

Six +

steps

to a

better

brand

online

Front Doors

Social

Video

Email

Premium  
Ad Formats

Local

And More...



## "You've Got..." Matt Damon

Stars come in for a cause

Actor Matt Damon brought his cause, Water.org, to AOL Video's "You've Got..." series with a video parody about bad holiday gifts. In the segment, Damon suggests a better gift idea – Water.org water bottles. The bottles, designed by his brother, Boston-based artist Kyle Damon, sold for \$20 each, with 100% of the proceeds going to Water.org.

**Matt Damon's "You've Got..." drew 63M PR/media impressions<sup>1</sup>**

Damon was filmed at AOL's New York studio by the "You've Got..." team, which also created a Water.org PSA that was featured in the AOL Homepage Cause Marketing module, across the AOL network, and in other media outlets, garnering 63M PR/media impressions.<sup>1</sup>

AOL's "You've Got..." series draws 2M viewers every week.<sup>2</sup> Guests have included President Obama, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and a variety of other notable public figures. The Matt Damon episode marked the first time a celebrity used the forum to support a charity.

# 57%

**of users discover content through websites or portals rather than search engines<sup>3</sup>**

## Front Doors The first stop for your audience

For branding success, nothing beats going in through the front door – your customers' jumping-off point for the wider web. Digital front doors draw audiences as large as network TV, while adding the interaction unique to the web. As a result, they're the ideal foundation for any launch or awareness-focused campaign.

The traditional front door is the portal. To this day, five of the ten most-visited sites on the internet are portals.<sup>4</sup> The top three alone attract nearly 200M unique visitors monthly.<sup>4</sup>

Portals are one place people get their information – 57% of visitors use a website or portal as the doorway for their news and entertainment content, rather than finding content via search.<sup>3</sup>

Given that 53% of time spent online is with content,<sup>3</sup> portals are more important than ever. They provide the kind of editorial guidance users seek – a curated experience amid an ever-expanding world of content.

**The top three portals attract nearly 200M unique visitors every month<sup>4</sup>**

Sources: 1 Cision, December, 2010; 2 comScore Video Metrix, February 2011; 3 D&M study, "The Future Is Seen: Content Now 2010," September 2010; 4 comScore Media Metrix, March 2011;

# 27M

**pieces of content are shared daily, and 23% of social media messages contain content links<sup>5</sup>**

## Social The best brand outlet

A January 2011 Webtrends analysis found that ads from brands with a social presence got a higher clickthrough rate, suggesting better engagement.<sup>6</sup> Compelling content drives a huge portion of social interaction, with 23% of all social media messages containing links to content.<sup>5</sup> Here are three great ways to get your brand content talked about:

### 1. Showcase your experts

Your executives and industry experts can represent your brand through externally hosted blogs. It's a great way to show them off as thought leaders, while also fostering brand loyalty and trust.

### 2. Use an authentic voice

38% of people say they would be most likely to share "information from someone I trust."<sup>5</sup> Don't risk closing down the conversation with an overt marketing pitch.

### 3. Find the story within the story

Try applying a journalistic approach to your branded content. A recent Starbucks photo slideshow on The Huffington Post focused not on company products, but on the history of coffee consumption. The result was one of The Huffington Post's most popular brand features.

PHOTO: BEN TRIVETT FOR AOL

PHOTO: THE HUFFINGTON POST

<sup>5</sup> Nielsen & AOL Research Study, "Online Content: Fueling Social Connection and Interaction," March 2011; <sup>6</sup> eMarketer, "Automotive Advertising Picks Up Speed Online," March 2011; <sup>7</sup> AOL Internal Data; <sup>8</sup> @Plan, Rel 4, 2010 (as compared to average internet user).



## Roy Sekoff on creating seriously addictive content

As a founding editor of The Huffington Post, Roy Sekoff has always had one goal in mind: producing content that people just can't get enough of.

"We embrace all the things that organically make up the DNA of the online experience," Sekoff says. "This encompasses both our content and our people, who have a passion for the material and the technology and the delivery that is personal, real time, obsessive and addictive – all in the best senses of those words."

