

HOW TO VLOG

KEEPING STAFF AND CUSTOMERS UP-TO-DATE

With the Covid-19 social distancing rules, now more than ever brokers need to find new ways to communicate with both their employees and clients.

What is Vlogging?

Vlog is the combination of the words 'video' and 'blog' and refers to a type of blog where the format of the content is video. Like blogs, vlogs record a person's thoughts and opinions and are typically published on the internet. Vlogging is a great way to engage with your audience and is a great alternative to both the written word and face-to-face presentations. It's also easier and cheaper than you think.

Video vs Text: which is better?

If you're not convinced it's time to jump in front of the camera, here are some compelling arguments why it's time to stop relying on the written word:

- **Video gets your message across** - body language and verbal tone play incredibly important roles in conveying a message. Text is inherently impersonal: it's black and white and read without context. However, video is not searchable and not well suited for detailed and technical information.
- **Video is more engaging** - video holds your audience's attention better than text as it includes both pictures and sound. Your audience is ready to watch as long as you deliver content that is valuable and concise.
- **Video presents quick and rich content** - reading takes much longer than watching while video gets your message across far quicker.

How can brokers use vlogs?

Just like blogs, you can vlog about almost anything. Here are just a few ways brokers could use vlogs with both your own teams and your customers.

Vlogs to keep employees engaged

Vlogs are excellent for keeping in touch with employees while everyone is working from home. Here's some ideas on what you could vlog about:

- **Trading updates** - rather than send out the regular email updating your performance, why not create a vlog to explain them to your teams and thank them for their continued efforts?
- **Answer FAQs** - take a couple of questions you or colleagues get asked all the time by clients and provide the definitive answer to your team.
- **A peak behind the curtain** - humanise what it is also like for you home working, outline the challenges you, like your team, are overcoming and that you are in this together.
- **Case studies** - ask one of the team to outline how they placed a particularly difficult risk or resolved a client issue working remotely.
- **Team challenges** - it doesn't have to always be about the serious stuff, taking part in social media trending challenges will show your human side - maybe start a friendly team competition.

Covid-19 vlogs for customers

Once you are confident vlogging with your own teams you may wish to create customer vlogs. Specifically during lock-down, vlogs could be used by your team to consistently respond or communicate Covid-19 related issues such as:

- **Remind customers you remain open for business** - outlining how you team have the technology for home working and continued market access to deliver excellent service.
- **Detail any key process changes** - e.g. how renewals and new business will operate whilst home working or during lock-down or during easing of restrictions.
- **Spotlight insurers' responses to the pandemic** - how is the insurer market is handling temporarily unoccupied premises for example, or direct them to useful business support resources.



8 simple rules for creating compelling vlogs

While vlogs offer huge potential to keep your audience informed, there are some simple rules you must follow to make sure you get the most from the medium.

- 1. Learn from others** - watch other vlogs and try to identify what makes some vloggers so popular. Then incorporate the best bits into your own vlogs (e.g.. visual impact, duration, tone of voice).
- 2. Think about the presentation** - if watching a video is just as boring as reading the wall-of-text it's replacing there's no point in vlogging. How you deliver the message is just as important as the message itself. There is no right answer when it comes to scripting. Some prefer to just turn on the camera and talk while others need the comfort of a script or at least an outline script. What's important is you know what you are trying to accomplish before you press record. If you do choose to use a script make sure it sounds natural, so write in the voice you speak in.
- 3. Get the orientation right** - videos, unlike photos, are almost universally presented horizontally. So your vlog should be filmed in landscape mode rather than portrait.
- 4. Make sure you have good, clear sound** - film somewhere that is free from distracting background noise and has no echoes. Investing in a directional microphone that attaches to your camera will make sure you only pick up audio from whatever your camera is pointing at.
- 5. Keep it steady** - no one wants to watch shaky footage, so invest in a tripod or at least rest your camera on something to keep it steady.
- 6. Lighting** - professional lighting is expensive, but you can always use natural light from windows to make sure your subject is well lit.
- 7. Get a variety of shots** - if possible break your presentation into different sections and use a variety of close ups, wide angle and different angles to add variety. It will mean more editing, but it will make your video more interesting to watch.
- 8. Relax** - when you're ready to start filming, relax and be yourself. Your audience will notice if you're pretending to be someone you're not. So take a deep breath, press record and be yourself.



Editing your vlog and going live

Tools for creating your video

There are lots of tools you can use to create for video. Here are some simple-to-use packages to get you started:

- **For iPhone or Mac** - Apple's iMovie is a free video editor application for use on their products.
- **For PC** - Microsoft's Windows Movie Maker.

Both packages allow you to do basic editing and add titles and other media like music to your vlogs. If you're looking to move up to the next level, Adobe's Creative Cloud Suite has all the tools you need to create professional looking and sounding videos. The downside is it's expensive and it takes time to learn all the features.

If you're looking for additional support with creating or editing your content Ignition can help.

How to share your vlogs.

You can post your vlog anywhere that supports video content. YouTube is clearly a popular choice but there are other options including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Vimeo.

Restricting access to your vlog

You'll also need to consider who you want to see your content. For internal Vlogs you'll probably want to restrict access to staff only or you may just want to allow your own customers to view your video.

YouTube has an "Unlisted" setting where only those who know the URL can view the video, the video won't appear in searches or suggested videos. This makes it an option for restricting access, but you'll need to rely on the URL not being shared outside your intended audience.

If you need to ensure only the intended audience see your video you can use Google Drive or Microsoft's OneDrive and invite specific account holders to access the files. Alternatively Vimeo allows you to authorize people by username and password (for a fee).

Generally though vlogs are about sharing, so you should promote your content on your website and across social media and let everyone benefit from your expertise.

About Ignition

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Our success starts with us taking the time to understand what you're aiming to achieve and why. From creating professional brochures to revitalising your brand, from building web and mobile applications to detailed marketing consultancy projects, Ignition offer a wide range of cost effective marketing and development solutions to help Insurance brokers win and retain business.