

The Ultimate Guide to Ecommerce Product Videos

Sellers who have gone through the effort of showcasing products in a video signal to customers that they take pride in the product.

In this guide, we'll cover:

- ✚ What type of content works best for product videos
- ✚ How to film and edit product videos
- ✚ How to track the ROI of your product videos

INTRODUCTION



Video Is Not Just for Professionals Anymore

Ecommerce product videos have come a long way since the days of the amateur unboxing video on YouTube. Consumers today are better informed than ever before, and this abundance of information has turned every purchase into a reconnaissance mission. Many people won't even think about adding a product to their shopping cart until they've conducted enough research that they can be certain they're making the best possible purchase.

This means it's up to you to convince customers that your product is the best they can buy. That's where product videos come in. Video can bring a product to life in the eyes of the

consumer in a way that text and photography can't. In fact, viewers retain [95% of a message](#) when they watch it in a video, compared to 10% when reading it in text.

Creating video can seem intimidating and out of reach. But nowadays, you don't need to be a pro to shoot great content. As an ecommerce store owner, you have the power to create your own product videos. Read on as we walk you through everything you need to create compelling product videos for your ecommerce site.

GUIDE OUTLINE

Part 1: The Basics of Product Videos

- a. Demonstrate how the product is used
- b. Describe what you're doing as you do it
- c. Show how the product solves the customer's problem

Part 2: Types of Product Videos

- a. Product walkthrough videos
- b. Unboxing videos
- c. Explanatory videos

Part 3: Cost of Product Videos

- a. The "bare bones" approach
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- c. The real cost: your time

Part 4: The Product Video Shooting Process

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- c. Follow filming best practices

Part 5: Edit Your Product Video

- a. Choose the right video editing software
- b. Adhere to editing best practices
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- a. Choose a main hosting option
- b. Add it to your product page
- c. Consider additional marketing options
- d. Track product video ROI

Make Your Directorial Debut



PART 1

The Basics of Product Videos

When creating a product video, it's important to keep in mind what customers want to get out of viewing it. Product videos have become pretty common, so many customers have their own expectations about what they are preparing to watch. To ensure that your product video is effective, include the following top three product video basics in your planning process so that you don't end up with a video that confuses more than it helps.



a. Demonstrate how the product is used

Pick it up, use it, and abuse it. Try to demonstrate your product working in realistic conditions, solving the problems that customers are buying your products to solve.

Selling a tough pair of work boots? Show how tough they are by subjecting them to the harsh conditions a customer might encounter on a job site—step on nails, drop a sledgehammer on the toe, cover them in oil, or try to cut them with a knife. If they stand up to all of that punishment in a video, you'll have done a lot to convince your customers that your boots are tough enough to protect their feet on the job.

The more customer fears you can solve in your product video, the more likely you are to make the sale. There's a lot of value in showing instead of telling. Take it apart, pull on it, flip it around, zoom in on details. That's why they clicked play!





b. Describe what you're doing as you do it

To keep people engaged, they need to hear your voice throughout the video. If you're going to serve as the on-camera talent, it's also a good idea to introduce your face at the beginning of the video with the product in-hand to establish that a real human is guiding this product tour.

As the video progresses, your audience will want to see the product close-up. At that point, you can just focus the camera on the product itself, but continue your explanation as a voiceover. Showing and telling at the same time is a great way to ensure customers will remember what they learned.

c. Show how the product solves the customer's problem

Your video should focus on customer problems and how your product solves them. For example, if selling a camera bag, show all of the pockets on the bag, demonstrate their sizes, and explain what sorts of accessories can be stored in them. Even better, bring actual camera accessories and show the customer how well they fit, and how your bag keeps those expensive camera accessories better-secured and better-organized than competing bags.

Types of Product Videos

In this section, we've compiled a short list of product video types that demonstrate the features of their respective products and why they should be chosen over competitors'. Ultimately, when it comes to your product videos, you need to pick a style that works best for your product—but you don't need to reinvent the wheel. Take the time to study all sorts of different product videos made by ecommerce owners in various industries. Write down the things you like about each video, as well as the things you don't like. You'll end up putting your own spin on your videos anyway, but studying the work of others will help you nail down a style that fits you.



a. Product walkthrough videos

Product walkthrough videos are the most common and helpful type of product videos because they are simple and to-the-point. With a simple backdrop so as not to distract from the product, walkthrough videos allow the customer to see the product being examined although they were examining it themselves in person. These videos work best when they can incorporate niche-specific use case examples.

