

# A Blueprint For Successful B2B Video Marketing

Drive Revenue And Buyers' Engagement With Effective Use Of Video

by Nick Barber, Jacob Milender, and Laura Ramos

October 20, 2017

## Why Read This Report

Unlike static formats, video can pack a lot of information into a small but eye-catching package. B2B buyers are wired to process visual information and remember stories, making video an ideal medium with which to engage them. As the amount of video web traffic continues to increase rapidly, B2B marketers must use video to differentiate their message, engage Millennial buyers, and explain complex ideas more simply. This report outlines a blueprint to help B2B marketers create video content that connects with buyers and demonstrates video's value.

## Key Takeaways

### **Video Is A Key Tool For The B2B Marketer**

Video is a dynamic way to engage buyers because it showcases your company's big ideas. It also makes complex ideas simpler for buyers to understand and helps establish emotional connections and empathy better than any other medium.

### **More Bandwidth Will Make Video More Accessible**

B2B marketers struggle to make video content engaging and attribute its impact on the sales pipeline. Formerly a tool only within reach of firms with access to big marketing budgets and sophisticated production capabilities, video content now deserves another look by B2B marketers at all levels because it can readily engage buyers at any stage in their life cycle.

### **Use Video To Engage Buyers With Your Brand**

To make the jump from novelty tactic to compelling marketing content, B2B marketers must align their video strategy to customers' needs and content consumption preferences. They must also update storytelling and narrative skills to humanize videos and invest in a platform that helps attribute video content impact on marketing program returns.

# A Blueprint For Successful B2B Video Marketing

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[The Forrester Wave™: Online Video Platforms For Sales And Marketing, Q4 2016](#)

[Peer Stories And Credible Data Attract And Engage B2B Buyers](#)

[Vendor Landscape: Video Platforms For Customer And Employee Experience](#)



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**A Blueprint For Successful B2B Video Marketing**

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## Video Is A Dynamic Way To Share Your Brand's Marketing Content

Video packs a lot of information into a small but eye-catching package. It can tell sophisticated product and brand stories simply and make complex topics easier to grasp. Video also humanizes B2B marketing messages and promotions in a way that other marketing tactics cannot.<sup>1</sup> While many B2B marketers are still experimenting with this medium, video offers a distinct customer engagement advantage for those marketers who use it to:

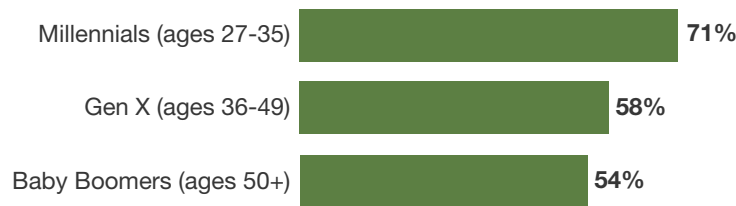
- › **Showcase their company's big ideas.** The human brain processes video 60,000 times faster than text.<sup>2</sup> Reading large blocks of text is the type of heavy lifting our visually oriented brains are wired to avoid, which makes video the perfect medium to deliver information that humans will pay attention to.<sup>3</sup> Fuze uses video in its The Future of Work campaign to highlight the unique trends and challenges technology workers face.<sup>4</sup> Unlike HTML, PDF, or other static formats, “video created awareness on both a product and a thought leadership level and connected more emotionally with buyers,” explains Amanda Maksymiw, Fuze's content marketing director.
- › **Engage a new generation of buyers who prefer video and interactive content.** Millennials will make up a whopping 75% of the workforce by 2025.<sup>5</sup> These digital natives will bring their technology use and content consumption expectations with them into the work world (see Figure 1). You can better engage this next generation of purchase influencers — and get them to consider your brand first — by using video and interactive formats to engage these buyers.<sup>6</sup> For example, in the near future, we envision marketers experimenting with B2B versions of Instagram Stories to replace a conventional reference call.
- › **Better connect to buyers' needs and motivations than through any other medium.** Marketers need to make a lasting impression to move buyers from awareness to choice. Our research shows emotions have a biological foundation in creating long-term memories.<sup>7</sup> More than any other medium, video can tap into the emotions that drive people to buy. That means your video marketing narrative can stick in their minds at a biological level. “Videos are such an important part of who you are as a company,” said Sangram Vajre, CEO of Terminus. “Nothing builds more trust in a relationship than looking into someone's eyes. When you're on camera, people can see visual cues that support your confidence and expertise.”

