



2026 video marketing trends

Helping video stand out in a feed that won't slow down

Making videos used to be the hard part. Now it's making them count.

Video shapes how customers experience your brand at almost every stage. It's the backbone of how you launch campaigns, educate buyers, and support customers. But as feeds get crowded and formats are multiplying, success doesn't come from making more videos.

It comes from making videos that matter.

That means telling focused, human stories, choosing formats that actually perform, and understanding how audience expectations are shifting. That's where this guide comes in. We've pulled together the latest video trends and Dropbox Insights to help your team create content that counts.

This report is your step-by-step guide to turning 2026's most important video trends into a practical playbook for your team.

You'll learn how to:

- ④ **Focus on what works now**
Discover which formats, channels, and content types are driving results today, from short vertical clips to explainers and demos.
- ④ **Meet rising audience expectations**
See how creator culture, trust in real people, and new viewing habits are reshaping what audiences expect from your brand.
- ④ **Scale creation without burning out**
Learn how teams of every size are using smarter workflows, in-house production, and AI tools to keep up with demand.
- ④ **Redefine success and prove impact**
Move beyond vanity metrics to tie your video strategy to revenue, retention, and long-term brand value.
- ④ **Future-proof your video strategy**
Explore how AI and personalization are changing what's possible.

The report is informed by original research conducted by Dropbox in December 2025 with 500 full-time video marketing and creative professionals across North America.

Represented industries include advertising, engineering, consumer goods, media, technology, and professional services. Participants work at small and midsize organizations, offering diverse perspectives on real-world video workflows.

Ready to dive in?

Let's explore the trends shaping video in 2026—and how your team can stay ahead.

07	What's working now
23	Shifting expectations
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What's working now

The answer is clear: Videos need to feel human, teach something useful, and show up regularly across all your channels.

Short-form vertical video is your reach and engagement engine

Designed for how people are watching on their phones



Drives performance

Short-form video is the **top-performing content format** for both B2B and B2C brands.

[HubSpot, 2025 State of Marketing Report](#)



Captures attention

The average human attention span has dropped from 75 seconds **to 47 seconds.**

[TechSmith](#)



Maximizes audience impact

78% of video views now happen on mobile devices in portrait mode.

[Bonomotion](#)

Short-form videos **receive 2.5× more** engagement than longer counterparts.

[Bonomotion](#)

69% of people prefer to learn about products or services through short-form video.

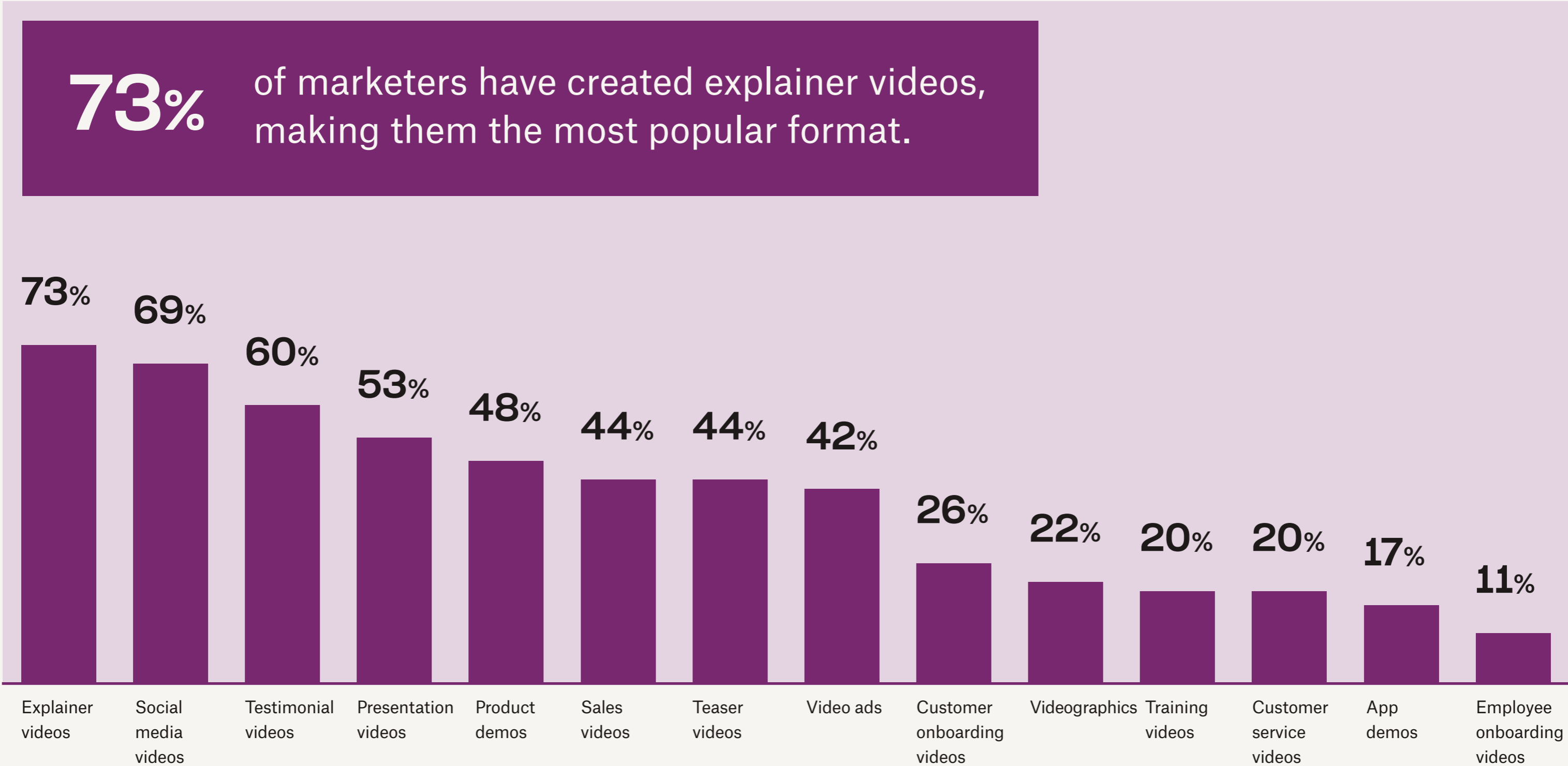
[Scopic Studios](#)

