videos can create a storyline by focusing on a specific pain point and painting a picture—and a solution—around it.

- **Optimize for watching on-the-go.** People no longer only watch videos on their desktop. Mobile viewing on the commute, in a long checkout line at the store, or even on the couch while the TV is on is the new normal. More than 52%[8] of all website traffic came from mobile phones in 2018, and mobile accounts for 78% of all social media visits[9] in the United States. This means you should optimize your videos for social media autoplay, no-sound playing, and a small screen.

- **Keep binge-watching in mind.** There's little chance that someone will organize a marathon-viewing of your educational data center videos on a Saturday night. However, if just one video strikes a chord with someone in your audience, the chances are they will look for more. What value can you add to your videos to spark that reaction and become the No. 1 resource to someone? The answer to that question will level up your video-topic brainstorm.

The more vendors leverage playlists to keep people watching video after video in succession on their YouTube channel, the more the YouTube algorithm will tilt things their way in the search and discovery flows for YouTube audiences.

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[8] https://www.statista.com/statistics/241462/global-mobile-phone-website-traffic-share/

[9] https://www.statista.com/statistics/477368/us-social-media-visits-share/

Types of Video That Resonate with B2B Buyers

As we mentioned earlier, we found that the most effective videos for B2B buyers are the real-talk, deep-dive expert videos. Instead of inflating your executives' ego, you'll reap significantly more rewards by focusing on one of the following types of expert-focused video instead.

A side note: you'll notice all three types are highly binge-able!

Whiteboard-Style Videos

Videos that feature an expert and a whiteboard are a super simple, yet powerful approach to break down technical concepts and complex topics in an easy and visual way.

An expert infuses trust, and the whiteboard helps the viewer keep up with video's narrative, take notes, and put what they've learned into practice.

Moz, an SEO software company, has been doing its Whiteboard Friday[10] series since 2007, which has propelled the company—and its co-founder and former CEO Rand Fishkin—into fame in the SEO and marketing world.

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[10] https://moz.com/blog/category/whiteboard-friday

Figure 19: ActualTech Media's RoadCast series leans heavily on the trusty whiteboard to increase value to viewers

On our ActualTech Media RoadCast series of videos (we hit the road and visit top vendors to see what they do and how it works) we emphasize whiteboard videos[11] heavily.

Expert Interviews

Another way to go deep on a topic is to host video interviews with experts. Again, they can be your company's experts, as well as co-marketing opportunities with other companies.

They can also be conducted in-person or over a video call. As long as you're asking questions that you know your audience would ask, you'll create videos that resonate with your ideal viewers.

The Baer Facts[12] was a video series run by ExactTarget (a Salesforce-owned email marketing company) and Jay Baer, a marketing author and longtime practitioner. Kyle Lacy of ExactTarget interviewed Jay Baer every week on current marketing topics and burning aspects of a marketer's life.

[11] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggC47EvpvWc&list=PLzdSwS_lGyw8mcjilUP3GVMhFXR2iW_SK

[12] https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHYDWFM-nbDtRJa7o1QXzFETwx8vkFDeZ

Figure 20: Giving experts an opportunity to expound on their thoughts with digital drawing capability takes the discussion to the next level

We're also fond of improvising on the whiteboard concept using tablets and a display.

In-depth Explainer Videos

Search for an explainer video on Google or YouTube and you'll likely find dozens that introduce a product immediately or within the first 30 seconds.

As we mentioned earlier, this isn't necessarily a bad thing. Later stages of the purchase journey naturally include more product- and brand-specific research on the buyer's part.

However, there's a gap in B2B providers' content when it comes to topical, information-focused explainer videos. Some marketers struggle to envision the return on investment for spending on producing videos that don't directly pitch their product. Unfortunately, this myopic view of the buyer's journey will leave your prospects feeling "sold to."

You can make these educational videos as detailed or as high-level as your target viewer needs them to be. The point is that B2B buying
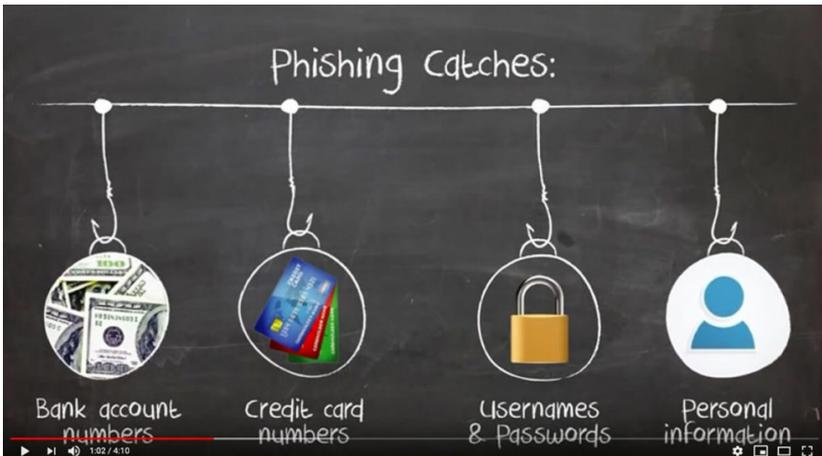
Figure 21: This video is engaging, dynamic, and highly specific

groups today want to feel informed and educated on a topic before they progress to being sold to.