**"Our hope is ... to create a truly 21st century media company."**

As a result, The Huffington Post has attracted one of the most engaged audiences on the web. They're both extremely vocal – leaving 3.5M comments each month<sup>7</sup> – and very social – 70% more likely to share content with others.<sup>8</sup>

"Our hope," continues Sekoff, "is to mix great journalism with the unique capabilities of the web – real-time speed, social engagement, people-to-people communication – to create a truly 21st century media company."



## AOL Sessions

Creating strange bedfellows

When Weezer recently appeared in AOL's LA studio for a taping of AOL Sessions, they brought along rapper Chamillionaire, singer-songwriter Sara Bareilles, and adult contemporary artist Kenny G – who admittedly had never heard Weezer before stepping in the studio.

"Chamillionaire and Kenny G sharing a green room together – who would have thought?"

Improvisation was the theme of the day, as Chamillionaire wrote his own verse for the Weezer song "Can't Stop Partying" just a few hours before the performance, and Kenny G lent his stylings to "I'm Your Daddy" by "totally winging it." Says Sessions producer Jeffrey Bell, "It was cool to see all these artists come together. I mean, Chamillionaire and Kenny G sharing a green room together – who would have thought?"

Other stars have performed and been interviewed on AOL's stages, including Rihanna, Elvis Costello, Lady Gaga, the cast of *Twilight* and rising indie band Phoenix, but it was Weezer who created one of the series' most memorable episodes.

# 60%

of TV audiences regularly surf the web while watching their favorite shows<sup>1</sup>

## Video

Enhance your TV media buy with real results

Around 60% of TV audiences regularly browse the internet while watching their favorite shows.<sup>1</sup> The right online video campaign can add scale while still maintaining the quality context your brand needs. Here are five reasons why:

### 1 Campaign reach and influence increase

Not only does online video increase the reach of a TV campaign, it also drives your audience to action online – and off. For example, 48% of online video users visit a website after viewing a video ad.<sup>2</sup>

### 2 Audiences respond to programming

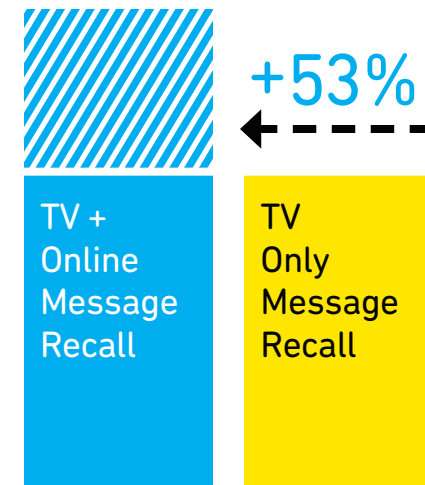
You can't control whether a video goes viral, but you can align with actively programmed content

that has dedicated audiences. Not surprisingly, the most-viewed types of videos parallel what's popular on TV, including news stories, movie previews, and how-to videos.<sup>1</sup>

### 3 Your brand gets passed along to friends

36% of content shared through social media messages is embedded directly into the social site.<sup>3</sup> Become a part of the conversation by integrating your brand directly into content with branded entertainment.

PHOTO: COLLIN ERIE FOR AOL



A recent Nielsen study showed that message recall increased 53% for viewers who saw an ad both on TV and online.<sup>4</sup>

### 4 Your 30-second spot works harder

New technology allows your spot to change based on your customer's geography, weather or time of day. Add local showtimes to your trailer or swap recipes from breakfast to dinner – without creating new video assets.

### 5 More often is more effective

Campaigns that run across multiple platforms are proven to be more effective. Movie ads saw a 31% increase in likeability when they were shown on TV and online, compared to just TV.<sup>5</sup>

# 66%

of people who share content use email as their primary sharing tool<sup>3</sup>

## Email

The better social platform

66% of people who share content use email as their primary method, while 99% of social network sharers also share content through email.<sup>3</sup> Email is now the preferred digital platform for many real-life actions. Important activities that were once done by mail, like managing finances or finding coupons, have transitioned to email. It's time for a resurgence in premium ad formats that help build your brand in front of this audience.