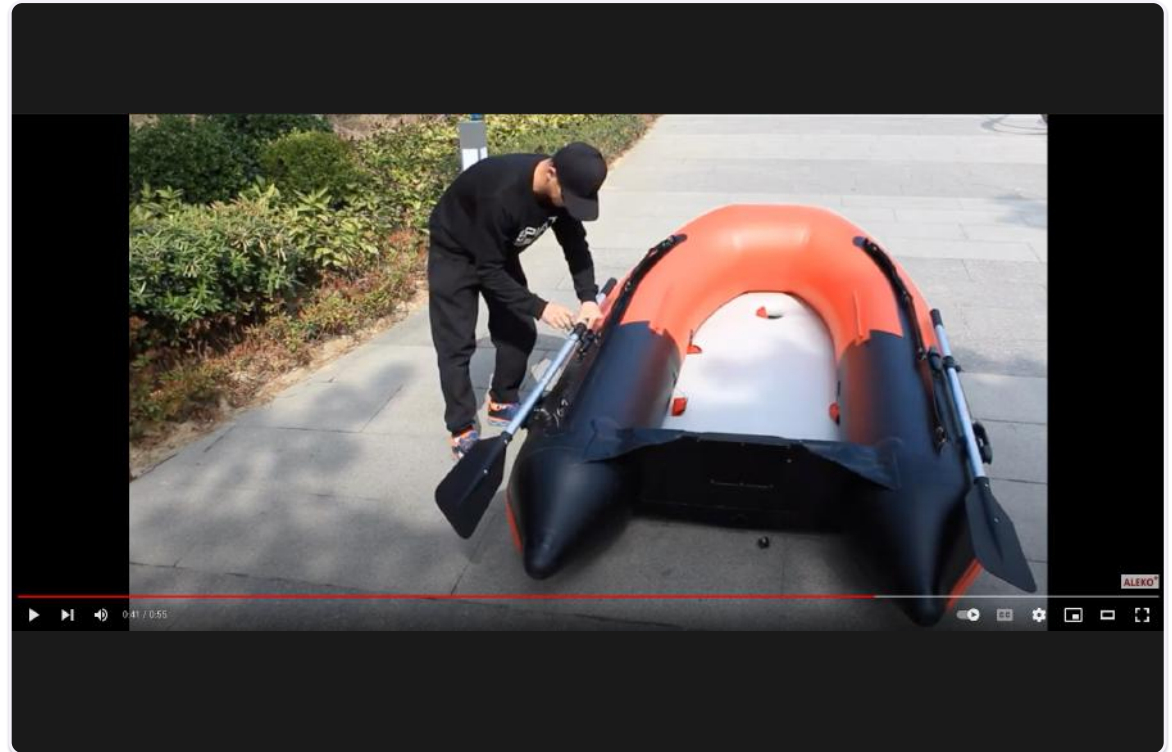
In [this product video](#) about paintball bags, the product expert comes across as authentic and knowledgeable as he explains all the use cases that this product solves for their specific audience. By showing the features of the bag and explaining the uses for each, he's done a good job of helping the viewer understand the capabilities of the bag from a paintball-centric perspective.



b. Unboxing videos

Unboxing videos are not just a YouTube fad from the past! They can also be used to add value, even without the aid of narration. These types of videos work especially well for luxury products, electronics, and anything with fancy custom packaging.

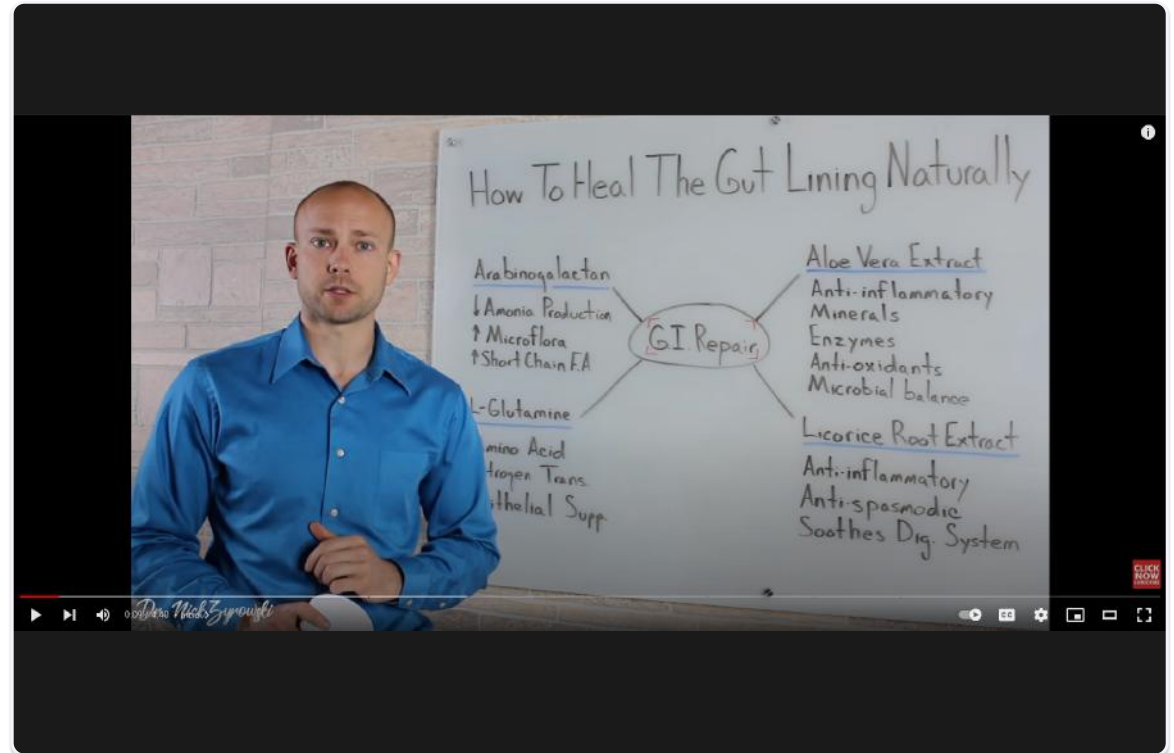
In [this product video](#) from Aleko Products, an expert unboxes and sets up an inflatable air floor fishing boat. Since inflating the boat takes a while, this video was edited down to show just the essential steps, giving the viewer all of the information they want without having to wait through any boring “dead air”—moments in your video in which nothing interesting is happening. Now the customer knows exactly what to expect when unboxing and inflating this boat. The addition of music, graphics, and transitions also make this unboxing video feel well-paced and professional.



