

Subject: How You, Too, Can Get Political Video Online From: Dan Manatt of PoliticsTV.com



Pop Quiz: What do these key political videos from the past year have in common?

1. The Macaca Video
2. The Obama, Edwards, Clinton presidential announcement videos
3. The Bill & Hillary Clinton Sopranos Spoof
4. The Hillary/1984 Mash Up
5. The CNN/YouTube Debate Videos

Answer: None of these videos originated as TV spots – they all came from the Web.

Web video as a political force began in earnest with the Macaca video in August/September of 2006. In less than a year, it has gone from a curiosity to an essential tool of 21st century politics – thanks to cheap digital video technology and the rise of YouTube.

Web video can help you if you use it correctly, but it will definitely hurt you if you don't use it at all. Rudy Giuliani has largely ignored the medium, such that a video search for Giuliani videos on YouTube yields dozens of videos attacking him. By contrast, Ron Paul, who has embraced the medium, has dozens of positive videos by his campaign and by supporters. So ignore Web video at your peril – if you don't use it, you can rest assured your opponents will.

But remember also that video cameras are everywhere – DV cameras, security cameras, web cameras, cell phones, etc. Digital technology means \$100,000 cameras and editing suites now cost \$5,000 or less – making it more accessible and ubiquitous. YouTube and other video publishing accounts are free – giving anyone free access to a worldwide audience for \$0. For better or worse, candidates and other political leaders must assume they are being taped 24/7 by their opponents if not the average Joe. Web video is now an inescapable fact of political life.

So how do you get started in this brave new medium? How do you begin to integrate Web video into what you already do in politics? This memo helps get you thinking about the kinds of things that Web video is well suited for and being used for already. We give you a top 10 cheat sheet of ideas that have been boiled down from a previous NPI video report (a 20 minute highly produced Web video) that I helped create called "[Political Web video World](#)."

Then the memo goes through the basics of how you can get started in very practical terms, including explaining different packages of cameras and tools you need to buy. This is a written version of a talk I recently gave at the NPI event "[The Exploding World of Political Web video](#)." Like with viral video, feel free to send this around.

Top 10 Ways Your Campaign/Organization Should Use Web video

1. **Bio Video:** The bio/profile spot has long been a staple of the campaign. Unrestrained by TV's 30 & 60 second time limits, Web video allows you to post a 3-5 minute video telling the story of your candidate (or organization) – and making the case for their candidacy.
2. **Issue Videos:** Organizations and candidates should include short videos on key issues. These shouldn't be videotaped "white papers" – but short, engaging snippets of your candidate on the campaign trail or organizational leader working your issues.
3. **Gotcha/Opposition Research Video:** Forget the smoking gun, today the coin of the political realm is the smoking video. The Macaca video showed how a video showing one's opponent making a major mistake on the campaign trail can be deadly effective. Recent videos showing John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, and Mitt Romney flip flopping have further proved the point.
4. **Campaign Trail Vlog & Event Vlogs:** Supporters love to see the candidate on the campaign trail, pressing the flesh, making speeches, and the like. Videotaping key campaign trips and speeches is a great way to leverage events – and have them live on forever. If a candidate family member is a decent cameraperson, you might make it ever more personal by involving them in the production – which will build more of a connection with the voters.
5. **Debates:** Your candidate shines in a TV debate, but most voters aren't watching. Sound familiar? Your campaign should publish debate content on your YouTube account, yielding an exponentially greater impact.
6. **Web video Town Hall:** YouTube's YouChoose Spotlight has shown the way for candidates to engage in interactive video dialog with supporters. Campaigns solicit video questions from supporters, and candidates answer in an engaging, personal way.
7. **Fundraising:** Fundraising is always more effective when the candidate or a surrogate makes "the ask". From Bill Clinton soliciting contributions for Hillary to Paul Newman soliciting for the DSCC, the fundraising video is becoming an important Web video and fundraising staple.
8. **Endorsement/Testimonials:** Endorsements from officeholders, celebrities, civil leaders, and regular voters should be touted by your campaign – including through video online.