Paychex, a business that offers payroll and HR solutions, used this type of informative explainer video[13] to educate its audience on the ins and outs of phishing. It includes definitions, examples, signs to look for, and best practices.

Promotion Strategies for Your B2B Videos

Next up is getting the most mileage out of your video.

Search Engine Optimization

Video can help you reach more people through good old SEO. A blog post with a video can triple the number of domains linking to it.[14] It also increases the average time spent on a page.[15] Both elements can increase your rankings.

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[13] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHJzSuWcpOc&feature=youtu.be

[14] https://moz.com/blog/what-makes-a-link-worthy-post-part-1

[15] https://wistia.com/learn/marketing/video-time-on-page

That's great news! Take the necessary actions to ensure your video can rank in relevant search results:

- Title your video appropriately and use keywords that reflect your audience's search terms

- Add closed captions or subtitles to it, as this is what search engines can read and understand

- Surround your video with relevant, descriptive text, on platforms like YouTube and Wistia through descriptions and tags, as well as on your landing pages

Social Media

Another important place for you to focus your video promotion efforts is social media. Social video has leveled the playing field for businesses of all sizes, and all major platforms now offer native video options.

In other words, wherever your audience hangs out, they're probably consuming lots of video there:[16]

- On Facebook, people are on the go, on mobile, and often consume videos with no sound

- Twitter is quite similar and requires snappy, quick video messages in order to reach your target viewer

- On YouTube, however, viewers are more engaged, watch with the audio on, and are open to watching longer videos; people also use YouTube to search for specific answers and information

For B2B organizations, this is where LinkedIn comes in. This is where you really have an opportunity to stand out. According to LinkedIn, video content is shared 20 times more[17] than other content formats in the LinkedIn feed.

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[16] https://animoto.com/blog/video-marketing/video-marketing-trends-2019/

[17] https://techcrunch.com/2017/08/22/linkedin-video/

Native video on such a B2B-driven platform can help you make an impact with your videos. YouTube and LinkedIn are the two best prospective places to reach your ideal viewers and potential customers with your B2B videos.

Even though your expert-focused videos might fall on the longer side, remember you can always take short snippets and repurpose them for

How is your audience watching video across different platforms?

UPDATES
Share what's new

- On the go; on mobile
- No audio
- No time
- Scrolling to discover

INSPIRATION
Show something interesting

- Hanging out; on mobile
- Sometimes audio
- Killing time
- Scrolling through, swiping, tapping Stories

NEWS
Post what's happening now

- On the go; on mobile
- No audio
- No time
- Scrolling to discover

EDUCATION
Help viewers learn

- Engaged
- Audio on
- Ready to watch longer videos
- Searching for specific information

Figure 22: Different platforms call for different types of video if you want to be most effective

Twitter and Facebook. And if you want to test LinkedIn ads, videos under 30 seconds reported a 200% lift[18] in view completion rates— good to know!

Reddit

As you probably know, Reddit users are notorious for calling out people who spam the platform to promote themselves. Self-praise doesn't go far on Reddit. So why would we recommend it as a place to promote your video?

The depth of questions and the extent of topics ("subreddits") available on Reddit mean you can stand out as an expert in your industry. You can do so by providing value through answering questions first.

Once you've built up some karma—literally called karma points [19]on Reddit—you can use the same approach to not only answer questions, but also add a link to your video to make your answer more valuable.

For example, in the Marketing subreddit,[20] there are questions about various platforms, technologies, and tools. If you were an agency owner or even a marketing software business, you could go in and answer these questions while adding extra learning through your expert-driven videos:

This is a strategy[21] that requires patience, testing, and hyper-focus, so make sure you zero in on topics and questions that truly relate to your knowledge and expertise. As a result, you'll attract an audience that will keep coming back to your content long after they've found you on Reddit.

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[18] https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/success/best-practices/video-ad-tips

[19] https://www.reddit.com/r/NoStupidQuestions/comments/9vmjcm/how_is_reddit_karma_calculated_are_some_votes/

[20] https://www.reddit.com/r/marketing/

[21] https://www.slideshare.net/BrentCsutoras/leveraging-reddit-the-social-media-superpower-everyone-is-scared-of-139698015
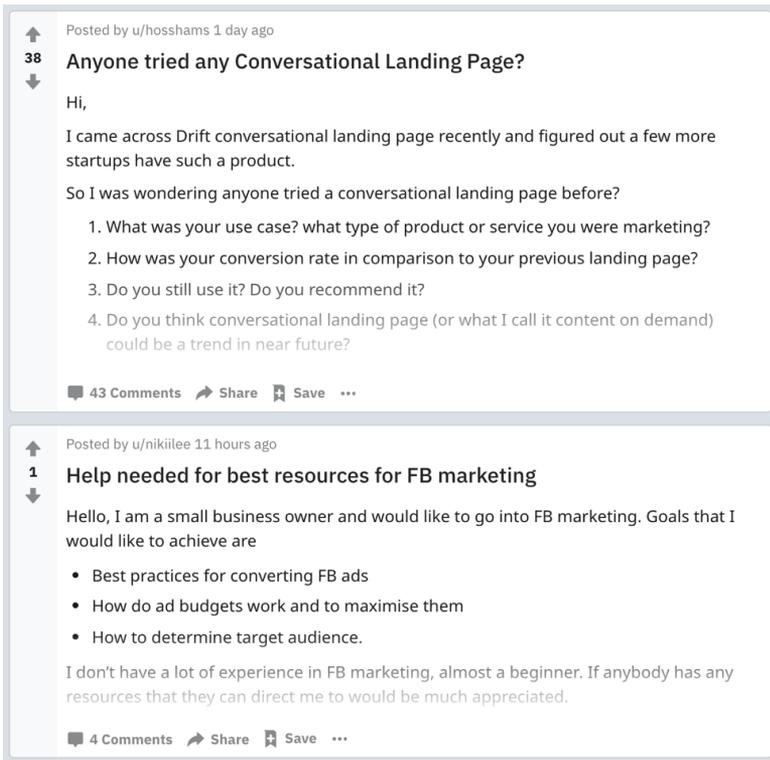
Figure 23: In-depth Q&A threads can be a helpful way to create deep, meaningful connections with your audience