c. Explanatory videos

If you think your product isn't Instagram-worthy, don't let that stop you. It could mean that the internet isn't already saturated with content similar to yours—and a lack of competing content could be a great opportunity for your product videos to stand out.

Take this product for example: a gastrointestinal repair health supplement. In [this product video](#), Dr. Nick Zyrowski uses a simple whiteboard to explain the problem that the shopper is suffering from in detail, and how the product fits into solving that problem. This is a page straight out of Marketing 101—a product is solving a problem. Combine that messaging with the authority of an expert speaker like Dr. Zyrowski, and you will definitely have any customer's attention.



Cost of Product Videos

You know the basics and you've decided what type of product video you'd like to shoot. But just how much is it going to cost you? That depends on how much you want to spend. You have complete control over the level of commitment you want to give, which has a direct effect on your budget. We'll take a look at two approaches to budgeting for product video creation.



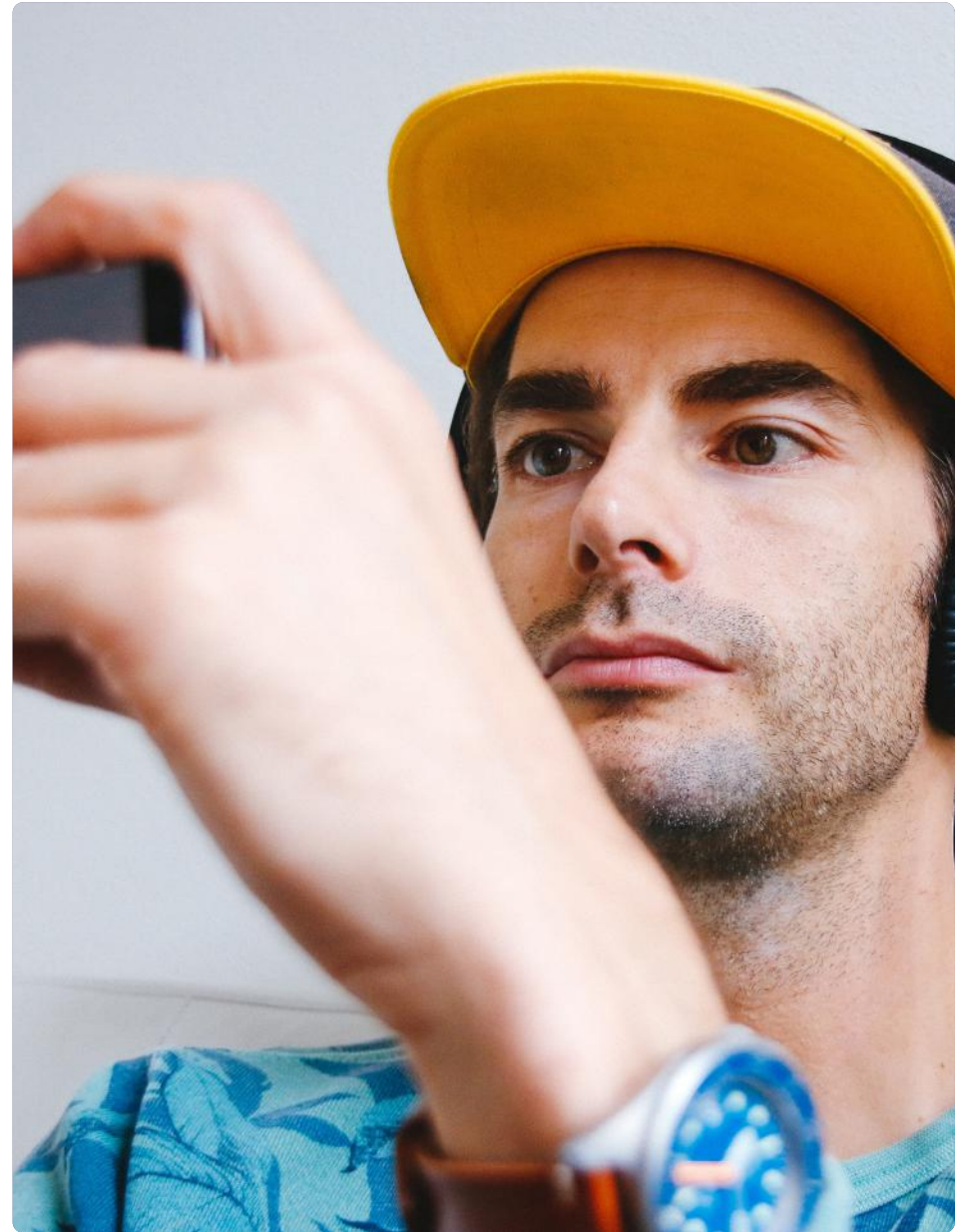
a. The “bare bones” approach

Let’s say you’ve decided you want to do quick-and-dirty product videos with a skeleton crew of just yourself as the writer, director, producer, and star. Assuming you only have the budget to film using your smartphone, plus some inexpensive versions of the essentials, here’s how you can create product videos on a modest budget:

- Smartphone: **Free**
(assuming you already own one)
- Tripod: ~ **\$30**
- Shotgun microphone: ~ **\$40**
- Lighting kit with backdrop: ~ **\$140**
- Editing software: **Free**
(seriously—there are so many great free options out there)

Grand Total: ~ \$210

As long as you’re willing to put in the extra time to get creative with cheaper materials, you can totally shoot product videos on a shoestring budget.



b. The “finer things” approach

Maybe you want to invest in some reliable consumer video equipment that is guaranteed to get you the quality of shots you want the first time around. Here’s what you can expect to spend:

- Camera: ~ \$200-\$500*
- Tripod: ~ \$30-\$100
- Wireless lavalier microphone: ~ \$200
- Lighting kit with backdrop: ~ \$140
- Pro editing software (Adobe Premiere): ~ \$24/month

Grand Total: ~ \$700-\$1,000