9. **Traditional TV Earned Media:** Local TV stations remain some of the most powerful sources of news and information. When your campaign receives favorable TV coverage, leverage and multiply that coverage by posting it to YouTube and your website.

10. **Video Contests & Supporter/Volunteer Videos:** User generated content is increasingly being used by campaigns such as Hillary Clinton’s presidential campaign. Your campaign should smartly solicit your supporters, either through a low key website announcement or a high visibility contest, to create and submit content for your campaign. Supporters videos build community while possibly revealing low cost, high quality volunteer resources you may not have been aware of.

How You Can Venture Into the Web Video World

So you realize Web video is important, you want to use Web video as outlined above. What are the first things you should do to enter the new world of Web video?

1. **Open Web video Accounts on YouTube and Other Platforms:** You can deploy Web video through several excellent platforms – Brightcove, blip.tv, and Google Video, just to name a few. But like Microsoft and Google’s domination of the OS and search arenas, YouTube has an overwhelming market share for video – especially political video. So webcast on as many platforms as you wish – but definitely deploy via YouTube. Start a YouTube account today, reserving your campaign name, candidate’s name, etc – before someone else does. Also, start keyword subscriptions so you’re alerted whenever a video about your candidate and/or opponents is posted.

WEB VIDEO ECONOMICS 101

The YouTube/Web video Revolution has exploded in large part due to the astounding cost-savings afforded by new digital video technology. A quick primer on Web video economics:

Digital Video Camera



PRICE: \$250

Macbook Laptop (Video-Ready)



PRICE: \$999

iMovie or YouTube (Editing Software)



PRICE: \$0

YouTube Account



PRICE: \$0

The Next “Macaca”



Moment: PRICELESS

2. **Buy a Video Package:** Whether your Web video budget is \$200 or \$20,000, you should invest in some basic tools immediately. See the accompanying sidebar at the end to see what you should buy.

Web video Packages:	
A Buyer's Guide	
So you want to get set up for Web video production, but you're not sure what to buy? Below are packages for every budget, whether you're financing your video effort with your penny jar or for a targeted Senate race.	
\$ – The Volunteer Package	
Disposable Video Camera	\$25
YouTube Account	Free
YouTube Editing Software	Free
Film School Volunteer/Intern	Free
Total	\$25
\$150 – The Student Council Package	
Flip Video Camera	\$150
YouTube Account	Free
YouTube Editing Software	Free
Film School Volunteer/Intern	Free
Total	\$150
\$1500 – The City Council Package	
Basic miniDV Camera	\$250
Microphone/Audio	\$150
Tripod	\$100
MacBook Laptop	\$1000
iMovie Editing Software	Free
YouTube Account	Free
Film School Volunteer/Intern	Free
Total	\$1500

3. **Buy a Tivo and Tivo Account:** Not every campaign needs a campaign videographer – but every campaign should have DVD-recordable Tivo so you can record any earned media coverage of your campaign for posting on YouTube and your Web Site.
4. **Find a Good Campaign Videographer:** The tools of Web video are cheap, but finding political producers with the production and political savvy to produce political video is much tougher. Task your communications director to find a video volunteer or intern. Use your supporter email list, or even advertise on Craig's List or at local film schools.
5. **Have a Campaign Web video Czar:** Put someone on your campaign in charge of Web video – most likely, your communications director, press secretary or Internet strategist. Even if you are not producing Web video content, this person should monitor the Web/YouTube for content attacking your candidate or cause, monitoring your opposition, and selecting earned media to post to your YouTube account. Don't assign the task to an outside consultant who isn't on call 24/7 or a junior webmaster who doesn't have political savvy or rank to get senior staff's attention if a Macaca moment blows up in your face.
6. **Web video Promotion Strategy:** Your video czar's first task should be to formulate a plan to promote your videos to blogs, media, supporters, etc.
7. **Make Sure Your Media Consultant is Web video Savvy, and Plans to Integrate Web video into Your Strategy:** Your TV consultant should be Web video savvy, and

understand how TV and Web video strategies should be synergistic. Just because they

don't earn commissions from TV buys shouldn't mean they ignore the medium. In fact, ideally your lead consultant will create an integrated media strategy smartly combining your mail, phones, TV and Web components.

