



GETTING STARTED WITH ONLINE VIDEO DISTRIBUTION AND SYNDICATION

From social networks to personal blogs to niche online communities, video publishers have never had so many ways to reach viewers. This fast-growing landscape provides powerful opportunities to disseminate content widely and gain a large global audience. But it also presents a challenge: distributing content through all available channels in a time- and cost-effective way. In this article, we identify the key components of a successful distribution and syndication strategy, and explain how Brightcove Video Cloud can help you realize its full potential.

Distributing through Social Networks

The explosive, viral growth of online video has proved two things – people love discovering compelling content online, and they love sharing it with friends, niche online communities, and other like-minded viewers around the world. To take advantage of this, you need an online video solution that can leverage the inherent discovery and sharing aspects of social networking to drive traffic to your content and engage viewers across the Web, on your own site, as well as on popular social networking sites.

Social Sharing

The most basic distribution strategy is simply to make it easy for your viewers to share a video with others. While anyone can copy a URL and paste it into an email, instant message, or social network status update, in-player calls-to-action increase the likelihood that a viewer will take action by streamlining the sharing process. It is essential to have a player that enables one-click sharing via email, social networks, and a link.

The Video Cloud Studio allows publishers to easily add and remove email, link, and social network share buttons. By offering various sharing options right in the player, you can boost the probability that viewers will spread the word about your content or post it on social networks like Facebook and Twitter. You can also use the video end screen to promote a sharing call-to-action to drive further traffic to your content.



Engaging Viewers inside Social Networks

The rich experience offered by social networking, including video, leads people to spend a lot of time on these sites. By maintaining a strong video presence on social networks, your organization can connect with prospects and customers when they're at their most engaged, and give them highly compelling content that captures and deepens their interest.

As part of Brightcove's extensive partnership with Facebook, the social media powerhouse has whitelisted Video Cloud players. This means you can embed a video player right into your Facebook fan page, complete with the same styling, branding, calls-to-action, and analytics you get when you embed a player on your own domain. Creating an immersive, high-quality video experience inside a viewer's social network can have a profound impact on the success of your video initiative.

Driving Discoverability and Traffic through YouTube

While it may not have the video quality, customization options, and advanced analytics that Video Cloud provides, the popularity of YouTube—currently the world's second most-used search engine—makes it an important way for viewers to discover your video content and start engaging with your brand. Any organization serious about online video needs a YouTube strategy.

The Video Cloud YouTube sync feature makes it easy to create and maintain a YouTube channel. Just enter your YouTube credentials and Video Cloud will automatically push whatever content you choose to your YouTube channel, complete with the metadata you entered in the Video Cloud Studio. If you later decide to remove the video, or edit the video's metadata, those changes will automatically be reflected in your YouTube channel. You can easily maintain your entire online video presence right from the Video Cloud Studio and start leveraging YouTube's discoverability benefits to drive traffic to your own website.



Syndicating Content across the Web

The landscape for video distribution and discovery is becoming increasingly scattered and fragmented. As a result, organizations these days are rarely content to publish content on just one site. For a video initiative to realize its full potential in terms of reach and engagement with target audiences, it needs to be disseminated through multiple channels.

Enabling True Viral Distribution

Bloggers thrive on featuring third-party content on their sites. By making it easy for them to share your video, you can tap into the loyal following they've built over time and expand your own audience. A simple link back to the video isn't enough, as many readers won't bother to visit another site. Instead, you need to make sure the blogger will embed your video right on their site. This is the most common and effective way for videos to "go viral" – a blogger likes a video enough to share it with his or her own network, the blog's followers do the same, and the video sees an exponential growth in views.

Video Cloud players include a "get code" option that makes it easy for bloggers and other online content aggregators to embed your video in their own sites to share it with their audiences. With complete control over the player itself, you can create a highly customized player specifically for viral distribution so your syndicated content drives not just video views, but also increased brand impressions and inbound links to your website.

Generating Subscribers through MRSS Distribution

While the most engaged members of your audience will be eager to see your latest content, you can't count on them taking time in their busy day to check your video site for updates. By distributing new assets proactively to subscribers, you can help them engage with your content as soon as it comes online, and start sharing it with others.