***Note:** This price range is what you can expect from standard consumer models of camera, including [GoPro Cameras](#) and popular consumer DSLRs from Nikon and Canon.

As you can see, an investment in some reliable consumer filming equipment can cost you a pretty penny. Of course, that number could skyrocket if, for some reason, you feel the need to spring for even higher-end professional grade equipment—though that may be premature for someone just getting started with product videos.



c. The real cost: your time

When it comes to creating product videos, the monetary investment in equipment can be fairly minimal. But the real cost is your time, especially in the beginning. There is a bit of a learning curve, especially when it comes to editing. Try to block off a few hours (maybe even a day) of your time to produce your first product video.

If you're spending too much of your time creating your own videos, you may find it worthwhile to hire outside help. But keep in mind that the price of hiring professionals or semi-professionals (think film students and wedding videographers) adds up very quickly. You could expect to pay between [\\$1,500-\\$5,000](#) or more for freelancers to create a 1-2 minute semi-professionally produced video for the web. Then again, if the video is for your flagship product, it may be worth the investment.



The Product Video Shooting Process

You've filmed videos before—after all, your kids' baseball games don't just film themselves. But you're probably just beginning to dip your toes into filming videos for professional use, so let's go over some of the basics. Here are some of the most important steps to follow when shooting a product video.



a. Gather the right equipment

First and foremost, you'll need to gather all of the equipment we mentioned in Part 3. Here's a quick walkthrough of things to keep in mind as you choose the right pieces for the job:

Camera: Higher-end cameras may give you more control over the aesthetics of the video (for example, you can switch out a variety of higher-quality lenses on a DSLR), but for the purposes of product videos, your smartphone may do the job just fine. Film a few test videos on your smartphone and then play back that footage on a computer. Are you satisfied with the quality? If not, ask yourself if the investment in a higher-end camera is worth the return.