At ActualTech Media, we also strongly recommend[22] monitoring your brand and niche on Reddit to be alerted to discussions you need to be on top of.

Turning Casual B2B Video Viewers into Loyal Leads

The question that naturally pops up at this point: How do you entice those watching your video to come back again? How do you become that go-to resource in your industry?

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[22] https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6513397250285199360
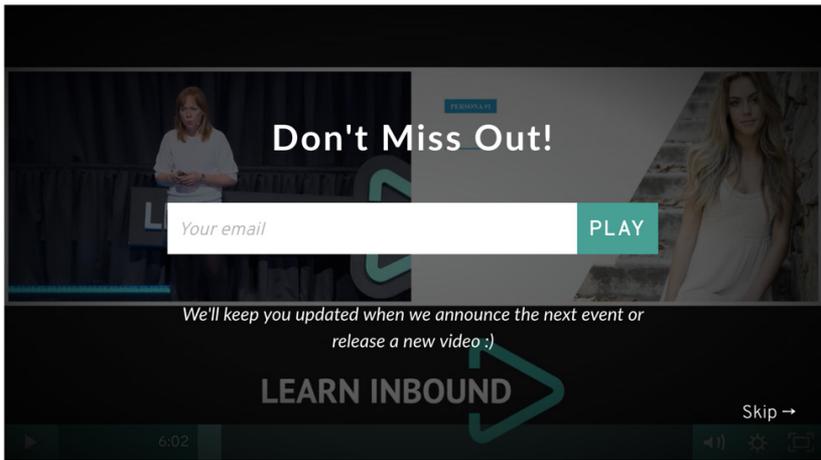
Figure 24: Gating videos is easy with platforms like Vimeo and Wistia

The answer: Turn them into your leads.

Video is a powerful way to generate leads, and the reason is simple. At the time of watching your video, your viewer has the highest intent and interest when it comes to the topics you're discussing. They're focused on you and, if you do everything right, you can turn that attention into a deeper connection with them.

In other words, if your video delivered what they were looking for, they will happily exchange their email address in order to keep getting that value from you.

Here are some tactics for successfully converting viewers to leads, and some examples of companies that are killing it when it comes to lead generation with video.

1. Gate Part of Your Video with a Lead Form

This is as simple as asking for an email address at some point through-out the video; ideally, you'd do this when there are still parts of the video that your viewer doesn't want to miss out on.
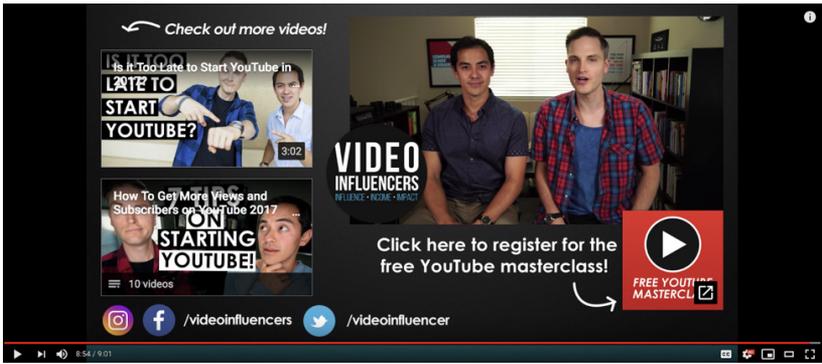
Figure 25: YouTube features increase engagement and conversion

Learn Inbound,[23] a marketing training company, does this with videos from its conference. These are highly valuable and extremely detailed videos with leading experts in various marketing fields.

These videos are also free, so providing your email to keep on watching a 30-minute talk seems like a fair exchange. Gating videos is easy to implement with a tool like Wistia.

2. Use YouTube Features to Generate Leads

When your viewer powers through your video, it's an ideal opportunity to drive their attention to a signup. YouTube's end screen and cards are the perfect feature to use for this.

The Video Influencers YouTube channel[24] uses a card in the later part of their video that invites the viewer to register for a free YouTube masterclass. Then, as the video comes to an end, the end screen suggests another video, a playlist, and a signup to that same YouTube masterclass.