Viewers watch 82% of how-to videos under one minute.

[Wistia](#)

Long-form content helps customers understand and commit

From explainers to testimonials, it all builds trust



Wyzowl

Long-form video is quietly delivering results. **40% of video creatives say product demos and explainers as their most effective video type, followed by employee spotlights (36%) and thought leadership videos (32%).**

🛡️ Authenticity and UGC beat polish

What consumers want to see in brand content

Most important	Least important
Authenticity	Off-the-cuff
Relatability	Polished
Entertainment	Product-centric

[Sprout Social](#)

Cringe vs. credible

40%

of consumers think it's embarrassing when brands jump on viral trends.

[Sprout Social](#)

184%

That's how much TikTok's user generated content outperforms professional productions.

[Bonomotion](#)

“People now are okay with mistakes or something that’s a little less polished. It’s almost a tip-off that you’re watching something that’s AI if it sounds too perfect.”

Zach Yokum

CEO & Creative Director, Surefire Video



😊 Joy and humor make videos unforgettable

Making audiences smile drives choice

90%

of consumers say they're more likely to remember a funny ad.

[Adobe](#)

72%

cite humor as a reason they'd choose one brand over another.

[Adobe](#)

2x

as many people say they're likely to buy from brands that "bring them joy or delight" than from brands that just deliver what they promise.

[Adobe](#)

🗨️ Emotional storytelling creates loyalty

Moving people keeps audiences connected

“Humans bring emotions, memories, nostalgia, and personal experience to video content. That’s what keeps it original, fresh, and authentic.”

Amanda Goscinski Potvin

Supervising Producer, Trilogy Films



“If you’re pushing content out just to get a point across, it gets drowned out by all the other content trying to do the same thing. What really resonates with viewers and consumers, in my opinion, is when a brand’s marketing content has a clear point of view and lives within its own world.”



Kyle Nolan

Co-Founder & Head of Production, STURDY

As tools make it easier to produce video, **people remember the ones that carry a distinctly human touch.**

Our research reinforces this: 81% of creatives increasingly see authenticity as a differentiator, and many expect human-created content to become premium as AI content takes over feeds.

🏠 In-house production teams are setting the pace

The numbers show a clear trend

📁 Bring it home

71%

of companies now create videos in-house, up from 63% in 2023.

[Wistia](#)

