



Videos Inspire Supporters

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Put yourself in the shoes of a donor who has been tasked with researching potential nonprofits to partner with on an upcoming funding initiative by doing some online research. So, you begin your search and land on one text-heavy website and another website with a prominent video that describes a nonprofit's work, mission, and impact. Which one would you be most likely to remember when it comes time to make a recommendation?

[HubSpot's recent research](#) demonstrates that branded video content is the most memorable. When it comes to inspiring your donors to support your cause consider creating a nonprofit explainer video for your organization.

What are nonprofit explainer videos?

Nonprofit explainer videos are meant to be informative and showcase your mission in a clear, concise, and engaging way. These short films, which take viewers on a journey into the specifics of your work in 90 seconds or less, have many benefits. For example when watching a video, [audio and visual channels activate separate parts of the brain](#), and when these two elements combine, it helps supporters better understand and engage with your mission.

However, it is also worth noting that in addition to their advantages, producing a nonprofit explainer video often comes with a price tag and can be time-consuming. In fact, nonprofit explainer videos with large-scale animations are often costly to create, ranging from [\\$2,500 to \\$30,000+](#). But keep in mind that there are also [free](#) and [low-fee](#) tools that you can use to produce an explainer video on your own and at a lower cost.

If you're venturing into [nonprofit video production](#) for the first time, here are four expert tips for how to leverage educational videos to inspire action and create an engaging experience for viewers.

1. Get to know your audience

The style, tone, and core message of your explainer video should be dependent on your target audience. Examine your donor database, social media channels, or even survey data to answer questions, like the following:

- Why is your mission relevant to your audience's direct interests?
- How familiar or comfortable are they with the causes or issues you address?
- What are your audience's key motivations for supporting your nonprofit, or nonprofits, like yours?

With these insights on your target audience, you can make informed decisions about their learning objectives and create content that inspires meaningful engagement.

2. Craft a compelling storyline

You have a limited amount of time to introduce your nonprofit to viewers and inspire them to lend their support. To ensure your video conveys all the necessary information in a short amount of time, I recommend adhering to this general structure:

- a. **Introduce the problem.** [Studies show](#) that after the first 10 seconds of a video, engagement drops significantly, which means you have a small window of opportunity to introduce the problem you're trying to solve. Use an engaging and quick opener to convince viewers to care, for example: "More than 9 million children faced hunger in 2021. That's one in every eight kids."
- b. **Provide a solution.** Explain how your organization's mission is a solution for addressing the problem at hand. For instance, using the example above, you could say, "That's why we have specialized programs to support and provide children with the food they need, when they need it most."

- c. **Explain your process.** Detail the tangible steps that you take to achieve your nonprofit's mission, so that viewers know you're an expert in the field.
- d. **Add human interest.** Show a person or group of people impacted by your organization, such as a beneficiary or donor, to share their connection to your cause. This will help viewers emotionally connect to your work.
- e. **Use a call-to-action.** Always provide your audience with a clear way to support your cause by including a call-to-action at the end of your video—whether it's through donating, volunteering, or sharing the content with their own networks.

3. Prioritize imagery and narration

Rather than overwhelming your audience with on-screen text, think about using [compelling visuals](#) and narration to draw viewers into your mission-driven story. Wondering what might work best to showcase your cause? Consider the following styles of explainer videos:

- **Animation:** Use graphics and animations to communicate abstract or intangible ideas.
- **Live action:** Having a real person explain your message can help create a human connection between the viewer and your mission.
- **Screencast:** Record a demonstration of your social impact-focused product or service in action, using zooming and scaling to highlight specific capabilities.

In addition to using visuals to tell your story, consider including [closed captioning](#), [audio descriptions](#), and [other tactics](#) to promote accessibility and to ensure viewers can engage with your video, regardless of their visual, auditory, motor, or cognitive abilities.

4. Plan for the launch

Some people get so excited about creating a video that they forget to plan for the launch. Avoid falling into this common trap. Instead, seek to prepare ahead of time for a successful video launch by:

- **Selecting a platform to host your video:** YouTube is the most popular platform for [video promotion](#) because it's free and includes built-in analytics for tracking engagement. Regardless of the platform you chose, be sure to post content to the site and share the link across your marketing channels.
- **Having a multichannel marketing plan:** [Marketing experts](#) recommend a multichannel marketing approach to sharing video content. Leverage your website, newsletter, social media channels, and email campaigns to reach as many supporters as possible. Just remember to tailor your content to each channel. For example, an explainer video going on Instagram should be condensed to one minute or less, as short-form content performs better on that platform.
- **Collecting metrics to determine success:** Most video platforms allow you to track and analyze audience behaviors, including views, watch time, and percent completion. After creating an explainer video, choose the metrics you want to track in advance in order to determine whether the video meets your organization's goals and objectives.