Adding the card to this lead magnet toward the end of the video instead of throughout the entire video is a smart move. Instead of pushing

[23] https://learninbound.com/videos/

[24] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNKQOi-k50g

something that benefits the channel only, these creators have focused on delivering value first and only pushing the resource on their website as the video comes closer to its end.

3. Make Converting on a Landing Page Extra Easy

If your video lives on a landing page or any part of your website, you don't necessarily have to gate the video or use YouTube cards to encourage a signup.

You can accompany the video with a form, or a call-to-action (CTA) nearby, or even have a slide-in CTA that stays in the corner as your visitor scrolls up and down the page.
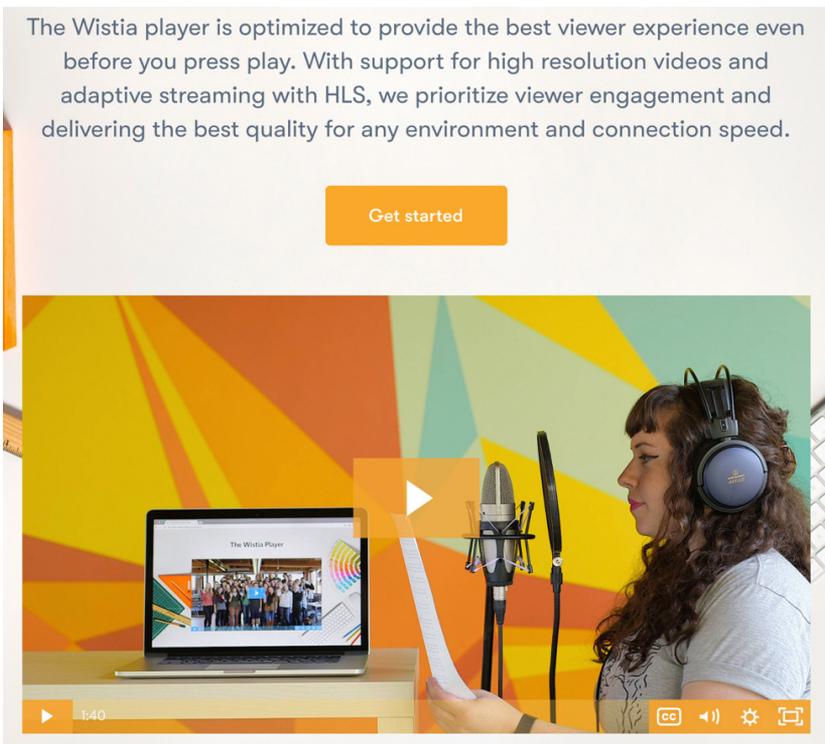
Figure 26: Wistia demonstrates a helpful video with a CTA close by

A great example comes from none other than Wistia. On one of its product pages,[25] it has a 1:40 minute video that emphasizes key features of its player. Right above it, there's a "Get started" button that takes the visitor to a signup page, including to the free account that Wistia can convert to a paid account later.

Start Creating Irresistible B2B Videos

Here's a key takeaway: Your audience is looking to learn from experts that have been in the trenches. They want to hear about tactics experts have tried, what worked and what didn't, and be able to put those learnings into practice.

Focus on answering real audience questions, promoting the videos to maximize their impact, and turn video traffic into leads when possible, and you'll be well on your way to success with video!

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NOW

- **Need help with video?** We shoot hundreds of videos a year with vendors in nearly every IT niche, often as part of our Discovery Campaign and other services. Check it out at actualtechmedia.com/discovery

- **Arrange a quick chat with us.** We're always happy to jump on a quick call and learn about your plans and dreams for video marketing and we're excited to talk to you about how we can help! Drop us a line at actualtechmedia.com/contact to arrange a discussion!

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[25] https://wistia.com/video-marketing/player

The Top 10 Reasons You Need To Be Presenting on MegaCast & EcoCast Multi-Vendor Webinars

Since their inception a little over four years ago, ActualTech Media's MegaCast and EcoCast multi-vendor webinars have been turning the traditional IT webinar world upside down. Why?

Part of the reason is because of what they deliver:

The Numbers Don't Lie ...

• Close to 100,000 registrants for our webinars in 2019 alone

• 1,185 audience-submitted Q&A questions in the last 12 months

Our multi-vendor webinars deliver:

• *Massive* lead counts

• The hottest enterprise technology themes

• Access to a humongous *live* audience

• The opportunity to present back-to-back with the biggest names in IT

Our highly engaged audience of IT pros and decision makers use MegaCasts and EcoCasts to quickly evaluate and compare the solutions

available to them in a technology niche—all in a single event and without conference travel.

In the last four years, more than 100 different vendors have presented on MegaCasts and EcoCasts, and over 70% return to present on multiple events each year.

So, if you're an enterprise technology vendor, why should you tap into this new multi-vendor, MegaCast and EcoCast webinar model?

First, let's give you a brief idea of what makes a webinar a "MegaCast" or "EcoCast" …

What Is a MegaCast or EcoCast?

First, we start with a technology space. In the last 12 months, we've done everything from Cloud Solutions, Containers and Data Protection to Converged Infrastructure, AI and Big Data. If it's hot, we have an event for it. (You can view the full upcoming event schedule at actual-techmedia.com/event-schedule/ to see what's coming up.)