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**FIGURE 1** Millennials Show A Strong Preference For Short Videos, Compared With Other Generations Of Workers**“Thinking about the content you prefer to read/use, how likely are you to engage with the following forms of content?”**

(4 or 5 on a scale of 1 [not likely] to 5 [very likely])

**Short videos (less than 90 seconds)**

Base: 214 global IT and business decision makers

Source: Forrester Consulting's Q1 2017 Global Marketing Content Credibility Online Survey

**B2B Marketers Struggle To Make Video Part Of Their Content Mix**

By 2021, more than three quarters (78%) of the world's mobile data traffic will be video.<sup>8</sup> Despite this huge potential growth in video use, few B2B marketers are using this format to successfully interact with buyers. In a recent study, only 23 out of 60 companies earned a passing score for using video to engage customers beyond repurposing speeches or advertisements.<sup>9</sup> The other 37 are missing key opportunities to connect with buyers because they:

- › **Can't create content that engages audiences.** Producing a haphazard flood of content means that marketers typically deliver the wrong message to the wrong person at the wrong time. In fact, 54% of B2B buyers find much of marketing material vendors give them is useless.<sup>10</sup> Video can help marketing content cut through this clutter and make your target audiences take notice. “A lot of people don't realize what video can do for them,” said Bruce Kahn, managing director at Incomar. “We found that good imagery, content, and video drives sales and allows sellers to be more effective.”
- › **Fail to attribute video appropriately.** Since the early days of online, producers have equated high view counts with success. This way of measuring video adds up to little more than a vanity metric unless you connect video viewing with purchase behavior or deal acceleration. “We can measure how well a video performs within a campaign but can't attribute this activity back to a sale,” said a VP of content marketing at a leading benefits firm. Many B2B marketers today echo this challenge and struggle to show how video pays off in shorter deal cycles or healthier pipeline.
- › **Overcomplicate production.** Video production today runs the gamut from a simple conference room repurposed as a studio to a full-blown sound stage. Smart B2B marketers don't let the technology — like costly 4K video cameras and lighting — dominate their strategy. Producing

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simple, straightforward video of a customer story or a tutorial is more effective than getting too flashy too soon. As Kristina Cleary, CMO of Ceridian, explains: "Relevancy and quality is critical. It's one thing to create a message and another to make one that the audience cares about. No video is better than a poor video."

## A Blueprint For Effectively Using Video In Your B2B Marketing

Without full integration into your content strategy, video can feel like an expensive collection of disparate assets. B2B marketers have found success with video when it fits into a larger content plan: One of the world's largest benefits providers makes video part of a multitouch marketing campaign, with marketing automation measuring a video's performance. Rather than just a medium for sharing product demos or client testimonials, use video to reinforce your message across the entire life cycle. As a VP of content marketing puts it, "Video is the best way to tell a brand's story." To make the effective jump from video as a novelty to a compelling way to connect buyers with your brand, marketers need to follow three key steps.