Although creating nonprofit explainer videos can be time-consuming and expensive, it's also worth considering how they might be able to help your nonprofit succeed. With the right content and promotional plan, your nonprofit explainer video can inspire donors to support your nonprofit and drive meaningful results for your cause.

Using Advocacy Video Effectively

As a nonprofit professional, you know how powerful [advocacy](#) videos can be for charitable organizations. Just think of the [classic ASPCA video](#) featuring a carousel of devastating animal video clips and Sarah McLachlan's melancholic voice in the background. You know it's almost impossible to watch that video without a few tears welling up in your eyes!

Nonprofit videos have the power to break your supporters' hearts, build them back up again, and inspire them to take action. That's why you may want to explore adding video to your organization's digital strategy.

Whether you've never taken an organized approach to video or you're looking to boost your existing strategy, you'll need a dedicated plan to incorporate video into your [digital strategy](#) effectively and sustainably. Here we explore the best strategies for integrating video naturally into your digital advertising plan.

1. Redefine the concept of video.

You might feel intimidated by the prospect of adding video to your digital marketing repertoire, so it's important to reframe the way you think about video.

A video doesn't always have to be a carefully crafted presentation with multiple interviews or camera angles. Video can be a quick, 30-second repeating gif on your website homepage or they can be a behind-the-scenes Instagram Live tour of your nonprofit's facilities taken on an iPhone camera. In other words, it can be as casual or formal as you want to make it.

Additionally, videos can be infused into other [online marketing](#) efforts, such as social media campaigns or blog posts. When you're planning your next digital marketing campaign, think of ways to incorporate video with other elements such as written copy and visuals.

[Getting Attention's guide to nonprofit videos](#) recommends integrating videos into your organization's marketing culture. Think of video as a unique, additional format to tell your nonprofit's story in a new way.

2. Incorporate calls to action.

Video can play an integral role in [facilitating the donor journey](#). The donor journey is the steps your supporters take from initial awareness of your mission to donating.

According to a [Google study](#), over half of the people who watch an online nonprofit video donate afterward, making video a highly effective platform for boosting your fundraising.

Viewers should leave your videos with a clear understanding of the next steps for getting involved with your nonprofit. Use videos to describe your fundraising efforts and encourage viewers to contribute with an inspiring call to action. Include the URL or a link to your online fundraising page and explain how donations make a difference. For instance, at the end of an animal shelter's video, let viewers know that a donation of \$10 can help feed a shelter dog for a week.

Lastly, ensure your videos incorporate [accessibility best practices](#) so everyone can engage with them. This includes avoiding flashing or strobing elements and including accurate captions or a transcript.

3. Promote your videos on the right channels.

The platforms you use to share your videos are just as important as the content of the videos themselves. Here are the most popular and effective platforms for sharing video content:

- **YouTube and Vimeo:** As the most popular video-sharing platforms, these two websites are naturally the first place to post your videos. Supporters can browse all of your videos in one place on these platforms.
- **TikTok:** TikTok has exploded in popularity in the past couple of years. Major nonprofits such as UNICEF and the American Red Cross have found significant success on TikTok, with hundreds of thousands of followers each. Post shorter videos on this platform or participate in trends.
- **Instagram and Facebook:** These are two of the most popular social media platforms, and they are also among the most video-focused. Posting your videos on these channels allows supporters to share your content easily.
- **Email:** Email is a great way to send video content directly to your supporters' inboxes, helping make your messages more engaging.
- **Your website:** Videos can bring your website content to life, whether used on your home page or within blog posts.

Use metrics from past marketing campaigns to determine which channels are most popular among your supporters. It's also important to share your videos at the right time. Review your social media and email analytics, such as open rate and engagement metrics, to determine the best time and days to post.

4. Use analytics to assess your progress.

Each digital platform you share your videos on will offer some form of analytics that you can use to assess each video's effectiveness. For example, YouTube offers information such as:

- Traffic sources (what channels viewers are using to find your videos)
- When your viewers are on YouTube
- Watch time (how long viewers spend watching your video before clicking away)
- Audience demographics (such as age and gender)
- Other channels and videos your viewers watch

Other sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, reveal information about the level of engagement followers have with your videos, using metrics such as the number of shares, likes, and comments.

Review these analytics regularly to assess what your most successful videos are and why. This data-driven approach ensures you'll continue moving forward with the most effective video strategies.

Whether you're a [marketing expert](#) or a digital content whiz, you know the importance of using quality videos to support your nonprofit's digital strategy. By using these strategies to weave video into your digital marketing approach, you can engage supporters in a new way and incorporate video sustainability into your regular marketing activities.

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