After we've identified a technology to feature, we pull together a mix of established and up-and-coming vendors that have solutions in that space.

Vendors present to the live audience back-to-back—*not in roundtable format.* This allows presenters uninterrupted presentation time and a long enough slot to present their choice of a mix of slides or screen-share a demo or video during their 20-minute allotment. After the 20 minutes is up, some non-competitive, audience-submitted questions are discussed live with vendor presenters and the ActualTech Media moderator.

The ground rules for presentations require that no vendor is allowed to directly reference or disparage any other vendor or competitor: The audience dislikes it when presenters go negative, so we insist on maintaining a respectful environment on these events.

The Top 10 Reasons to Leverage Multi-Vendor Webinars

Now that we've covered the format, let's consider the top 10 reasons why you should tap into this new multi-vendor, MegaCast and EcoCast webinar model as an enterprise technology vendor ...

1. IT pros & decision makers rely on these multi-vendor webinars to make buying decisions

68% of our audience say they use MegaCasts and EcoCasts as their *PRIMARY* way to learn about new technology solutions.

IT professionals and decision makers used to rely on industry trade-shows, user groups, and VAR pitches to learn about new solutions. But with limited time and budget available for in-person events and travel, they're now doing their own research *online.*

This is where ActualTech Media's MegaCasts and EcoCasts come in: In a single sitting, IT pros can join an online MegaCast or EcoCast and see *up to eight solutions in a row* and compare their various approaches to the challenges they solve.

Some even call it "speed dating" for solutions. Many now use them as buyer's guides.

Live answers to their questions from the vendor experts on the events help drive additional instant interaction, engagement, and value for attendees.

Finally, attendees are also exposed to new solutions and vendors they didn't even know existed prior to the MegaCast or EcoCast and likely wouldn't have otherwise considered.

This makes MegaCasts and EcoCasts the *perfect* platform for announcing new releases and product launches to a mass audience who are often planning new deployments and refreshes in the very near future.

> **Looking for fresh audience sources and leads?** Vendors consistently tell us they see leads they've never encountered before, en-masse, on MegaCasts and EcoCasts. If you're looking for an audience you haven't seen in your other marketing efforts, these events are your ticket!

2. Present live to a greenfield audience of several hundred IT decision makers on a single event

If you're like most marketers, your company's technical presenters are in high demand. You need to be able to maximize their time and effort to put them in front of as many prospects at a time as possible to best leverage their availability.

> **If your presenter is strapped for time,** you're welcome to pre-record your entire presentation for playback during the live event.

MegaCasts and EcoCasts help you do just that: Your presenter's time goes farther than ever before, getting your message in front of several hundred buyers at once—all in one webinar event.

The kind of live audience numbers that MegaCasts and EcoCasts drive don't come along very often and that's why such a high percentage of presenting vendors come back for more.

Registered vs Attended

52.42%
Attended

790
Live Viewers!

47.58%
No show

Figure 27: Attendance Stats from a Recent MegaCast—790 Live Viewers (52.42% Live Rate)

3. Get your brand in the mix with the other top vendor brands

There's no way to sugar coat this: *If your competitors are tapping into MegaCast or EcoCast events, you need to be there too.*

If you're a large or established brand, you're in an enviable position: Because you're an essential part of the technology conversation the audience is looking to hear from you. Participating regularly in these events cements your place at the table when audiences are evaluating and comparing solutions, especially as you continue to innovate with new product capabilities and releases.

What about newcomers and hot startups? There's literally no faster way to elevate your messaging than to place yourself side-by-side with the best in the business. Joining top brands on MegaCasts and EcoCasts shows you're ready to play and be considered in the mix where you belong.

Figure 28: Vendor branding on a recent MegaCast

This is why using MegaCasts and EcoCasts on a regular (we recommend quarterly) basis to boost prospect recognition and familiarity is essential for presenting brands. Top performers use their MegaCast and EcoCast presentations as part of their larger funnel and engagement approach, quarter after quarter.

> **If you're a marketer at an established brand or a hot startup,** you already know that multiple touches with prospects are key: Salesforce.com found that it takes six to eight touches to generate a viable sales lead.[1] One presentation rarely causes a customer purchase order to drop from the sky. *It takes a consistent cadence of exposure and nurturing to open up conversations and opportunities.*
>
> [1] https://www.salesforce.com/blog/2015/04/takes-6-8-touches-generate-viable-sales-lead-heres-why-gp.html

4. Show what makes your approach different from other vendors

You may play in the same technology space as other companies, but your approach to solving problems in that space is no doubt not the same. *You have unique technology and competitive differentiators that audiences need to see and understand.*

The MegaCast and EcoCast webinar formats were designed to show-case what makes you "you." As a result, we skip the "everyone talk at once" panel or roundtable-style format and give you a dedicated and uninterrupted presentation and demo time to strut your stuff.