Video Cloud makes it easy for you to reach out to your fans and jump-start viral distribution by automatically generating MRSS feeds



for your video assets. You can create opportunities for viewers to subscribe to these feeds directly and receive updates via RSS readers, so they are notified as soon as you push new content live. You can also leverage MRSS feeds to engage your audience outside the traditional Web browsing experience. For example, you can create an automatically updated iTunes video podcast channel, which downloads new videos to subscribers for offline viewing. This provides yet another powerful channel to boost to video viewing and engagement rates.

Creating Syndication Partnerships with Video Cloud Media Sharing

Larger organizations can dramatically increase a video's exposure by creating a syndication network that enables video content to be published on multiple properties, and sometimes hundreds of sites, all at the same time. The challenge is making it work, especially if it means sending a large video file to a number of different departments and organizations and relying on those teams to encode, upload, and publish your content.

Video Cloud's advanced media sharing capability greatly simplifies the process for distributing content to syndication partners. Publishers can easily set up rules and processes that automatically push specified video assets into other accounts. The video appears in partner accounts automatically and can be treated like any other video asset, so publishing the content is a simple task. You retain control over the asset itself, and can remove or update it at will. By making it easy to syndicate content to large numbers of properties at once, Video Cloud helps you drive traffic and views through powerful new distribution networks of your making.

Emerging Opportunities

Connected TV and "over the top" systems such as Roku and Boxee present a dynamic new distribution opportunity for organizations. But with no clear breakaway platforms in this rapidly changing category, the technology environment involved is highly fragmented, with devices supporting varying combinations of Flash, HTML5, and proprietary technologies. It can take significant time and effort to address each system, so make sure to stay focused on your traffic and advertising goals, and do the research to make the right choices for your business.

At Brightcove, we can help remove the complexity of these emerging platforms so you can take advantage of these distribution opportunities without inordinate investments.

The easiest to expand reach through connected TVs will be the LG platform, using a reference application Brightcove will make available later this year. Other platforms, such as Boxee and the latest Samsung connected TV platform, let you run Flash players in a browser. You can also use Video Cloud APIs or BEML to create a custom player experience suited to living room viewing environments. Other platforms support Video Cloud HTML5 Smart Players. And Video Cloud's feed-based distribution system lets you easily deliver video content to platforms like Roku.

Measuring Your Success

With video players distributed across many different properties, networks, and platforms, measuring the success of your distribution and syndication strategy poses a challenge. You need a way to answer several key questions to determine where you are doing well and what you need to optimize:

- 🔗 What percentage of your views comes from on-site versus distribution or syndication channels?
- 🔗 Are those viewers more or less engaged than your on-site viewers?
- 🔗 Is your distributed content contributing traffic back to your own website or websites?

Video Cloud analytics provide insight into these three questions. Our embedded domains analytics report allows you to identify the top domains on which your content is being viewed. You can see, for example, how many views your Facebook fan page video player is driving, or identify third-party blogs on which your video has gained a wide audience.



The embedded domains report also displays the number of viewed minutes that occur on any given property, providing insight into the level of engagement you are attaining on your distributed

properties. If you notice a higher than average engagement rate on Facebook, for example, you might consider ramping up your effort to drive traffic to your fan page.

Finally, Video Cloud's referring sites report exposes the amount of traffic your distribution and syndication outlets are driving back to your content. You might notice that your YouTube channel is not referring the desired number of viewers to your Brightcove players. If that is the case, you could consider adding a call to action for a viewer to visit your own property in the video metadata, or limiting your YouTube channel to teaser clips that entice viewers to watch more.

Conclusion

The sheer scope of the Web and explosive device landscape creates an opportunity to reach audiences with relevant, engaging content on diverse properties outside your own domain. Video Cloud's suite of distribution and syndication features simplify the dissemination of content through relevant channels, and provides the tools necessary to create a successful distribution strategy that drives traffic and helps video content reach its full audience potential. Since even the most successful projects or strategies can always be improved, Video Cloud also provides the tools needed to measure and optimize campaigns for true online video success.