



Atresmedia leans into native digital video and grows online audiences

Atresmedia is a Spanish television network, which operates a number of free-to-air channels. Its channel laSexta is dedicated to news, with a focus on political and economic issues.

OPPORTUNITY

Atresmedia wanted to reach a wider online audience. Prior to GNI YouTube Innovation Funding, the brand would repackage its TV shows to publish online. But it saw an opportunity to reach younger viewers by adapting its news storytelling to a native digital format that would resonate with this target audience.

APPROACH

Atresmedia trained staff members in digital video skills, built a digital studio in which the team could film digital video content, and experimented with different content formats to see what would resonate best with a digital video audience.

Training staff for digital video: For the YouTube channel, Atresmedia wanted to use presenters who were already popular on its news TV channels, so it leveraged existing laSexta journalists and trained them to become narrators. The brand also trained editors, graphics experts, and other staff in digital video best practices.

Creating a digital set: Concurrently, the team repurposed a studio space and dedicated it to producing digital video. This enabled them to produce content faster, and not be dependent on television equipment or workflows.

Learning which formats and topics will best reach audiences: They decided to experiment with a new explainer series called “Xplica”, and release two new videos per week. Initially, they selected topics by looking at what was most controversial in the news. Then, they started using SEO and trending results to help find popular news topics to cover.

Testing, learning, optimizing: The team used audience data to learn which the most popular videos were, and started to replicate those findings across other pieces. They discovered that the topics performing best were related to breaking news stories and, armed with this data, made changes to the team and workflow processes. For example, they trained more reporters in digital storytelling so they were able to speed up production and respond faster to breaking news. This approach meant that they were able to publish more frequently than twice a week, which resulted in greater audience growth.

RESULTS

Atresmedia **trained 23 journalists** in digital video best practices and successfully made the leap to creating native digital video formats. The team now produces **content for broadcast and YouTube on a regular basis**.

LEARNINGS

It's better to be fast than perfect: Find formats that allow you to produce content quickly, simply, and efficiently. Of course, you still need to produce quality content that is useful to your audience, but (especially compared to traditional TV) you don't need to obsess over every last aspect of post-production. For example, Atresmedia found that publishing breaking news videos as soon after the event as possible generated higher views than spending more time on post-production and releasing later.

YouTube has a language unto itself: For traditional media broadcasters, it's important to be aware that your TV language, tone, and style won't necessarily fly on YouTube. Play around with tone and style until you've found something that represents your brand and also resonates with a YouTube audience — but remember not to compromise on journalistic integrity as you do so.

Cross-channel promotion works: Use your existing platforms to promote your digital video, and vice versa — for example, Atresmedia promoted across their website, TV channels, and multiple social media platforms to drive traffic to the YouTube channel.

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With this project we have started a long walk — we know we're in digital video for the long haul. We want to continue with the project, so we are always thinking about new formats and ways to improve.

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