

December 2019

Nov. 6: How to grab attention with video

By Sue Horner

It's easier than ever to create content. Capturing attention? Not so much. But "that's the power of video," says **Vanessa Holding**, Partner/Executive Producer at [Arc + Crown Media](#).

At PIC's November event, Video Marketing From A to Z, Vanessa cited the value of video in condensing information and sharing it visually. You can use video to learn new skills, research how to fix something or find out how to pronounce a word. You can watch video anytime and anywhere. Video can reduce language barriers and make information more accessible. And it's searchable for good search engine optimization.

"The question is not 'Should I use video?' but when, what and how to use video," Vanessa said.

Every minute, YouTube users watch 4.3 million videos.

Source: [What Happens in an Internet Minute](#)

WHEN to use video

How does *your* audience normally find information? Millennials have grown up with video. Gen Y and Boomers use it too, and 60% of executives would rather watch a video than read text. So use video when you want to:

- Introduce new products or services
- Put on events
- Launch a website
- Increase conversions (by explaining a complex product, for example)
- Ramp up social efforts
- Build an audience by providing valuable information
- Position executives as thought leaders
- Get in front of issues
- Align your brand with certain values.

WHAT to use video for

- Ads and promotions – testimonials, animated explanations, product development, event highlights
- Company focus – profiling your people and culture, recruiting, vlogs (video blogs)
- Content marketing – information, entertainment, mini documentaries
- Community relations – corporate social responsibility, investor relations, public service announcements, news releases.



HOW to use video

- Ask the right questions, including what is your main objective and who's your target audience.
- Decide direction, including length (determined by your objectives and audience) and how you will use it.
- Assess your resources; do you need actors? Interviews? Voiceovers? An animated logo? A drone operator?
- Determine budget and timelines.
- Develop your content plan now to make it easier later – scripting, storyboarding.
- Execution – shooting, editing.
- Distribution – where (YouTube, Vimeo, Wistia?) and how you'll promote it so people will find it.

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LAST CALL!
Come in from
the cold at
the PIC winter
social Dec. 12

It's not too late to say you'll join us at our seasonal social on December 12.

Grab a bite to eat, have a drink, and most of all, enjoy the fellowship and camaraderie of fellow independent communication professionals.

Meet up from 6:30 p.m. onwards at the [Duke of York](#), just steps from the St. George subway. See you there!

**Happy holidays
from PIC!**

[REGISTER HERE](#)

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Vanessa talked enough about objectives and content plans and resources and execution that we could all clearly see the advantages of hiring a professional. "Good production quality allows viewers to focus on the message and not on the delivery method," she also emphasized.

Still, there are reasons you might want to do it yourself:

- If you have no budget/less than \$1,500
- If low quality won't negatively affect your brand
- If you have the time and tools (stock music, graphics, apps, YouTube instruction)
- If the content is simple without a lot of "weight," such as a party
- If something is better than nothing (such as a selfie testimonial)
- If you don't need audio. "A lot of people listen with the sound off anyway."

If you want to use DIY video for self-promotion – to share what you just learned at a conference, for instance – Vanessa suggested:

- The **Live** features of Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. For an example, check out social media trainer [Cher Jones](#).
- **Zoom videoconferencing**. There's a free version similar to Skype, and people can type in questions.

- **Soapbox**. Use this Chrome extension to record, edit and share video.
- **Vlogs**. Take your blog posts and put them into video form.
- **Video bios**.
- **Testimonials**. Ask clients to record a few minutes on their cellphone, but first give them prompts so they just have to fill in the blanks. "We're looking for two sentences about..."
- **Speaker highlights**. Record your full presentation, but use snippets as a highlight reel.

Vanessa invited PIC members to email her (vanessa@arcandcrown.com) for several resources: Questions to ask when planning a video; a list of YouTube best practices; and "prompts" to help customers record a testimonial.

Did you attend the session? What tips do you plan to use? We'd love to hear from you. Send your comments to [Sue](#) or [Nancy](#).



Sue Horner is a writer, principal of [Get It Write](#) and Co-Director of Communications for PIC. She also captured Twitter comments about the session in [this summary](#).

Articles for Communicator due Dec. 13

IABC/Toronto members are welcome to submit articles for the chapter's e-magazine. The next issue – due December 13 – highlights Internal communications. All submissions are subject to editing by IABC/Toronto and must be written in blog format, 500 to 1,000 words in length, and follow IABC/Toronto's style guide (which Felicia will give you).