Tripod: Tripods provide the stabilization essential for video, which can be an unforgiving medium when it comes to motion. Consider the types of shots you're going to take (close-up only? Full-length person standing up?) so that you know the maximum extendable height of the tripod you'll need—most standard tripods have a maximum extendable height of between 40 and 60 inches. If you know you'd like to be doing all of your filming on a tabletop surface, you might consider purchasing a more compact tripod to accommodate such close-range filming. If you're filming with a smartphone, make sure your tripod has a phone mount.

Audio: Your camera or smartphone has a built-in microphone, but you may want to consider using an external microphone to enhance the quality of the audio. Your main options are shotgun microphones—unidirectional microphones that receive audio from a very concentrated source and can be mounted on your camera—or lavalier microphones—small microphones that clip directly onto the speaker's lapel, capturing audio as close to the source as possible. If you plan to rely on the microphone already built into your camera or smartphone, remember that the further away your camera is from the person speaking, the worse the audio quality is going to be.

Backdrop and lighting: Lighting and backdrops are much more important than what model of camera you use. Spending \$100 on a lighting rig and backdrop will do much more to improve your final product videos than spending an extra \$100 on a fancier camera model—if your lighting is terrible, an expensive camera will just do a very good job of recording how terrible it is. You can also just get creative with the lighting you have on hand by bringing in extra lamps to eliminate shadows. For the background, simplicity is best—solid white backdrops are great because they're easy to light evenly and eliminate any visual distractions for the viewer.

b. Set up for the shoot

Once you've gathered all the materials you'll need, it's time to set everything up so that you can begin your shoot. Once you have chosen the space you want to shoot in:

Plan for the shots you want with storyboarding: "Storyboarding" refers to drawing sketches to visually organize and plan out the list of the shots you want to get before you film. For example, you may want to vary the types of camera angles in the video. You can do this by sketching out an establishing shot of the on-camera talent with the product, followed by the close-up shots of the product as needed. A storyboard doesn't need to be complex, and you don't need to be an artist—you can download blank storyboard templates online and doodle a basic outline. This way, you can make sure you get all the shots you want to show off your product.

Camera setup: Varying the types of shots can help create a sense of pacing in the video, which keeps your viewer engaged. Ever notice how some product videos include shots of the product from different angles? These shots were either achieved via a multi-camera setup or a single-camera setup. The primary benefit of a multi-camera set-up is that the on-camera talent can speak and use the product at the same time without having to worry about stopping to set up a different angle. If you don't have more than one camera to use for your product video, that's okay—you can also film using one camera at a time.

Test your equipment and lighting: Eliminate any obvious shadows or glare coming off of any surfaces that might distract viewers. Another good rule of thumb: try not to point your camera directly at a window or a light. When you point your camera at a light source, it can cause the footage to look "blown out" by bright white light, while objects and people in front of the light become dark and shadowy.

Test your audio: You'll also want to keep an ear out for distracting background noise. Record a few clips using the microphone you plan on using and play back the clip so you can hear the audio after it's recorded. Pay special attention to any background noise you may not have noticed while recording, like road noise or echoing. If the audio sounds poor, consider finding a new location in this instance as well.

c. Follow filming best practices

It's time to hit "record"! Begin shooting everything you have planned to include in your product video. As you do, keep these best practices in mind to ensure a successful shoot:

Film in landscape, not vertical: If you're filming on a smartphone, you may be tempted to film in vertical mode, but please resist the urge. Consider this the first cardinal rule of professional video.

Dress the part: Dress your on-camera talent in company branded clothing if possible to help reinforce the brand. It also helps subconsciously convey a sense of expertise and legitimacy to the viewer.

Keep an ear out for background noise: Even if you've already tested the audio, you still need to be aware of any background noise that may occur during filming. One common example is the sound of low-flying aircraft like planes or helicopters passing overhead, as microphones do pick up those sounds. Wait for loud aircraft to pass and then resume filming. You'll thank yourself later. It's easy to forget about audio while you're filming, but it's a critical component of good video.

Take notes: If you plan on doing multiple takes (and you probably will), consider having a "shot list" on hand and keeping track of the number of takes with notes describing which were best. Did you end up doing 12 takes of a 5-minute long explanation? It might be a pain to remember which take was best when it comes time to edit the video. Also, try beginning each take with a visual aid like a piece of paper with the take number on it. That way, you can quickly skim through your clips when editing.

Double check the footage: This one's important: while you're still on set, play back the footage you shot before you call it a wrap. There's nothing worse than having an area all set up and lit, the cameras perfectly positioned, the talent looking perfect, and then realizing much later on that you need to re-shoot something for one reason or another (bad audio, out-of-focus shot, memory card malfunction, etc.). It might seem tedious at the time, but your future self will thank you.

PART 5

Edit Your Product Video

You're done recording all the shots you need for your product video (and some extras)—now it's time to put all of the best takes together into one cohesive video that tells the story you're going for. Editing is another part of video production that can be outsourced if you're concerned about your computer skills, but video editing these days is easier than ever. Here are important steps you should take while editing your product videos.