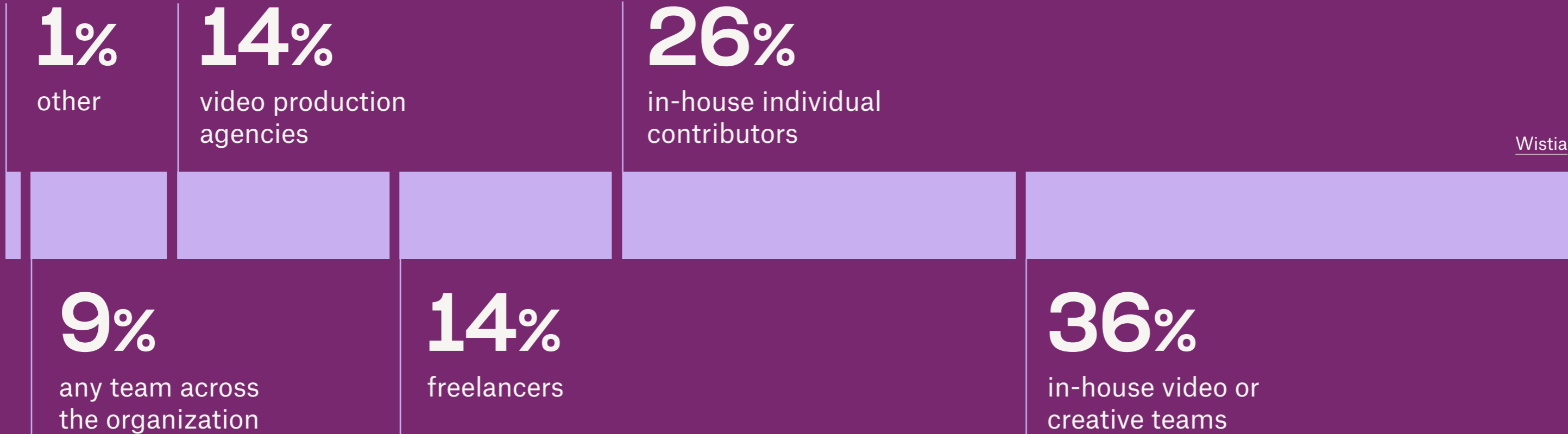
📅 Produce it often

40%

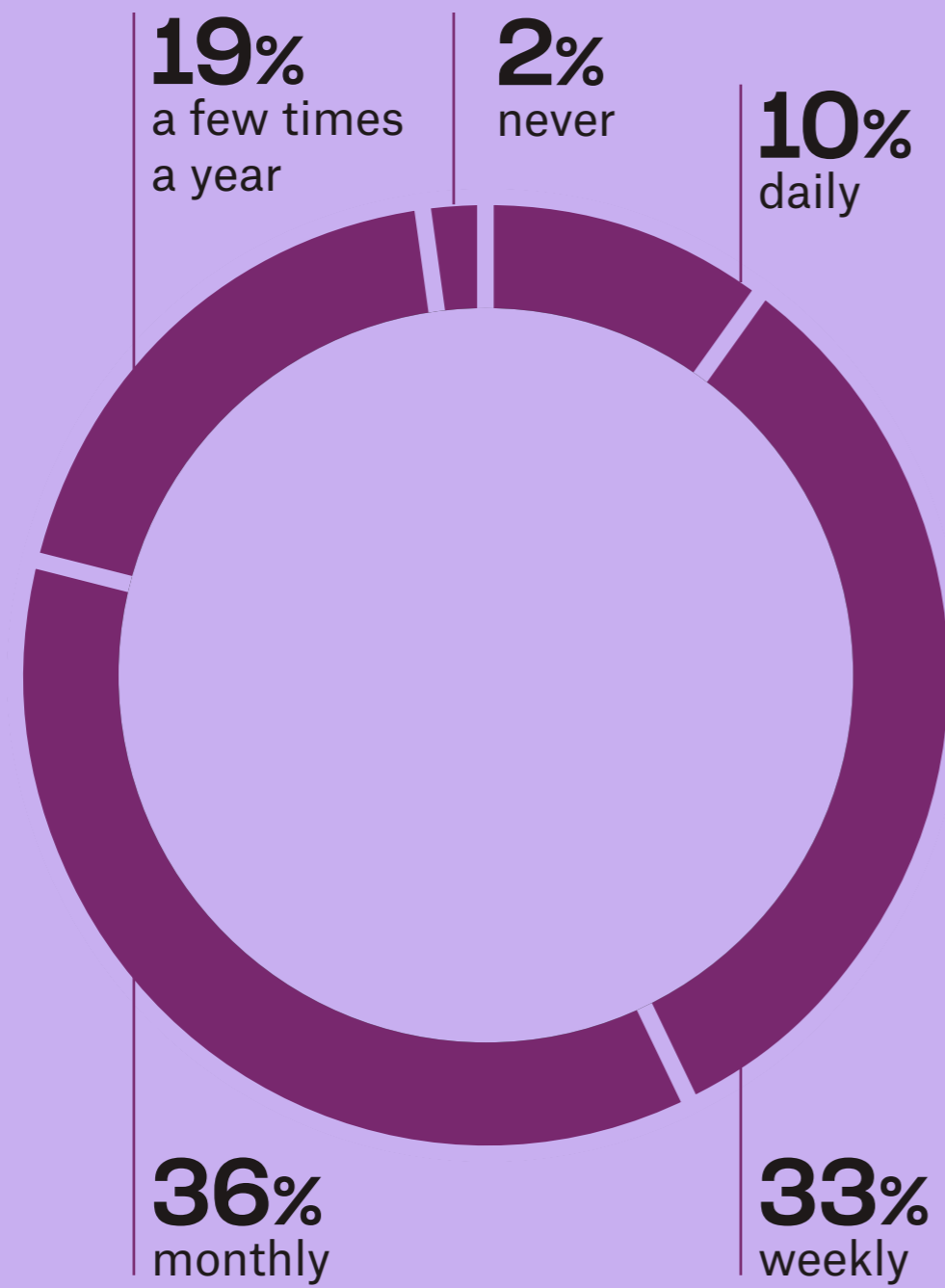
of companies make at least one video per week; mid-sized companies produce about three weekly, double 2023 volume.