Send your ideas for "high-quality content that will provoke the interest and curiosity of IABC/Toronto members" to editor **Felicia Empey** at f.empey@gmail.com.

Thank you, Sharon and Donna!



At our November meeting, PIC Chair **Nkiru Asika** thanked **Sharon Aschaiek** and **Donna Papacosta** for their dedication to PIC as previous Chairs and Past Chairs of PIC. Both have put heart and soul into making PIC the supportive and helpful group it is. Donna is no longer on the PIC executive as of August, and Sharon remains Past Chair. Thank you both!

Changes to the PIC member list due Feb. 28

As a PIC member, you can promote yourself at no charge on the [PIC member list](#), which is updated quarterly on the IABC/Toronto website. Send your updates to PIC's director of membership, [Kathy Lim](#), by **February 28**. For new profiles, send your name, company name, city, email address, telephone number, website and LinkedIn URLs and a brief (about 40 words) description of your business. Existing members, does your listing include your LinkedIn profile?

See you on social media

Build and strengthen your connections with other PIC members, advance your communications business, discuss business issues and network with PIC on social media: on Twitter at [@pictoronto](#); LinkedIn, [IABC Toronto Professional Independent Communicators](#); Facebook, [Professional Independent Communicators \(PIC\), part of IABC/Toronto](#). Recent posts include how to price a new project, deal with imposter syndrome, decide when to fire a client and more.

Feedback

We're always glad to hear that PIC members appreciate receiving *The Buzz*. Here are comments we received after the last issue:

"I really enjoyed this issue and have to share my congrats to the team! PIC is such a great membership benefit." – **Sharon McMillan**

"The latest Buzz is terrific, great content and it looks awesome." – **Judy Irwin**

"What interesting and thoughtful content! I really enjoyed this November issue." – **Kathy Lim**

PIC PERSONALITY:

Meet Jacqui DeBique

By Nancy Miller



JACQUI DEBIQUE is a communications specialist, content strategist, editor, and project manager with over 25 years of experience. In addition to being the Manager of Communications and Knowledge Transfer at the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario, she runs her own communications business, [Quite Write Communications](#).

What's your elevator pitch?

Quite Write Communications specializes in writing, editing, and project management. I help others get their words out, both literally and figuratively.

What's your background?

After earning a BA with a specialization in communications from Concordia University, I moved to Toronto where I earned a diploma in Public Relations at Ryerson. My career started at an ad agency as a junior media buyer, then junior copywriter. After that, I moved into more PR/communications roles. I call myself a communications generalist because I've done

everything from publicity, media relations, and event planning to writing, editing, and strategic planning.

I started Quite Write Communications in 2007 and did that full-time for two years before taking my current position at Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario. I continue to manage the independent business part-time.

How did you first develop your clientele?

My first client was a company I had been working with, who eventually became my bread-and-butter client. Additional projects came my way through word-of-mouth and through the relationships I had built. Some of my work came through requests for proposals (RFPs). I would see an RFP on [Charity Village](#) and put my hat in the ring. I sometimes complemented my pitches with in-person presentations. A couple of times, I've acted as the overall strategic planner and sub-contracted to people with particular expertise.

What do you most like about being an independent?

The diversity of projects you get to dabble in. No two clients or projects are ever the same. The subject matter of each writing project is different. The voice or brand image of each project is different. That gives you variety as well as an opportunity to flex your muscles in different ways.

What don't you like about being an indie?

You have to market the business *and* do the work. You wear more than two hats: you're the accountant, the marketer, and the tactician. You have to balance all that, so nothing falls through the cracks. But inevitably, when you're juggling all those roles, something does fall through. In my case, it would be marketing the business and accounting—things that are not my forte.

"The voice or brand image of each project is different. That gives you variety as well as an opportunity to flex your muscles in different ways."

What advice would you give to someone new to independent communications?

Network. Network. And continually network. You need to network to stay current with trends, learn about who is doing what, and let other people know about the work you're doing. It's something that should never lapse. It's a skill that you need to learn and practice. Not everyone is comfortable with networking, but the more you do it, the better you get at it. It's not just important to build your network but also to stay connected with people and get a feel for what others are doing. It helps you broaden your horizons.

How long have you been a PIC member and what do you hope to get from the membership?