### Step 1: Align Video Production To Customers' Needs Across Their Life Cycle

B2B marketers should use the customer life cycle to help determine the type of video content that will most effectively engage buyers at each stage (see Figure 2). Experienced B2B marketers also adjust video length, style, and production quality based on customers' changing information needs and content consumption preferences over time (see Figure 3). As Lisa Morway, director of brand and creative services at Polycom, explains: "It's important to have a plan of who you're targeting. We constantly refine how video affects each persona's journey by asking key questions like, 'Where is this video in the journey, what's the message, and how do we promote it?'" Top marketers best adapt video use across the buyer's lifetime when they:

- › **Keep videos short in presale stages when targeting a wide audience.** When buyers are discovering solutions and exploring options, shorter content is key. "Video is like dating," says Kristina Cleary. "You have to begin with short conversation starters. As buyers move through the pipeline, they narrow the field and have more time to spend with you." Ceridian keeps early-stage videos around 15 seconds in length and offers buyers long-form video, like prerecorded webinars, only when they move further down the pipeline. Polycom's Lisa Morway agrees with this approach, "You must keep the message concise and direct because it's very easy to lose viewers in the first 15 seconds."
- › **Share compelling ideas through video to persuade buyers to buy.** Video can summarize complex ideas in neat little packages that explain what you do more directly. "A lot of times the most powerful videos are ones that force you to reduce a complex topic into a simple message," says Chris Goodman, CMO at KPMG. "There's no place to hide with video; it forces your messaging process to be compelling and to the point." Top B2B marketers use video to create

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urgency when they show the visual difference between today and tomorrow — or with or without your solution — like San Francisco-based creative studio Moonbase did for Ionic Security's company launch video.<sup>11</sup>

- › **Use internal production teams to streamline post-sale video.** Customers need fast answers to bothersome issues. They also learn faster when you show rather than tell them how to solve a problem. Putting your top sales engineer or customer training expert in front of the camera to shoot a quick how-to video lets you focus video production dollars on prospects while keeping current customers happy and productive (see Figure 4). "Product demos and instructional videos are less slick, so we can do them internally with a small team," says Fuze's Amanda Maksymiw. "We use agencies when there is more complexity in the story and execution."

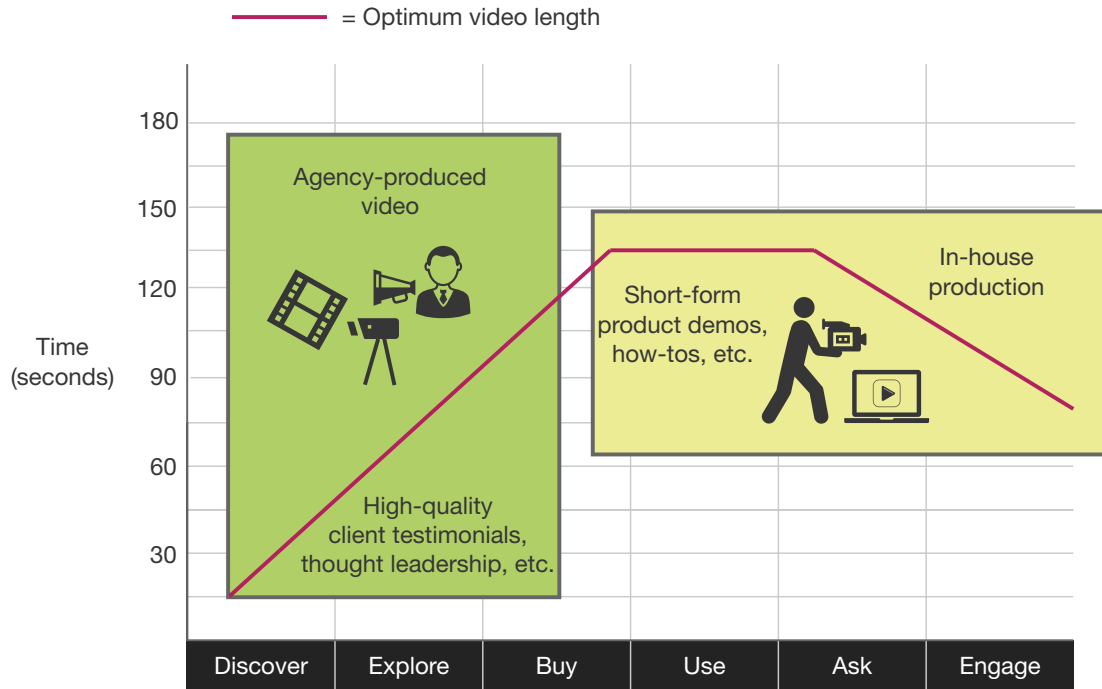
**FIGURE 2** Use The Customer Life Cycle To Determine What Types Of Video To Deploy By Stage