[Wistia](#)

Who handles video production?




How often do companies produce videos?



Wistia



 Key takeaway

 ***Short-form video earns the click.
Human content earns the customer.***

The winning formula is simple:



Create short-form video as your entry point



Use instructional content to turn that attention into action



Build in-house production capabilities to tell authentic, human stories that keep up with culture

Don't just optimize for attention, optimize for connection.

Your 2026 action plan



Start every concept with a clear feeling you want the audience to experience (delight, curiosity, courage) and let that guide the script and visuals



Make short-form vertical video your default for social and top-of-funnel



Pair short clips with longer explainer, how-to, and demo videos that answer specific questions



Spotlight real customers, experts, and internal voices over heavily produced studio shoots

Your 2026 action plan



Use humor or sharp truths about your category to connect with your audience



Give creators permission to lean in on camera with their quirks, expertise, and genuine interests



Treat video as a weekly (or daily) output, not a one-off project



Build lightweight in-house workflows so you can test, learn, and iterate quickly across platforms



Shifting expectations

If you think your audience is passively watching your videos, think again. They're deciding whether your videos feel human, helpful, and made for them.

@ Put a face to your brand

Audiences are craving authenticity

38%

of consumers say “real and relatable” video content is more memorable than highly produced ads.

Teleprompter



“Something that we’ve been seeing over the last couple of years is the shift from people really connecting with a brand to actually connecting more with individuals from that brand.”

Taylor Corrado

Senior Director of Brand Marketing, Wistia



“I feel like the bar for polished has dropped, but the bar for substance has gone up.”

Rhonda Hughes

Director, Brand & Content, Gong

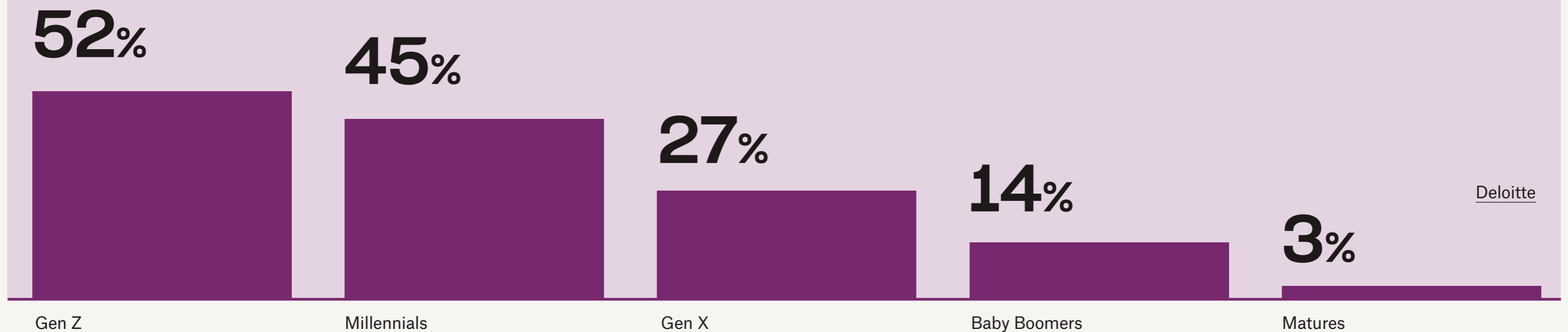


Our survey shows a growing gap between what audiences want and what brands deliver. Over **50% of video creatives report rising demand for transparency and authenticity.** Yet more than one-third say behind-the-scenes human content remains underutilized relative to the value it provides. As AI-generated content becomes easier to produce, human-created video is fast becoming a signal of trust.

👥 I trust people like me

Younger audiences feel more connected to creators than celebrities

I feel a stronger personal connection to social media creators than to TV personalities or actors



This influences their purchase decisions
63% of Gen Z and 49% of Millennials say social media ads or product reviews are the most influential to their purchasing decisions.

Deloitte

With video being the optimal format
87% of consumers have been convinced to buy a product or service after watching a video.

Teleprompter

📺 Teach me, don't just tell me

Audiences rely on video to understand your products



Consumers use video to research products

98%

of consumers have watched an explainer video to learn about a product or service.

[Wyzowl](#)

And marketers see the benefit

99%

of video marketers say video has increased user understanding of their product or service.

[Wyzowl](#)

🔇 Sound off, subtitles on

Audiences want to watch
on their own terms



How often is video
watched in silence?

85%

of Facebook videos are
watched without sound.

Bonomotion

Why does this matter?

