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What's all the buzz about live video?

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In the early years of social content, text reigned king. Since then, we've come a long way with using imagery and video to increase engagement with our social media posts. But how do we further engage our target audience and effectively communicate on social media channels?



If face-to-face communication — the holy grail of powerful communication — is what we're aiming to replicate, then live video may be a smart option. In today's instant world, immediacy beats pre-recorded video when it comes to algorithm love from platform powerhouses like Facebook and generating an authentic experience with your audience.

Not all live video is equal

Live video can be produced on a variety of platforms, some of which are easier to operate than others. Facebook offers an easy-to-use yet robust offering. Facebook Live can be further enhanced with third-party apps such as BeLive if you want to split your screen like CNN or have lower thirds like a newscast. Although not as robust, Instagram and Periscope are super simple. Anyone with a phone can instantly start producing live video.

If you don't mind rolling up your sleeves and getting a little technical, you may want to opt for YouTube or VIMEO's live streaming services. With these platforms you have the ability to create a complex production with multiple camera set-ups and producers controlling the camera shots.

Benefits of live video

Regardless of the platform choice, there are some unique benefits to broadcasting live video vs pre-recorded video over your social media channels. Below are a few key considerations.

- Statistics show that most live video broadcasts cover live events. Because physical events have a finite capacity of participants due to room size – regardless of whether it's a classroom or concert hall – live video may be the answer to indefinitely expand your audience to anyone with a reliable internet connection.
- Watching pre-recorded video is a passive event that can seemingly occur at anytime. Creating a live video for a one-time event adds a sense of urgency and news value because it may not be accessible once the recording ends.
- Audiences watching live videos are typically more highly engaged because they're making a personal commitment to take time out of their schedule and watch the event. Facebook research supports this theory by citing that Facebook Live videos achieve 10 times the comments as pre-recorded videos.
- Since live video enables viewers to interact with publishers and vice-versa, it's a powerful medium to build a connection. And even if you fumble when answering a question or make a mistake during a live broadcast, this may provide bonus points for being real, which may help improve the perception of your brand or executive on the broadcast.

Whatever platform you choose to work with, perhaps the biggest difference between pre-recorded video and live video is the video planning process. With a live video, the tactic of marketing your video to ensure you have an audience when you do go live needs to happen well before the live video is started. Making live video work takes a new and different approach to both planning and production, but with practice it can be a great way to add compelling content to your social media mix.



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