

Three applications for video in channel communication

By [Wynand Smit](#)

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Businesses have embraced a multi-channel environment when it comes to communicating with customers. This is driven both by the introduction of new options such as chat and chatbots, as well as by customer preferences.



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The old faithful channels of voice and email still remain by far the most popular channels, but video is an additional channel being put to good use within certain contexts. Here are three applications that illustrate its usage:

Live assistance

Customers may not always be able to access an in-store environment; in this case, video chat performs the same role as a sales or customer relations consultant. For complex interactions that may need in-depth explanation and the space for customers to ask many questions, video chat can work well. It personalises the interaction, putting a face to the person on the other end of the line and this can lead to an improved interaction. Customers may get frustrated over the phone, speaking to a faceless consultant or contact centre agent, but video gives a better sense of speaking to an individual. According to research done, this can also create a better foundation for a trust-based interaction.



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Besides personalisation, video can provide an opportunity to include visual elements to customer service or sales, such as taking a client through a document, showcasing product features in real-time or assisting with setting up software. This prevents the customer from having to use more than one channel to successfully conclude an interaction, i.e., the customer may call via phone to make a request or express interest in a product or service, and then have to revert to email to find out more about completing application forms, for example. In a completely integrated multi-channel environment, the agent or consultant can switch seamlessly between channels within the same interaction to avoid the customer having to call back.

Many-to-one video

Video can be combined with other channels such as online chat and chatbots in a single live interaction to boost sales conversion and promote live brand engagement. A chatbot, for example, can engage with and segment audiences automatically during a live video broadcast. This will help prevent viewers from dropping out of the sales funnel – engaged viewers can continue to pose live questions to the person hosting the session, while inactive, passive viewers can also be directed to a static campaign form to book a live interactive session, or to a live salesperson immediately if they express interest. Content, such as images or presentations, can also be shared live with viewers during a broadcast to create a multi-dimensional and fully interactive brand experience.



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Video's most practical applications in this context include product demonstrations, explaining promotional offers, customer care, online advertising and answering FAQs.

One-to-one video interactions are slightly more complex and engaging. They offer flexibility according to the customers' connectivity, opportunities for targeted sales campaigns and cross or up-selling, as well as slick customer experience provided by this more intimate form of engagement.

Team time

A many-to-one video option can allow for seamless intra-company communication, too, including the ability to conduct webinars and tutorials (these could work with customers, too), as well as a channel that can be used for corporate announcements.

Video can also be used to conduct performance rating meetings with individuals, strategy sessions or training – a great means of providing access to team members, especially if your company has many branches nationally.

Although these applications may not be widely employed in the South African context just yet, a video channel can offer the opportunity for close and multi-faceted engagement, strengthening the brand relationship, increasing sales, as well as potentially offering an enhanced customer experience.

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