Brands optimizing for silent
viewing achieve 12% higher
completion rates across
platforms.

Bonomotion

“One of the biggest changes I’ve seen this year is that a lot of people want captions baked into the video. They’re drawn in by the visuals and reading along.”

Daniel Jackson

Owner, Embassy Interactive



 Key takeaway

Audiences connect with people, not production.

Your customers expect videos that sound like real people, feature trusted voices, and offer clear guidance. They also want content that adapts to how they actually watch, from sound-off scrolling to fast, informed purchase decisions.



Your 2026 action plan



Put real people on screen
like employees, customers,
and creators who reflect your
audience's lived experience



Elevate trusted voices across
the funnel, from creator
partnerships to customer
proof and social reviews



Answer real questions by
prioritizing explainer videos,
demos, and customer stories
that reduce decision friction



**Design video for mobile
and sound-off viewing,**
with readable captions and
accessible visual storytelling



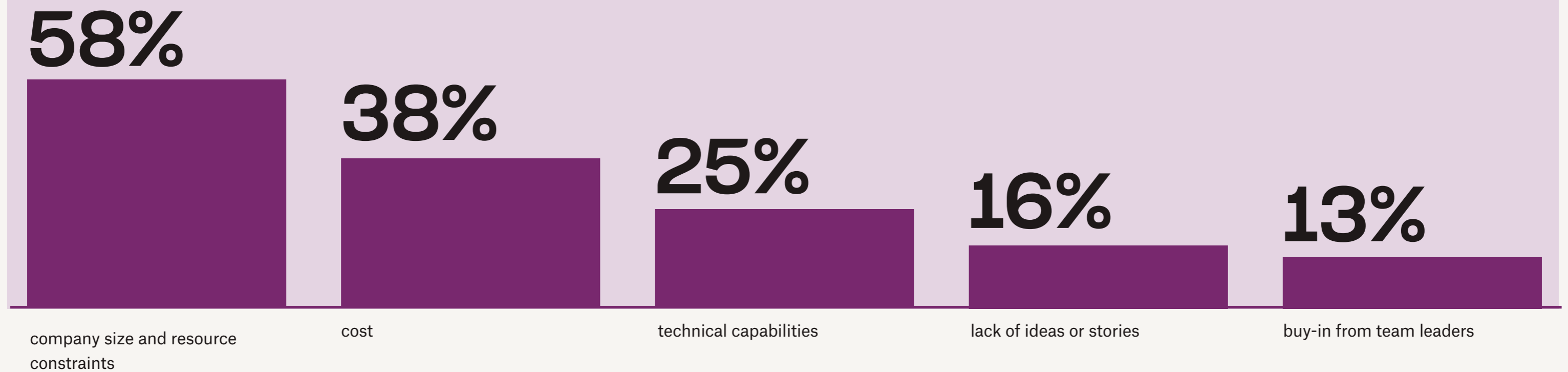
Solving creative team challenges with AI

Almost every team is feeling a squeeze. The demand for video keeps climbing, but the hours, headcount, and energy to make it all happen stay stubbornly fixed. And while AI is nearly universal in video workflows, teams are still testing where it helps most.

Bandwidth is the new creativity bottleneck

What's limiting video output right now

Teams cite cost and lack of resources as top barriers to producing more video.



[Wistia](#)