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**FIGURE 3** Life-Cycle Stage Should Predicate Video Length And Production Quality



**FIGURE 4** Level Of Video Production Should Depend On Sales Stage

Sales stage	Production strategy	Production time	Production cost
Presale video	In-house	Hours to days	\$\$
	Freelance	Days to weeks	\$\$\$
	Agency	Weeks to months	\$\$\$\$
Post-sale video	In-house	Hours	\$

**Step 2: Humanize Your Video Content By Establishing Empathy With Buyers**

More than any other medium, video can tap into buyers' psyche and engage them in a more compelling manner. For most marketers, this will require sharpening their storytelling skills to create video that makes an authentic human connection. Stories and narrative not only create interesting or entertaining videos but also show that you understand and share your buyers' issues. Demonstrating empathy can catalyze new business opportunities as well as facilitate upsell and cross-sell conversations. To develop empathetic video, make sure that you:

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- › **Serve up content rich in emotional relevance to captivate your buyers.** Addressing top-of-mind issues through video is important, but video also has the capacity to develop emotional relevance that helps create empathy. Top marketers focus on people and places in their video to create this emotional resonance.<sup>12</sup> KPMG's video series called "The Entrée," co-developed with JWT and produced by CNN, showcases thought leadership by having internal and external experts discuss the latest industry trends over a meal. Seeing these business leaders discuss a relevant topic over dinner gives the video much more empathetic weight than a whitepaper on the same topic (see Figure 5). [View the video associated with figure 5 here.](#)
- › **Create immersive narratives that mirror your buyers' daily challenges.** Building a strong narrative requires understanding your buyers. Here is where a key marketing tool, the buyer persona, can help B2B marketers better understand the characteristics, attributes, motivations, and interests of their target buyers.<sup>13</sup> Polycom immerses potential buyers in a virtual conference room loaded with videos that capture the narrative around the day-to-day work of a business technology (BT) buyer. By organizing videos into a common narrative, Polycom puts itself in its buyers' shoes and shows customers it understands the collaboration and real-time communication issues their teams are trying to solve (see Figure 6). More importantly, using the words "I need . . ." changes the narrative from first-person Polycom to first-person customer, which helps buyers see themselves in the message.
- › **Build a consistent theme to your videos through effective storytelling.** Everyone loves a good story, and storytelling is what makes your content more engaging and memorable for buyers.<sup>14</sup> Oracle achieves this with a video web series called "The Journey to Modern Marketing" starring a fictional marketer named Modern Mark.<sup>15</sup> The story is told through a season of 10 episodes; each is roughly 3 minutes in length, covering a specific aspect of modern marketing such as data management, social marketing, and so on. By tackling these issues in sequential order, the viewer shares in Mark's progression toward becoming a modern marketer and can relate to the story at a deeper level.



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**FIGURE 5** KPMG Uses Video To Build Awareness Through Thought Leadership



**Chris Goodman**  
CMO, KPMG

KPMG's video series "The Entrée" showcases thought leadership by having internal and external experts discuss the latest industry trends over a meal.

Digital Transformation: Putting the customer first

From healthcare to retail, technology is changing how organizations are providing their services to customers. Join us as we sit down for a bite at eatsa restaurant on Madison Avenue to discuss the transformative customer experience.

View all episodes of "The Entrée" video series.

