

Brainshark Converges Mobile, Social and Video to Give Marketing More Bite

May 18, 2011

Guest post by SMB member [Doug Tangwall](#)



Jay Wilder, director of product marketing for Boston, Mass.-based, Brainshark spoke this week at an event sponsored by Social Media Breakfast-Madison, *Convergence is Now: Mobile, Social and Video Combine!* He opened his presentation with an impressive statistic:

“According to the Weiss-McGrath Report, combining voice and visuals increases message retention by a factor of three to six times.”

Beyond Video

The explosion of video is well-documented. Wilder says, “[More YouTube videos were created in the last 60 days](#) than network television produced in the last 60 years combined.” And while increased retention certainly makes a case for video-based marketing, Wilder documents several trends behind his company’s focus on converging video with social media and mobile technologies:

- [Connected mobile users are up 40-50%](#), and if we look at smart phones as a social media platform, they rank second behind Facebook in terms of users ([estimated to be at 450 million at year end](#), compared to 600 million on Facebook, 200 million on Twitter and 100 million on LinkedIn.)
- **Mobile bandwidth is increasing**, and 4G will reach 10-20 times current 3G data speeds.
- **US Household are more connected**, with an average of [six devices](#) tied to the Internet: one in three adults has a smart phone, and, by year end, there will be 45 million tablets ([35 million of them iPads](#))
- **Tablet users watch more video**—[three times more](#) than web users and five times more than iPhone users alone.
- **Mobile users are more engaged socially**: [40% of Facebook users](#) are active on mobile devices; the average mobile social user is twice as likely to share video content; and month-over-month video referrals are [growing at a rate of 48%](#) .

The Business Case for Convergence

Wilder says, “Combining social media and video delivers trust, interaction and sharing.” He notes that many businesses are taking an educational or thought-leadership angle in convergence efforts. He also sees a trend of moving toward “business casual” videos that emphasize speed of production and authenticity over polished productions.

Wilder gives the following advice to companies looking into convergence:

- Think in terms of something your boss could watch. (Not all users are young; [75% of C-level executives](#) watch business videos and 65% visit a website afterward).
- Consider control versus democratized video. (Your company’s personality and industry will likely define how much creativity is allowed and, in the process, how much potential there is for sharing.)
- Adjust the mix by channel. (Think of each mobile and social outlet as having its own flavor and personality. You may have to edit differently and adjust calls to action.)
- Keep consistency across platforms. (Smaller screens and multiple operating systems make this challenging, but consumers want choice in which devices they use to interact with content. Wilder suggests video platforms are in the best position to overcome this challenge and adds that Brainshark converts videos for all major platforms automatically.)
- Measure and experiment. (Wilder says specific measurements may vary based on who you are, for examples an educator versus a marketer. He also says business video platforms like Brainshark create closed feedback loops that enable real-time promotional follow up.)

Does convergence work? Wilder highlighted a case study of Zappo’s, a leader in social media marketing. The company added 58,000 short videos featuring their employees and products and claims to have achieved a [10% increase in sales](#) and fewer returns as a direct result of the effort.

Connecting Online and Offline Marketing

Wilder says tools like the free [MyBrainshark](#) make it is easy to rapidly create video for numerous purposes across inbound and outbound platforms and activities. He recommends starting by segmenting video considerations:

- Audience: “Are you trying to reach suspects, prospects or customers?”
- Video type: Personality, testimonial, thought leadership, demos, how-to’s, entertainment, common problems are a few that he lists.
- Goals: Wilder says “Be clear on your goals. Do you want to entertain, build trust, inform, drive traffic, convert, adopt, resell or upsell, gain referrals...? Which channels play best to these different goals? How do they map to your buying or sales process?”

Wilder featured some marketing examples using SMS texting and Quick Response (QR) codes as a way to bring the mobile world into everyday life. QR codes are a two-dimensional barcode that can be scanned by smart phones. Wilder cautions, “Most people familiar with QR codes think of taking the user to a generic website link, but in many cases that’s a mistake. There are other more mobile-friendly possibilities, such as video, text messages, email, phone calls, Facebook ‘likes’ or Twitter follows.”

Wilder mentioned that his company can auto-generate these codes for marketing campaigns. “QR code scans are up over 4,000 percent. They are showing up on business cards and even résumés. Look for some interesting marketing developments in this area.” He then concluded with a discussion on the benefits of QR Code platforms and using SMS keywords to allow people to get a video message from you via text. (Text “shark” to 31313 for an example.)

Doug Tangwall is founder of [End Result Marketing](#), a content marketing and social media firm based in Madison, Wisconsin.