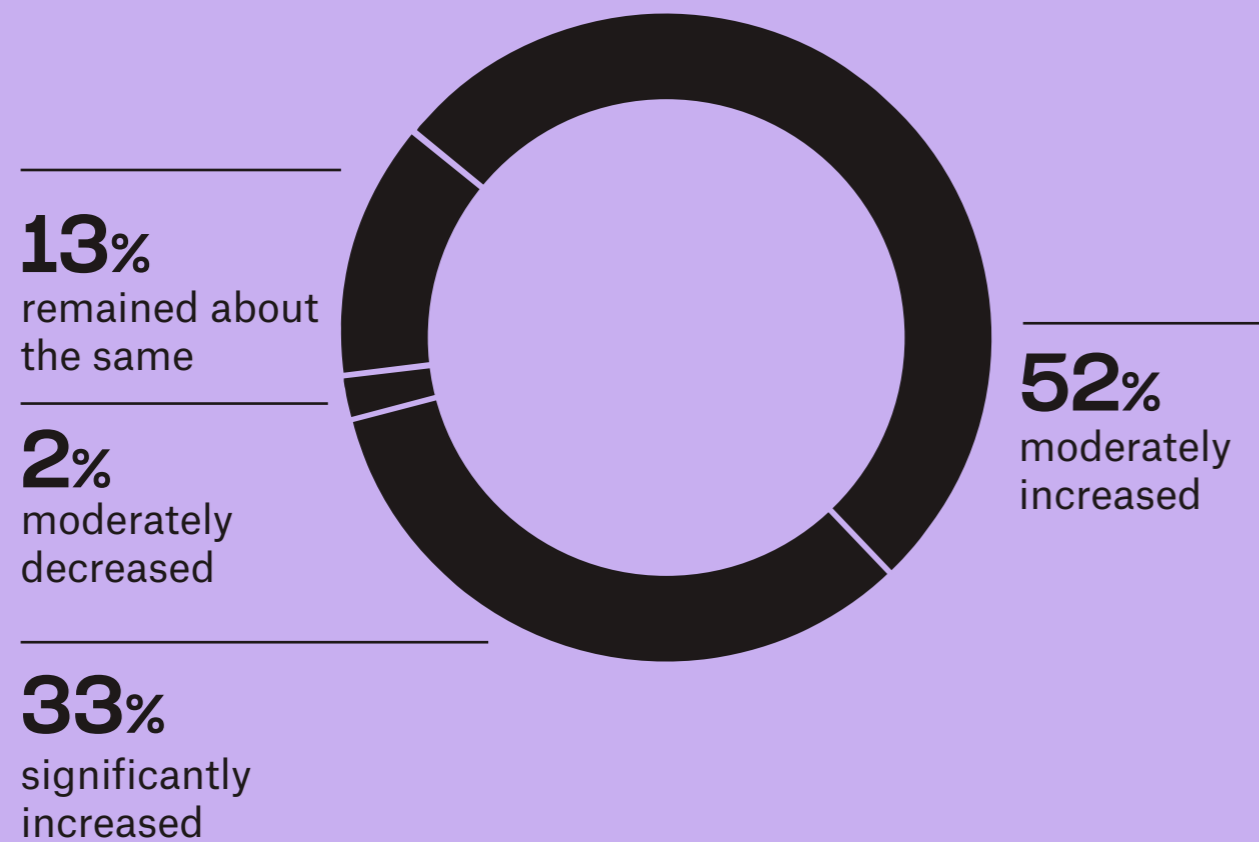
📺 Video volume keeps climbing

Production and investment are still growing

65% of organizations have increased video creation in the past two years

[Vimeo](#)

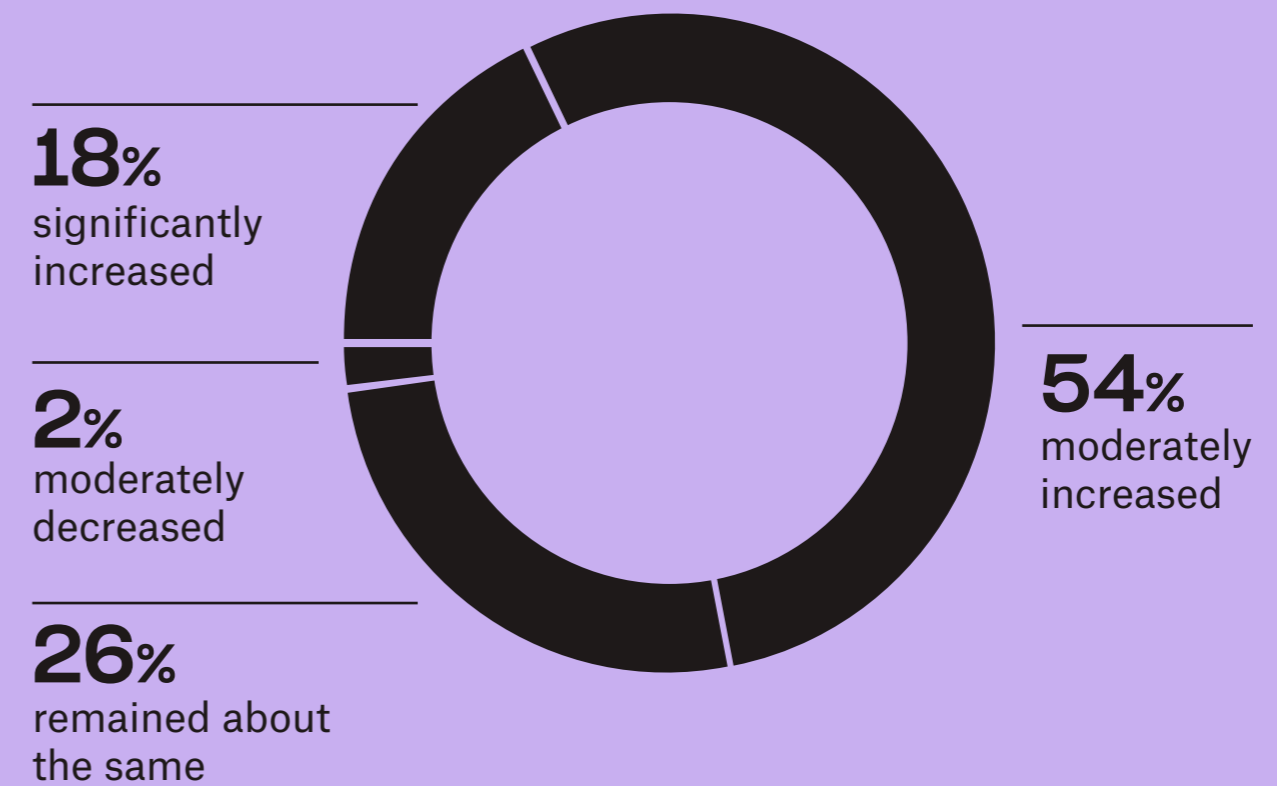
Change in volume of video content over the past two years