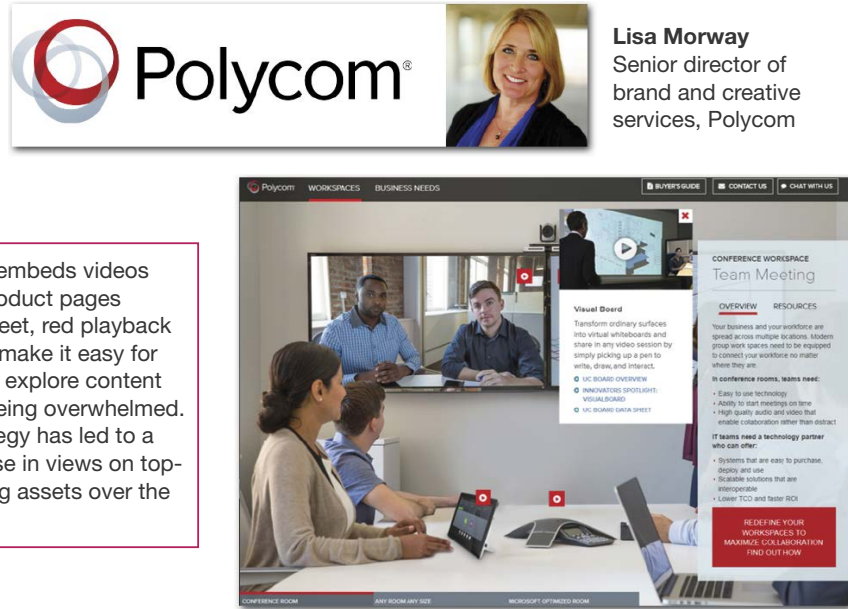
What are your goals with externally facing marketing video?	"We develop content that is focused on awareness, relationships, and sales. We determine which audience segment(s) we want to influence and the specific business issue(s) where KPMG has deep experience. Then we pick the most appropriate channels and craft stories that provide insight and advice to help our audience better understand and deal with the issues at hand."
How is your company deploying its videos today?	"There isn't a magic recipe because each of our audience segments consumes content differently — long- versus short-form; analog versus digital — but we try to use every touchpoint on every channel at the best time. We typically aim shorter content at a general audience and use videos to spark interest and propel viewers to consume more KPMG content or contact sales."
How do you define successful videos (e.g., lead generation, views)?	"We break down campaigns into an omnichannel mix of atomized assets that all work together to accomplish our marketing objectives. We see videos generate a 20% to 30% lift (i.e., leads) and up to 2x to 3x depending on performance. This is a branding effect. We've run small-scale tests with publishers like Forbes that indicate multimedia touches have the highest impact."

Source: KPMG website (<https://advisory.kpmg.us/topics/the-entree.html>)

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**FIGURE 6** Polycom Uses Video To Impart Product Expertise



Polycom embeds videos into its product pages with discreet, red playback links that make it easy for visitors to explore content without being overwhelmed. This strategy has led to a 2x increase in views on top-performing assets over the past year.

What are your goals with externally facing marketing video?	"We've seen increased demand for short-form videos that sit further down the funnel. While we create highly produced testimonials for general awareness, the majority of the 50 to 70 videos we produce per year are short how-tos for clients post-sale."
How is your company deploying its videos today?	"There's an in-house team of two that handles production. Most videos reside on a product page but are rigorously tagged with meta-data so that there are many ways to surface the content via search."
How do you define successful videos (e.g., lead generation, views)?	"It's easy to track the number of views, but we try and provide next steps after the video with calls-to-action (e.g., links, text). We're constantly refining the journey and personas we're targeting so that we can provide the most effective message for capturing the viewers' attention and encouraging them to take additional actions."