As noted earlier, audiences have consistently told us they hate it when vendors use their time to bash one another, and we agree. As a result, our moderators don't allow presenters to reference other vendors when presenting or "go negative." The result is a respectful, positive event you can feel good about participating in.
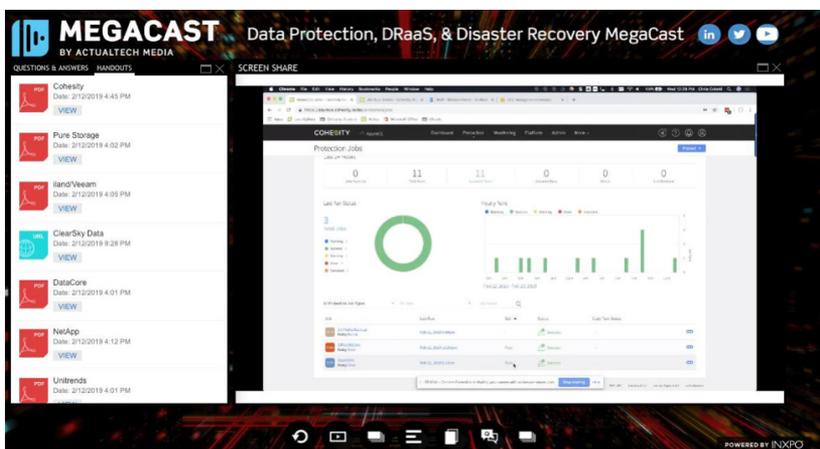

Figure 29: Sample MegaCast audience console: Demos, downloadable resources, slides and social interaction is built right in.

> **MegaCast and EcoCast presenters win** when they focus on why they're different and where they shine.

5. Uncover who's most interested in learning more about you

With the sheer number of leads that MegaCasts and EcoCasts provide, how can you effectively prioritize sales follow-up?

Great question! To help you make sure you capitalize on the most-interested leads and prospects, we've formulated a special poll question that runs right after your presentation slot. It gives audience members a chance to raise their hand and request more information right from their viewing console. This is coupled with our other advanced lead scoring and reporting metrics.

57 Red-Hot Contacts

these individuals would like to immediately learn more!

Figure 30: Sample 'Red-Hot' lead reminder from our exclusive post-event action reports

To ensure sales gets those leads ASAP, we flag those leads for you our special post-event reporting. We'll dive deeper into this a little further in No. 9.

6. Generate sales & opportunity pipeline

Of course, interest metrics are good, but this is what it's really all about: creating an opportunity and sales pipeline.

This is what MegaCasts and EcoCasts do best!

> "Following the MegaCast we had 32 solid opportunities with $1.6MM in pipeline and $500k closed within 30 days of the event."

> "We had 25 sales opportunities with two closing within 21 days of the EcoCast."

VP OF MARKETING, MAJOR ENTERPRISE STORAGE VENDOR

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, LEADING HYPERCONVERGED INFRASTRUCTURE VENDOR

Figure 31: Feedback from some of our MegaCast and EcoCast clients

Don't take our word for it.

Actual questions submitted on recent MegaCasts and EcoCasts:

- "Can I get a one-on-one with someone in sales?"

- "Who can I contact to chat about possible POC?"

- "How do I request an eval?""

If you're a marketer measured on opportunities and pipeline created, MegaCasts and EcoCasts can help you nail your targets.

7. Audience questions that inform your marketing messaging

Recent Sample Audience Questions:

- "How does this work with multiple remote sites?"

- "How is the data protected at rest? What kind of RTO can I expect?"

- "Are there options to use this in a hybrid model, co-existing with our current setup?"

There's nothing like a live stream of questions from real IT pros to help you realize what potential buyers' real concerns are and where they may need more help to better understand your solution.

Intelligence gained from the Q&A streams during your MegaCast or EcoCast presentation can help you align your marketing messaging with buyer's real needs and concerns.

You're also able to see where you may have gaps in your messaging that could be filled with answers to common questions or concerns.

> **Think about where this feedback could take you:** It's like having hundreds of potential customers telling you what really matters to them.

8. Some of the most affordable CPLs in the IT marketing industry

Sometimes there's no fancy way to put things: They're just a straight-up good deal.

And that's the opportunity with MegaCasts and EcoCasts: the cost-per-lead on these is some of the lowest in the IT marketing industry, especially when you consider the fact that these events are *live*, with a captive audience that comes ready to learn, compare, and short-list.

We don't know a marketer that doesn't love low CPLs and we're thrilled that MegaCasts and EcoCasts do that at scale!

Figure 32: Our exclusive PEAR report (also see **Figure 14**) gives clients actionable information immediately after the event

9. Exclusive reporting that helps you prioritize sales follow-up

As a marketer, you know that the more background and data your sales teams have on a lead that's handed to them, the more likely they are to close that deal. Not only that, the more likely that deal is going to be attributed to your marketing campaigns.

With this in mind, we build our exclusive Post-Event Action Report (PEAR) to give you the summary and background data that sales need the most. (View a sample at actualtechmedia.com/wp-content/up-loads/2019/04/MegaCast-PEAR-Sample.pdf.)

You can share the entire two-page PDF report with your sales teams or cut and paste whatever you find helpful into your CRM to provide sales with the data they need to build rapport with their leads, understand the prospect's environment, and start building a relationship.

Tip: Our clients tell us these reports also help them clearly communicate the value of their MegaCast and EcoCast participation to their management and executives.