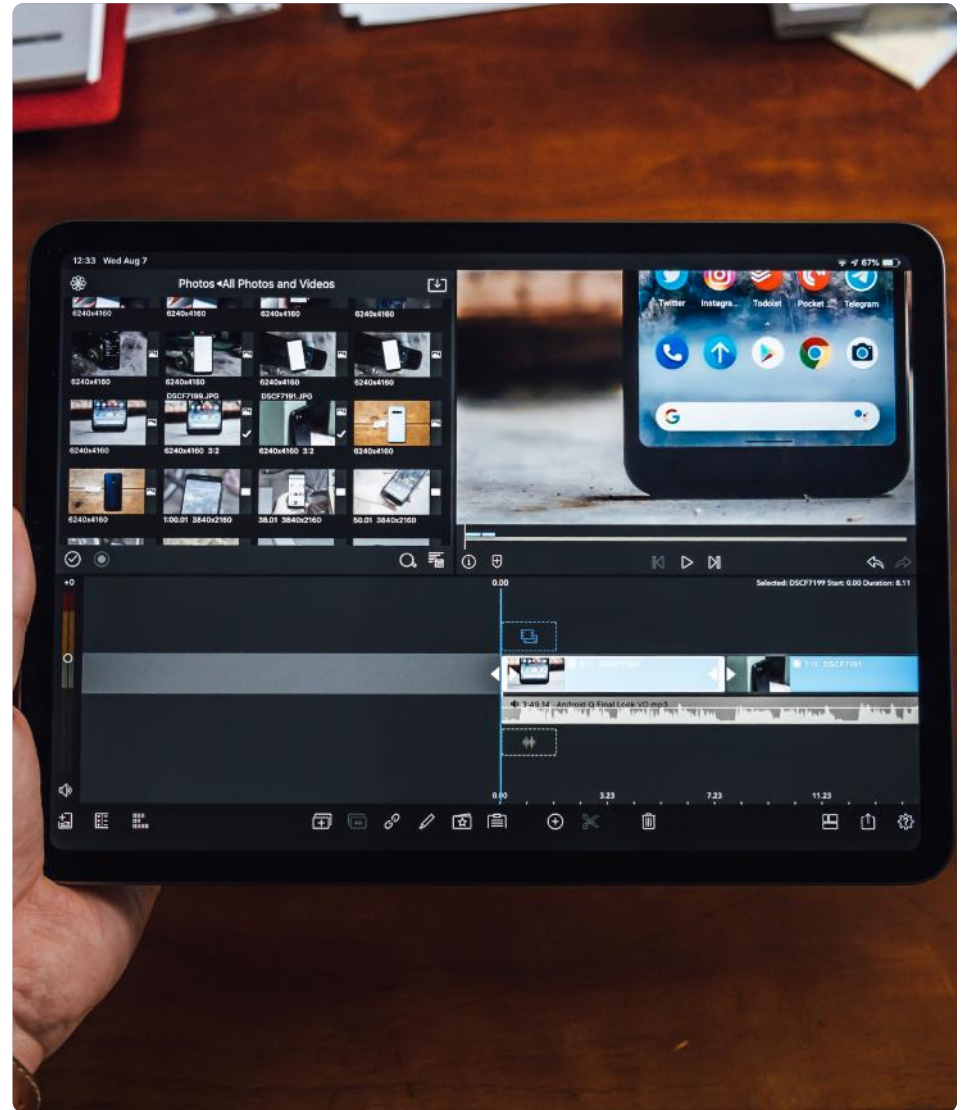


a. Choose the right video editing software

There is no shortage of free and low-cost video editing software out there. If you have a Mac, then you already have a convenient, easy-to-use consumer editing software in iMovie. If you don't have a Mac or want to explore other options, consider these popular video editors:

- [Hitfilm](#): A free version of a user-friendly software that can be upgraded to a paid version with additional features if needed
- [Lightworks](#): Another simple video editor that's popular with the YouTube crowd and upgradable to a pro version
- [Adobe Premiere](#): The “premiere” video editing software for professionals is available via the subscription-based Adobe Creative Cloud Suite

There are a host of other video editors available. Try out a few and see which one has the best feel and usability for your needs. Keep in mind, any editing software that bills itself as a “pro” software (such as Adobe Premiere) will have a steep learning curve. You might want to start with some basic editors and advance to the pro stuff if you think you need it for more complex editing later.



b. Adhere to editing best practices

No matter which software you choose, there are a few tried-and-true best practices for editing product videos:

- **Be succinct.** Edit it down to the bare essentials. If you're showing a process that can be sped up, or if some less-interesting parts can be clipped out, do it. This helps to create a sense of pacing that keeps the viewer engaged and more likely to finish the video.
- **Add transitions between clips.** Simple crossfades between clips can cover up your cuts and prevent the viewer from feeling jarred when you cut from one shot to the next. Also consider fading up from black at the beginning of the video and fading to black at the end of the video to give it a more polished feel.
- **Add graphics.** Add an image of your company's logo (or a motion graphic, if available) at the beginning and/or end of the video. Some companies even keep a watermark of their logo in the bottom corner of the frame throughout the video. Including your company branding helps accomplish that all-important goal of producing professional-looking content while also reinforcing your brand.



c. Include music the right way

Music can be a great way to introduce a video. You can either add a short song sample at the beginning and have it fade out as you begin to speak, or have a music bed playing throughout the entire video. But what kind of music should you use?

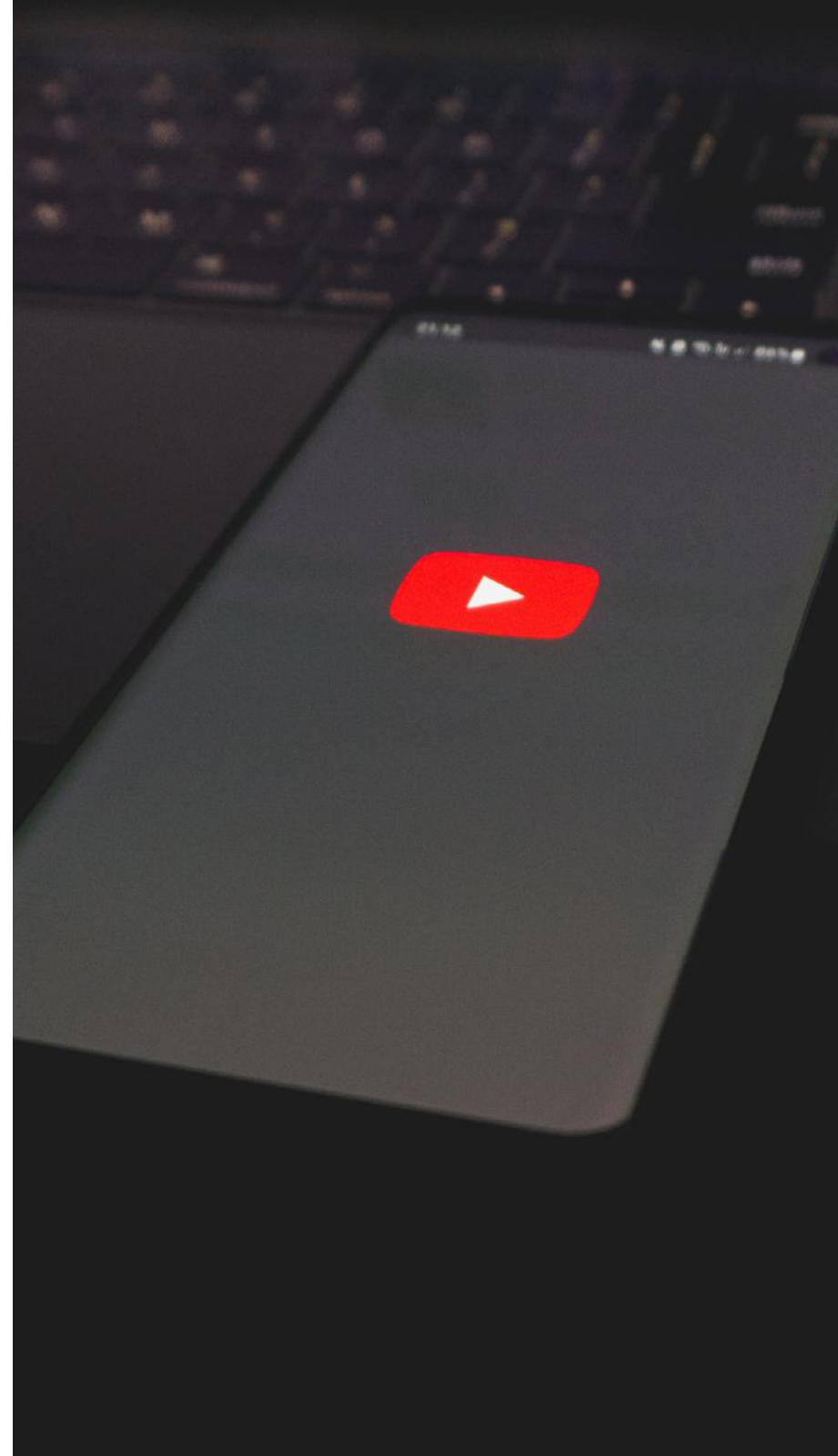
For starters, you definitely can't use copyrighted music without permission, like any music by popular recording artists. Still, some folks are tempted to post videos containing copyrighted music anyway, thinking that they probably won't get caught. The problem is that you will get caught. Thanks to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 (DMCA), YouTube is obligated to remove the videos that contain copyrighted music.