Source: Polycom website

**Step 3: Pick A Video Platform To Extend The Value Of Your Videos**

An online video platform (OVP) helps B2B marketers manage their video content and track how well it performs.<sup>16</sup> To prove that buyers are engaging with video content and determine how it affects the purchase process, B2B marketers will turn to technology that can help them:

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- › **Ingest and organize video content.** Video can be more expensive to produce than a white paper, data sheet, or social content. To maximize video use and reuse, B2B marketers invest in an OVP to become the command center for all things video. For example, most OVPs let companies push videos to different social channels based on metadata tags. Brightcove lets marketers customize videos with different bumpers and trim the videos without involving an editor. This effectively creates a short social trailer that drives audiences back to companies' sites. OVP costs vary widely, with a solution available for most budgets, so making this investment is important, especially for B2B marketers who must tell a complex story.
- › **Deliver high-quality engaging experiences.** OVPs automate the handling of video delivery to give viewers a Netflix-like experience. They can also syndicate content across multiple social channels to reduce the number of times marketers need to upload a single video.<sup>17</sup> Top platforms also embed interactive elements directly into users' experience to personalize the video content and keep viewers engaged. These qualities make an OVP essential in turning content into an experience that buyers will watch and remember.
- › **Attribute value to video.** The success metrics for video have changed: View count doesn't tell you anything beyond how many people clicked play. Top marketers now must understand who watched the entire video, which viewers left after 2 seconds, and how long they spent on any particular segment. Modern OVPs integrate with enterprise applications like CRM and marketing automation platforms (MAPs) to inform lead generation efforts with specific video attribution data — which Fuze marketers use advantageously. "We want to know if the video is adding value to the sales process," says Fuze's Maksymiw. "With Vidyard we're able to do multitouch attribution and can see which videos were watched and able to attribute revenue influence to specific content assets."

### Recommendations

## Update Your Video Strategy To Increase Your Customers' Engagement

Creating a video strategy means running parallel tracks of both technical and content capabilities, but this approach doesn't need to be daunting. A little help from your technology counterparts can help B2B marketers understand the range of video production and management capabilities on the market as well as the integration steps needed to upgrade websites, CRM systems, and MAPs with video capability and data. To become video pros, B2B marketing professionals should:

- › **Put video content into their marketing mix and budget.** Top marketers make video content part of larger campaigns and complement it with other content types. This may not require as big of an investment as you may think. For example, Fuze explained that video consumes about 15% of the budget of a thought leadership campaign, while a product campaign bumps that up to about 30% of the budget.

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- › **Drive content creation with events.** Your big events are great opportunities to produce compelling video content because key customers and employees are in a single space. You can capture the keynotes and main-stage presentations to use in the future, but some of the most important content can be interviews with customers — ask them how they use your solution and what some key benefits are. This montage can be a powerful endorsement. Ceridian interviews customers at events to produce a treasure trove of video content for use throughout the year; it leverages its big-ticket events budgets to help shoot reusable video content.
- › **Create an in-house video team, even if it's bootstrapped.** You don't need to hire a five-person production team and build a Hollywood-style sound stage to produce compelling video content. Look inside your organization for employees with storytelling and video skills. Repurpose a conference room or storage closet into a video studio and don't spend more than \$1,000 on your initial hardware purchase. Top marketers get off to a fast start when they produce their first video in less than four weeks and use their learnings to speed future production and analytics to produce more targeted content.
- › **Surface hidden video content and put it to work.** Recorded webinars and webcasts take on a second life after their primary broadcast when repurposed as video clips. Webinar platform like INXPO and ON24 make webinar editing and repurposing almost seamless. Add recorded webcasts to your OVP so that you can deliver them to buyers at various stages in the customer life cycle — especially those at the bottom of the funnel where buyers spend the most time viewing and learning from your content. “Our webinars are the No. 1 driver for marketing-qualified accounts,” says Alicia Baumann, brand webinar producer at Procore. “Webinars are among the top five marketing assets for revenue generation.”
- › **Connect their OVP to their other marketing applications to power attribution.** Sit down with your BT colleagues to figure out the best way to connect OVP metadata with CRM and MAP applications. Most OVPs offer connections at the API level, while platforms like Brightcove, INXPO, Kaltura, ON24, and Vidyard have out-of-the-box connectors. By capturing data about viewing time and video segment engagement, you can better attribute your marketing video impact on both marketing program returns and the buyer's journey.