73% expect further growth over the next three years

[Vimeo](#)

Anticipated change in video content volume in the next three years



Scale is a workflow problem before it's a creative problem. Our research shows where the process breaks: Pre-production planning, editing, and ideation. The teams that win in 2026 don't just "make more video." They reduce these stall points so good ideas can ship consistently.

◇ The scroll never stops

How does constant online pressure change the way teams plan stories?

Marketers feel pressured to stay current

94%

of social media practitioners agree they have to be chronically online to work in social media.

98%

of social media practitioners agree social content must keep up with online trends and culture.

[Sprout Social](#)

Why the pressure isn't letting up

Around **50%**

of consumers say original content is what makes their favorite brands stand out on social.

And almost all expect brands to understand online culture.

[Sprout Social](#)

“Not every trend is a winner. Be strategic and mindful of what you put out there, and make sure it always aligns with your brand.”

Amanda Goscinski Potvin

Supervising Producer, Trilogy Films



How creative teams are using AI

The strategic shift from video production to acceleration

Decreasing year-over-year use in video production suggests creative teams have concerns about AI-generated video quality.

2024

75%

of video marketers reported using AI to help with video production that year.

[Wyzowl](#)

2025

51%

of video marketers said they used AI to help with video production in 2025.

[Wyzowl](#)

But they're not abandoning it completely.

AI is perceived as a solution

93%

of social media practitioners believe AI is a tool that can help address creative fatigue.

[Sprout Social](#)

Video producers are putting it into practice

47%

of organizations are automating parts of their video workflows.

[Vimeo](#)

They're using AI across planning, production, and promotion of video content.

Where teams are actually using AI

59%

ideation and concept development

57%

generative AI for video production

57%

generating personalized ad copy

56%

delivering personalized content recommendations

[Adobe](#)

“One of the hardest things is just getting that initial spark, and sometimes that comes from access to knowledge that AI has and you don’t.”

Ron Dawson

Content Marketing Lead, Replit



⚡ AI speeds up the process; humans own the story

It unlocks valuable creative time



Saving time

Over half (59%) of senior executives say generative AI has given their creative teams more time for strategic work.

Adobe

But the boundaries are clear. AI accelerates the work; it doesn't replace creative judgment and output.

“I don’t like to lean into AI to create a physical deliverable of a video concept. However, it’s been very helpful for creating references and turning around ideas quickly, whether that’s for a client, a collaborator, or an artist.”



Kyle Nolan

Co-Founder & Head of Production, STURDY

“I hope that humans stay connected to the storytelling—writing the scripts, directing the characters, and being the stars and actors in videos.”

Taylor Corrado

Senior Director of Brand Marketing, Wistia



AI is nearly universal in video workflows, but no single use case dominates; teams are testing where it helps most. Our research shows the biggest upside is speed and creative momentum, with 84% of the creatives using AI for ideation and 33% highlighting the efficiency in repetitive tasks like color-correcting and matching subtitles.

The gap between AI's promise and practice narrows when teams have proper onboarding. While 68% of creatives face steep learning curves when adopting AI tools, the 56% who phased them in gradually report faster production, stronger collaboration, and higher-quality work.

AI systems help unlock creative scale.

The teams able to keep up with demand treat video production as a system design problem to solve. They use AI to explore ideas, streamline workflow, and move from brief to edit faster. But they still rely on humans to apply irreplaceable context: Who's it for, why it matters, and how it should feel. The teams that win in 2026 will leverage new AI tools without losing brand voice, originality, or human presence.

1 2 3 Your 2026 action plan



Create shared, cross-team workflows for briefs, approvals, and feedback so video projects move quickly without endless back-and-forth



Audit video workflows to find high-friction, repetitive tasks where AI can safely help (captioning, cutdowns, asset search, rough edits)



Require at least one human review before publishing and track AI experiments against clear goals like speed, volume, and quality



Define a small set of content pillars and story arcs, then map your publishing cadence to those, not the other way around



Train teams to write prompts that include audience, objective, and brand context, not just tasks





Rethinking success

As video proves its impact on revenue and brand, teams need to redefine what it means to be successful.

🚀 Video is influencing your business outcomes

It's time to plan for that impact

84%

say video has directly increased sales.