So what music can you use? You have some options:

- **Stock music:** Most editing software comes with free stock music options right there in the program. Find the "Music" or "Sounds" section (these tools are typically very aptly named). Listen to a few tracks and find one that works for your video.
- **The YouTube Audio Library:** Did you know YouTube has a library of free music and grants its users full permission to download and use in any video project? It's true! YouTube makes their audio library available to everyone in an effort to help take the guesswork out of music selection—you can access it easily from within your YouTube Studio account by choosing "Audio library" on the left-hand menu.
- **Royalty-free music:** You can also search for royalty-free music online if you don't like the options that come with your editing software or on YouTube. Some popular providers of royalty-free music are [Epidemic Sound](#) and [Envato Market](#). With sites like these, you pay a one-time fee for a license to use the song in your online video. Prices for music licenses from these sites will vary based on the artist, but they're usually relatively cheap. No matter which site you choose, you'll want to read over their terms of use carefully to ensure that the provider grants you full rights to use the music in your online videos.

Publish Your Product Video

Your product video is complete and ready for the world to see! Now, it's just a matter of finding a way to display it so that your customers can view it and get the valuable information they need quickly and easily. Here are some important steps to take as you decide how to store and distribute your new product video.



a. Choose a main hosting option

There are several places you can store your product video for public consumption. If you used YouTube Studio to add music, that means your video is already stored on YouTube—simply publish it and set it to “public” to be viewed on your channel, or “unlisted” if you want people to be able to watch it, but not amongst your channel content. There are also some other popular options to host videos besides YouTube, like [Vimeo](#) and [Wistia](#). Wistia is especially helpful if you want to embed your video on your website pages only without making it easy to find without context on the web.

b. Add it to your product page

The best place for a product video is on the actual product page of the product being featured—after all, this is where the sale happens. You can include it with your product photos, but keep in mind that it may become buried and not be viewed as often. Try to find somewhere it can be featured front and center, like in the product description. That way, as users are learning more about your value propositions, they are presented with this opportunity to engage with a closer look at the product.

c. Consider additional marketing options

Your product page and/or your YouTube channel don’t have to be the only places your product video is used! If your video is for a brand new product, consider including it—or simply using clips from it—with your marketing materials so customers can view it before they even get to your site. Short clips from your video can also be great to add some movement to other areas of your website if it currently is mainly image-focused.

d. Track product video ROI

Finally, with your product video published for the world to see, you'll likely want to know how well it's performing and whether it has made any impact on your sales. There are a few main ways to track the ROI of your videos:

- Let's start with the simplest: if you pull a report of how many sales you've had for this product monthly over the last 12 months, you can simply wait and see how that changes next month. For example, if you sold on average 100 units per month, and next month you sell 183 units, that's an 83% increase. While this method is simple and straightforward, it can't always give you all the information you need.
- Next, let's get one step fancier. If you have Google Analytics set up properly, you'll be able to see all kinds of metrics about this particular product page, such as "Time on Page." With a video, you're likely to see this figure increase—which is good! The more time the visitor spends on the page, the more likely they are to click "buy." You can also take your analysis further by creating a "Funnel Visualization" in GA that shows the segment of users who visited this page and purchased. By doing this, you can see how this user segment increases conversion rate to sale after you add the video.
- Lastly, for ultimate fanciness and the best possible data, [you can create an A/B test](#) to assess the exact conversion rate increase of your video in a shorter amount of time. You can use an A/B testing tool such as [Optimizely](#) to set up a new test.

CONCLUSION

Make Your Directorial Debut

Hopefully now you feel comfortable enough to begin the process of shooting your own product video! It's true that creating video can be time consuming, so don't be afraid to delegate. Many businesses outsource video production to freelance agencies. You could also tap an influencer to do an unboxing video for you through sites like [Influenster](#), [TapInfluence](#), or [Upfluence](#). Then you can post their videos to your product page.

While an influencer might not be the de facto expert on your product the same way you are, that's a trade-off you may have to make if time or resources prevent

you from creating your own content. But hey—sometimes you'll find the right influencer who's gonna be a great match for your product and bring the speed and style that can outweigh your niche expertise. The only way to know is to try. As Mark Twain said, "The secret to getting ahead is getting started."



If you're ready to sell your products online using software built for SMBs, [try a risk-free 14-day trial](#) of Volusion's award-winning ecommerce platform. From creating a beautiful storefront to managing inventory and accepting payments, Volusion is the easiest way for entrepreneurs to build the business they've been dreaming of.