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## Supplemental Material

### Survey Methodology

Forrester Consulting's Q1 2017 Global Marketing Content Credibility Online Survey was fielded in February 2017 to 214 IT and business professionals in the US, the UK, Germany, and France. Survey respondents are involved in purchasing technology products or services and work in companies with at least 500 employees. They hail from 18 different industries, with financial services and insurance (18%), manufacturing and materials (14%), government (11%), and transportation/logistics (7%) accounting for the majority. One-quarter sell to a roughly equal mix of consumers and businesses, while 41% sell mostly or exclusively to businesses.

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For quality assurance purposes, we qualified respondents based on their responses to specific screeners that related to their involvement with technology purchasing decisions as well as basic questions about their firm's location of operations, industry, and number of employees. Respondents opted into the survey from a research panel owned by Research Now, which also fielded the survey on behalf of Forrester. Respondents were provided with a small monetary incentive for participating.

Exact sample sizes are provided in this report on a question-by-question basis. Survey responses are not guaranteed to be representative of the population at large. Unless otherwise noted, statistical data is intended to be used for descriptive and not inferential purposes.

**Companies Interviewed For This Report**

Adobe	MongoDB
ADP	ON24
Brightcove	Polycom
Ceridian	Procore
Fuze	SAS
HCSS	Terminus
Incomar	TwentyThree
INXPO	Vbrick
KPMG	Vidyard
Mediafly	

**Endnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> See the Forrester report "[Empathetic Content: The Key To Engaging B2B Buyers.](#)"
- <sup>2</sup> Source: Liraz Margalit, Ph.D., "Video vs Text: The Brain Perspective," Psychology Today blog, May 1, 2015.
- <sup>3</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Forrester Wave™: Online Video Platforms For Sales And Marketing, Q4 2016.](#)"
- <sup>4</sup> Source: "Breaking Barriers 2020: How CIOs are Shaping the Future of Work," Fuze (<https://www.fuze.com/future-of-work>).
- <sup>5</sup> Source: Fred Dews, "Brookings Data Now: 75 Percent of 2025 Workforce Will Be Millennials," Brookings Institution, July 17, 2014 (<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2014/07/17/brookings-data-now-75-percent-of-2025-workforce-will-be-millennials/>).
- <sup>6</sup> See the Forrester report "[Peer Stories And Credible Data Attract And Engage B2B Buyers.](#)"
- <sup>7</sup> See the Forrester report "[The CMO's Guide To Emotion.](#)"

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<sup>8</sup> Source: "Cisco Visual Networking Index: Global Mobile Data Traffic Forecast Update, 2016–2021 White Paper," Cisco, March 28, 2017 (<http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/visual-networking-index-vni/mobile-white-paper-c11-520862.html>).

<sup>9</sup> See the Forrester report "[Empathetic Content: The Key To Engaging B2B Buyers.](#)"

<sup>10</sup> See the Forrester report "[Empathetic Content: The Key To Engaging B2B Buyers.](#)"

<sup>11</sup> For more information, refer to the following link. Source: "Making a Startup Promo Video," Moonbase (<http://moonbase.com/making-a-startup-promo-video/>).

<sup>12</sup> See the Forrester report "[The CMO's Guide To Emotion.](#)"

<sup>13</sup> See the Forrester report "[Key Tools For The Customer-Obsessed B2B Marketer.](#)"

<sup>14</sup> See the Forrester report "[Tell Stories To Connect With Business Buyers.](#)"

<sup>15</sup> Source: "The Journey to Modern Marketing: Season 2," Oracle (<https://www.oracle.com/marketingcloud/journey-to-modern-marketing.html>).

<sup>16</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Forrester Wave™: Online Video Platforms For Sales And Marketing, Q4 2016.](#)"

<sup>17</sup> See the Forrester report "[Vendor Landscape: Video Platforms For Customer And Employee Experience.](#)"

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