[Wyzowl](#)

79%

of organizations say video improves business outcomes, but only 43% have a clear, organization-wide video strategy.

[Vimeo](#)

↔ The measurement mismatch

Sales- and revenue-linked metrics are rising, but they haven't replaced engagement as the default yet

What's measured is what's managed

[Deloitte Digital](#)

Three most common KPIs with performance targets

62% customer acquisition cost (CAC)

62% engagement rate

55% cost per click (CPC)

What's missing is what matters

[Deloitte Digital](#)

33% have KPI targets for return on marketing investment (ROMI)

43% have KPI targets for revenue/sales lift

47% have KPI targets for customer lifetime value (CLV)

👁 Views aren't everything

What does long-term success with video look like?

“ROI is about what we're creating the content for and what the goal is. Is it driving attention and awareness, or deeper understanding? Is it enablement? The goals should align to that.”

Rhonda Hughes

Director, Brand & Content, Gong



“We measure success by engagement that leads to action: Clicks, shares, visits, or purchases.”

Taylor Corrado

Senior Director of Brand Marketing, Wistia



“For any video project, success comes down to what it is that you need this video to do. What action you want people to take or how you want them to feel. Is this video meant to educate? To entertain? To move viewers through the funnel? Start with having really clear objectives and then create a video accordingly. Video isn’t a monolith. There’s no one-size-fits-all.”

Ron Dawson

Content Marketing Lead, Replit



Most video creatives believe business outcomes matter more than engagement (56%). Despite this, engagement still dominates ROI tracking, with 53% of creatives using likes, views, and shares as their primary metrics. Video success is being redefined, but measurement hasn't caught up.

Outcomes, not views, define video success.

Success is now measured by what happens after the view, including high-intent attention, follow-on actions, pipeline influence, and assets that keep earning value through reuse. You don't have to abandon engagement. You need to stop treating it as the finish line.

1 2 3 Your 2026 action plan



Map every video to one primary business outcome, such as lead quality, pipeline velocity, retention, or brand lift



Simplify your KPI stack by elevating a few decisive metrics and retiring “nice-to-have” vanity numbers



Build a reuse plan for top performers, including cutdowns, recaps, and refreshed intros, so your strongest stories keep working over time



Add attention-quality indicators to your reporting, like completion rate among target segments or follow-up actions taken



Treat video as an insight source: Share learnings with sales, customer success, and product to refine messaging and experience





What to expect in 2026

The five video trends defining the moment



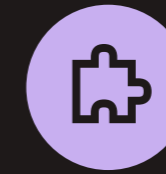
Less noise, more intent

As feeds become more saturated, expect brands to move away from constant interruption and toward content that earns attention through clarity, restraint, and purpose.



Platform-native storytelling replaces one- size-fits-all video

Expect strong brands to treat each platform as its own storytelling environment, shaping the same core idea differently depending on context, audience, and viewing behavior.



Zero-click behavior changes how impact is measured

Memorability, recognition, and trust built off-platform will become just as important as optimizing for clicks and conversions.



AI accelerates creation, but doesn't replace judgment

Experts consistently frame AI not as a single leap forward, but as an ongoing shift that rewards teams who stay curious, experiment early, and adapt continuously.



The coming tension between AI scale and human connection

While AI-generated video will become technically possible at scale, audience preference will continue swinging toward work that feels unmistakably human, especially for creator-led and personality-driven formats.

A generational signal to watch: Our research shows that Gen Z video creatives are the most frequent users of AI and the most concerned about how it's applied. They're significantly more likely to prioritize ethical guardrails like disclosure and creator rights.



Wrapping up

How to succeed with video in 2026

2026 is set to be another defining year for video marketing.

Video now underpins how people discover products, compare options, and stay loyal to the brands they trust. But our Dropbox Insights reveal the central challenge of 2026: AI will make video faster and more scalable, but it also risks making it all feel the same. The brands that pull ahead will use AI for efficiency and personalization, while doubling down on human voice, originality, and clear business outcomes as their differentiators.

What will set you apart in 2026?

1

Human stories that earn trust

Build your strategy around faces, voices, and proof. Then operationalize it by creating a repeatable pipeline for customer stories, employee experts, and creator partnerships.

2

AI quietly powering your process

Use AI to remove friction (captions, cutdowns, rough edits) and protect what makes you recognizable with a simple policy: Humans own the idea, voice, and final review

3

Systems that keep quality high at scale

Standardize the “boring” parts (briefs, review loops, versioning) so creative energy goes into the story, not coordination. Leverage AI tools to keep everyone aligned as projects move from team to team.

4

Metrics that reflect real outcomes

Keep engagement as a health signal, but commit every quarter to one outcome metric that ties video to the business (pipeline contribution, retention lift, CAC efficiency, or brand lift).

Ready to make
your video
strategy count?

Discover how Dropbox can
power your team’s video
collaboration in 2026.

→ [Get started today.](#)