The Democratization of Political Video

Orson Welles once said that filmmakers are the only artists who cannot afford the tools of the trade. Not any more. Today, any citizen with an affordable laptop and a bit of talent can produce a video that will catch eyeballs – and impact an election.

Video politics, once the exclusive realm of high priced consultants, has been radically democratized by the technological breakthroughs and flattening price structure of digital video production. As a result, millions of Americans are taking to this brave new world of video democracy, creating what the Supreme Court once described as the First Amendment's true goal: a robust, uninhibited, and wide open public debate.

Organizations and campaigns will embrace to varying degrees and with varying results this new medium. Those who adopt early and adapt faster will be better off. One thing is certain: politics will never be the same.

\$3,500 – The Congressional Package	
Prosumer miniDV Camera	\$2000
Microphone Package	\$200
Camera Light	\$300
MacBook	\$1000
Tripod	\$100
iMovie Editing Software	Free
YouTube Account	Free
Film School Volunteer/Intern	Free
Total	\$4000
\$10,000 – The Senate Package	
High Def. HDV Camera	\$4000
PowerMac Editing Station	\$3000
MacBook	\$1000
Microphone Package	\$800
Advanced Editing Software	\$600
Camera Light	\$400
Tripod	\$200
YouTube Account	Free
Film School Volunteer/Intern	Free
Total	10,000

Bio

DANIEL MANATT

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Dan Manatt, the founder of PoliticsTV.com, has worked in Web video for nearly a decade.

In 1999, after working for the 92 Clinton Campaign, on Capitol Hill, and in the White House Counsel's office, Dan joined the emerging field of Web video, working for FreedomChannel.com, the nation's first political Web video site.

In 2003, Dan founded the first political Web video consulting firm, working for clients from the One Campaign to the DNC to the AFL-CIO. Also in 2003, he produced the first ever campaign video blog, for Ben Chandler's Kentucky Governor's race. That same year, he co-created HotlineTV, National Journal's flagship InternetTV show.

In 2006, Dan launched PoliticsTV.com, an Internet TV website. PoliticsTV is also a leading YouTube Premium Channel, with 600 videos and over 3 million videos viewed in less than one year. Also in 06, Dan's first documentary film, The Republic of Baseball, about baseball in the Dominican Republic, premiered on PBS stations nationwide.

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Appendix: The Videos



“Macaca”

Jim Webb for U.S. Senate

August 06

This video is now a legend that woke up the world to the power of Web video. More directly, this video decided an election – and gave Democrats control of the U.S. Senate. The video went viral on YouTube – which had only officially launched in November 2005.



“Vote Different”

Phil DeVellis

March 2007

The famous mash up of Hillary Clinton’s video web chat and the Apple “1984” commercial has been viewed over 4 million times worldwide. Fair or unfair, the video showed how a talented young amateur or artist could have as big an impact as a million-dollar consultant. The Clinton campaign would later very smartly use Web video to soften her image in the Sopranos video (see below).



YouTube/CNN Debate

July 2007

YouTube and CNN decided to do something different for the Democratic South Carolina debates – and politics will never be the same. Town Hall debates will never again mean a few hand picked citizens in business attire asking polite questions.



Clinton Sopranos Spoof

Hillary Clinton for President

June 2007

The Clinton campaign did an expert job of using Web video to their favor with the Sopranos finale spoof. With high production values, sharp acting and a smart free media strategy, it is perhaps the most successful positive Web video produced to date



Obama Presidential Announcement Video

Obama Presidential Exploratory Committee

January 2007

Technically, this was Barack Obama's presidential "pre-announcement" video. Even so, it sent shock waves across the political landscape as Obama effectively did an end run around the traditional media in signaling his clear intention to run for president via this Web video.