10. Presentation coaching from marketers who actually get the technology

Time for some cold, hard truth: As marketers, we'd all love to have rock star-quality presentations 100% of the time to maximize the effectiveness of our webinar campaigns, but the reality is that sometimes our presentations come up short, both in hitting the right message with the audience and the right high-energy tone.

At ActualTech Media, we feel your pain and we want to help. We host well over 100 webinars a year and we see week after week what works (and what falls flat), and we're happy to share everything we've learned with you to ensure your presentation is a success.

We now offer no-charge presentation coaching that includes actionable feedback and recommendations to help you really "dial things in" for your appearance on an upcoming MegaCast or EcoCast.

Killer presentations = killer sales pipeline!

So, What Are You Waiting For?

These 10 reasons outline why so many enterprise IT vendors are consistently hitting their quarterly lead and pipeline goals with MegaCasts and EcoCasts. We're confident these events can become a key component of your marketing toolkit in 2019! Big leads counts, affordable CPLs, increased exposure, and a real sales pipeline are waiting for you as a MegaCast and EcoCast presenter—seize the day!

What You Should Do Now

- Head on over to the interactive event schedule calendar[26] and see what topics are coming up, who's already in for presenting vendors and descriptions for each event to help you see if the event is a fit for you.

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[26] https://www.actualtechmedia.com/event-schedule/

- Build a "wish-list" of events that look interesting.

- Request a quote and include any questions you may have. There's a button to contact us on the events schedule page or you can just click here.[27]

We look forward to seeing you on an upcoming MegaCast or EcoCast!

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[27] https://www.actualtechmedia.com/contact/

Two Critical Video Marketing Data Points IT Marketers Need to See

Smart marketers get it: Video is a huge part of the future of technical marketing. A recent B2B IT marketer's survey revealed[28] that 31% believe that video marketing will have the *biggest* impact on their business in 2019.

But video can be a heavy lift, and often requires a lot of resources. So, as marketers we need to be smart and make every punch count when it comes to what kinds of video we invest in.

At ActualTech Media, we recently asked our audience of IT pros and decision makers what kind of video they find useful and least useful so that our clients can invest in the kind of video marketing that actually works.

Two key data points jumped out at us …

Data Point #1: The Most Common Video Type Is the Least Popular

There's one particular type of video audiences consistently ignore; give these videos a pass.

Only 32% of the audience surveyed finds vendor executive interviews helpful.

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[28] https://www.spiceworks.com/marketing/state-of-it/report/it-marketing/

Here's the No. 1 takeaway from our survey, the thing that will most often drive viewers away: *Almost no one likes interviews with vendor executives.*

A paltry 32% of our audience gets excited when they see a video in which an executive is trotted out, spouting the company line. They want technical substance. They want something they can sink their teeth into and get actionable value from.

The top three kinds of videos, shown in the chart, provide that technical substance in spades. They also give the viewer nuggets that can be used to drive business value.

To drive the point home: *People love your technical experts.* In fact, 84% of our survey respondents said that they want to watch video featuring technical experts and evangelists. Seventy-nine percent engage with whiteboard architectural videos. And 76% said that they want to see interviews with independent experts that can help validate your claims and ask questions that they themselves might have.

> **Of course, there are times when you need to bring executives in for internal or other reasons,** or perhaps your executives are highly technical, in which case they may be able to add value to the top choices of video content. But if they're not uber-technical why not pair them up with your technical experts to meet the audience half-way?

Video discussions where executives bring the business-level considerations and technical experts dig in a little deeper from an architecture-perspective can provide tremendously compelling video content.

TYPES OF VIDEO AND HOW THEY'RE PERCEIVED

| Type	Useful	Not Useful
Interviews with vendor technical experts	84%	16%
Whiteboard architectural videos	79%	21%
Interviews with third party/independent experts	76%	24%
Animated explainer videos	74%	26%
Case study videos	74%	26%
Multiperson roundtable video discussions	68%	33%
Business case videos	67%	33%
Interviews with vendor executives	32%	68%

Useful ■   Not Useful ■
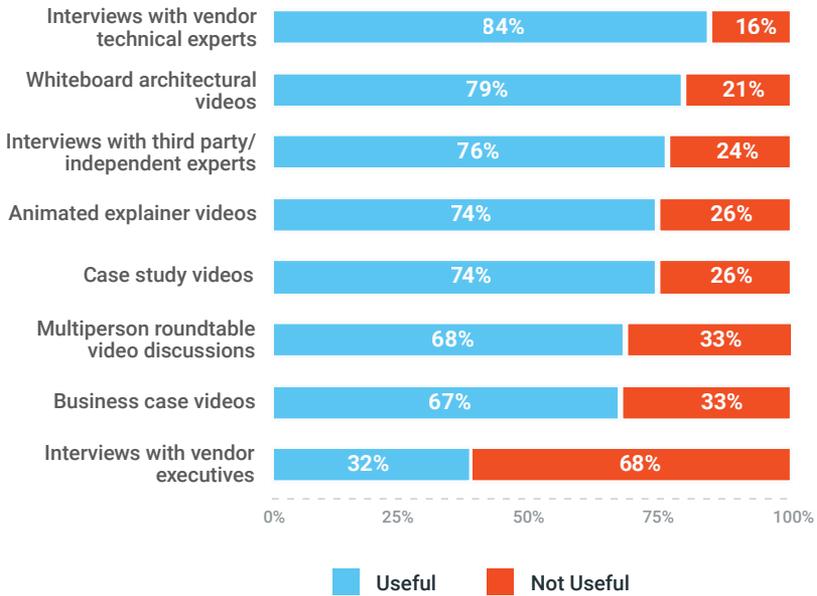
Figure 33: There's a clear opportunity for vendors to create more of the type of videos that buyers find helpful

Two other types of popular videos are animated explainers and case studies. Animated explainer videos have become almost an industry unto themselves, but they can be expensive to produce unless you've done the groundwork necessary to prep the script and make sure it's 100% ready to go before handing off to the production and animation team.