I've been a member for about a year. I joined IABC for the professional development opportunities and PIC specifically because it allows me to flex those networking muscles. I'm looking forward to doing more of what I've already done so far: getting out to events and learning from the professional development presentations. I'm looking forward to meeting more people and learning about what everyone is doing. So far, I've met people who have come to the independent life with different objectives and from diverse backgrounds. That has been great to see and interesting to learn from. I also hope to stay motivated and pursue the personal projects I have on my plate.



PIC members offer a range of talent, from coaching and media relations to video production and writing. Our PIC Personality feature introduces new members and randomly profiles existing members. Nancy Miller specializes in integrated marketing campaigns and strategic communications for education businesses. She can be found at [edtechmark.com](#) and [threadred.com](#). She is also PIC's Co-Director of Communications.

THE INDEPENDENT VIEW

Own your worth

By Nkiru Asika

I have never been so glad to see the back of a holiday. My eyes can't take another screaming headline about Black Friday and how much money I can save on some product or service I don't need.

The frenzy around deals got me thinking about pricing. Most independent communicators are selling services – trading time, energy and skill for dollars. We can't simply slash prices for the season.

So, how do we deal with bargain-hunting clients? You know the ones: "I've seen people offer this for much cheaper" or "I could do it myself, but I just don't have the time." These clients are often the hardest to manage, requesting multiple revisions, paying late or taking scope creep to a whole new level.

We've probably all accepted jobs that were priced too low, telling ourselves that "It's another piece for my portfolio"

or "I'll charge more for the next job." By the way, that last one is usually a crock. Once your client sees you as someone who works for cheap, it's hard to climb out of that dungeon.

Instead of allowing clients to undercut your services, try this:

1. Bundle your services

Rather than discount your service, add a complementary job at a reduced price. Suppose a client needs copy for a website but balks at your fees. Instead of cutting your fees, offer to create a lead magnet, for example. You can package the website + lead magnet bundle at a price lower than the cost of each as stand-alone pieces. You get a higher total, and the client maximizes the value of the original job while feeling like they scored a good deal.

2. Reduce the scope, not the price

When a client complains

that your proposal is beyond their budget, stick to your guns on the price but reduce the scope of the work. For example, a client wanted a sequence of eight sales emails to push tickets for an event. However, her budget only covered my fees for four. Instead of writing eight at a reduced rate and feeling like I had undersold myself, I showed her which four emails would be most beneficial and suggested we limit the work to those alone. She was able to achieve good results with her campaign and I could do the work without going below my minimum price.

3. Stop attracting price-shoppers

Attracting the right clients starts with taking deliberate steps to repel the people you don't want to work with (i.e., bargain-hunters). You're selling communications expertise, not commodity goods. Make it clear in your branding, your website copy and marketing that you don't charge peanuts. I'm not a fan of putting prices on websites, but that's one way to turn

some people away. Or, state that you only work with clients who have minimum budgets of \$X dedicated to the service you offer. You'll cancel out the people who can't afford you without having to declare your own pricing.

The greatest gift you can give yourself this season is the gift of owning your worth. Happy holidays to you and yours!

As always, if you have any ideas for professional development topics, possible speakers (including yourself) or any questions, concerns or ideas about PIC, please don't hesitate to reach me at toronto-sig@iabc.toronto.

Onwards and upwards.

Nkiru Asika

Chair, PIC;
VP, Special Interest Groups,
IABC Toronto



[Professional Independent Communicators](#) (PIC) is a special interest group of [IABC/Toronto](#). PIC's mission is to support independent IABC/Toronto communicators through professional development, networking and marketing. [IABC](#) connects communicators from around the world with the insights, resources and people they need to drive their careers and the profession forward.

THE BUZZ *The Buzz* informs members about upcoming events, shares professional development tips from past meetings and keeps us connected. Editor this issue: [Sue Horner](#) | Graphic design: [Deana De Ciccio](#).

Want to recap a meeting or do other writing for *The Buzz*? Contact [Sue Horner](#) or [Nancy Miller](#).

Quick links

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PIC executive

Contact any of us with questions, comments and ideas for speakers or topics:

Chair: [Nkiru Asika](#)

Past Chair: [Sharon Aschaiek](#)

Communications: [Sue Horner](#), [Nancy Miller](#)

Membership: [Kathy Lim](#)

Programming: [Judy Irwin](#), [Sharon McMillan](#)

Social Media: *(vacant; let us know if you can help!)*

Design: [Deana De Ciccio](#)