Then there are the case study videos: they're generally considered high quality, and may also be expensive to develop, but they can be powerful influencers for the right audience.

IDEAL VIDEO LENGTH

Video Length	Too short – can't learn enough	Perfect!	Way too long! I'll leave before it's over
30 seconds to 1 minute	85%	15%	
1 minute to 2 minutes	70%	30%	
2 minutes to 4 minutes	40%	56%	4%
4 minutes to 6 minutes	16%	72%	12%
7 minutes to 10 minutes	6%	64%	30%
10 minutes to 15 minutes		46%	54%
Greater than 15 minutes		19%	81%

Too short – can't learn enough **Perfect!** **Way too long! I'll leave before it's over**
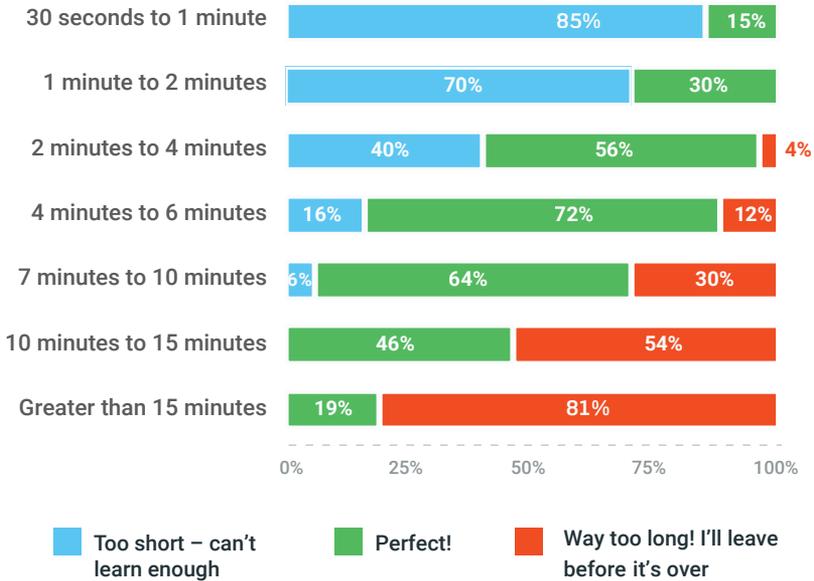
Figure 34: Desired video length as identified by ActualTech Media's audience

Data Point #2: Video Length Can Dictate Success

For this question, we ran a survey that received 1,182 responses. We wanted to find out the optimal length for a video that's both useful and short enough to hold a viewer's attention.

We found that a *four- to six-minute video is considered ideal* by 72% of respondents. That's not to say that shorter or longer videos are ineffective, but there is a risk that you may not be able to impart sufficient information with a reduced duration.

Effective Video Action Steps

Engaging video is a powerful tool, but, with great power comes great responsibility—to create video assets that people *actually want*.

☑ **If part of your video marketing efforts include distribution on YouTube,** longer videos currently tend to perform better in YouTube's algorithms as they keep viewers on the YouTube platform longer. Many YouTube experts recommend[1] 10 to 12 minutes to optimize for the current YouTube algorithms. It may seem counter-intuitive to extend video length for watch-time when as users we sometimes want to grab-and-go when it comes to YouTube, but it makes sense when you think about how it aligns with *YouTube's* goal to keep people on its platform for as long as possible.

[1] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhvvA0eXfcg

To get there, the data makes it clear that it's best to focus on *technical content with technical experts in the four- to 10-minute range.*

Taking feedback from IT pros and decision makers about what they really want can help set up your video efforts for success, driving more leads, awareness, and exposure for your technology and your brand.

What You Should Do Now

At ActualTech Media, we're a top technical video producer and help you easily tell your story with this expanding marketing medium.

We work with our clients to produce hundreds of compelling videos a year including:

- Whiteboard technical discussions

- In-studio professional interviews and chats

- Social media-optimized snippet videos

- Case study interviews

- Roundtable discussions

- Webchats and video podcasts

- Much much more!

As actual technologists who understand the industry and the tech, we work with you to create a discussion that captures and holds your target audience's attention.

Next Steps

Now that you're an expert on all things related to ActualTech Media, what should you do next?

Get in touch with us! We're always eager to have conversations about how our services can help our clients achieve heretofore unseen levels of success.

To reach us, email connect@actualtechmedia.com or call 888-741-7900

If you'd like to review our up-to-date list of scheduled webinars, visit https://www.actualtechmedia.com/event-schedule/