Make an impact with premium ad formats like AOL Mail's new sign-in takeover, which reaches 9M highly-engaged users every day.<sup>7</sup>

# 300%

## AOL's video streams have grown 300% in the last year<sup>6</sup>

Sources: 1 AdAge, "Economics of Online Video," February 2011; 2 eMarketer, "Actions Taken After Viewing Online Video," January 2011; 3 Nielsen & AOL, "Online Content: Fueling Social Connection and Interaction," March 2011; 4 Nielsen/AG, A18-49, Premium Online Video

Measurement 2009; 5 Nielsen "Premium Online Video Measurement," 2008-2009; 6 comScore Video Metrix, December 2009-December 2010; 7 comScore Media Metrix, January 2011.

## Targeted scale

Non-reserved can build brands

To compete in the online branding business, a non-reserved platform needs to do three things well:

### 1 Offer the largest number of available impressions

Platforms have to have access to impressions to be able to share them with their advertisers. So in this case, bigger is much better.

### 2 Find very specific audiences

The data sets that identify consumers make a huge difference. For example, someone who's bought a baby gift or two is a far different consumer than a mom who shops for children. Being able to separate the two is critical.

### 3 Manage risks posed to brands

16.9% of inventory served by ad exchanges is considered to be high risk, while only 6.3% of ad network inventory is similarly risky.<sup>1</sup>

**When weighing your options, consider this: Advertising.com not only has the inventory, audiences and safety it takes to compete, but guarantees results others can't match.**



Pictela's ad units drive interaction three times higher than standard units.<sup>2</sup>

## Premium Ad Formats

Reach full brand potential

Nearly fifteen years after the first banner ad was launched, new premium ad formats are revolutionizing the online advertising market. By 2014, premium formats will represent over \$7.6 billion in online spending.<sup>3</sup>

### Technology and great assets power premium formats

High-speed networks and cloud-based computing have allowed online advertising to reach its full potential. All of this innovation is leading to unprecedented consumer engagement. Of those who engage with a premium format ad, an astounding 10% will view every single photo, video or application.<sup>4</sup> "Any marketer with great assets is a prime candidate for using premium ad formats," said Greg Rogers, CEO of Pictela.

### Widespread adoption: the future of the industry

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) recently named a number of new premium formats as "Rising Stars"—high-impact online ad units that represent the future of the industry. They've gotten the attention of the top brands. "Because we know consumers' time is valuable, we're trying to give them something of value, something that's relevant," said Kim Kyaw, senior media strategist at Toyota.

**Premium ad formats will represent nearly half of total display advertising spend by 2014<sup>3</sup>**

## Beat the benchmarks

According to a recent study, the IAB Portrait premium ad format shows much higher interaction rates than standard ads, particularly in CPG and Retail categories.<sup>5</sup>

Interaction rates:

6.14x

Industry Benchmark

Portrait ad

7.19x

Industry Benchmark

Portrait ad (CPG)

9x

Industry Benchmark

Portrait ad (Retail)

# 86%

of purchases are local —  
made less than 10 miles  
from home<sup>6</sup>

## Local

Reaching consumers where they live

For national advertisers, creating a truly local campaign requires four key areas of focus:

### 1. Location-based tools and services

Mapping and location-based social platforms connect campaigns to the current place and mind-set of the consumer. The most creative marketers find ways to add value beyond just a check-in, with loyalty programs and mapped tips.

### 2. Local sites and content

True local journalism starts with the articles and video created and shared by the community, town or city. Once the domain of local papers, digital marketers can now connect their ads and events with local coverage.

### 3. Local offers and classifieds

Just like the local news circular, local digital ads can create days of deal-hunting fun — but brands must be wary of discounting their value. For example, a recent study showed that 32% of brands reported unprofitable Groupon campaigns, with only 13% of consumers returning to buy products at full price.<sup>7</sup>

### 4. Geo-targeting

Geo-targeting can connect an on-the-ground offer to an in-market shopper, with scale and frequency that purely local offerings can't match.

### AOL Local: We know all the local angles

**Mapquest:**  
The most accurate mapping on the web

**Patch:**  
800+ towns with local editors and a platform for community involvement

**City's Best:**  
Up-to-date reviews for major metro areas, written by the people who know them best

**Advertising.com's Geo-targeting:**  
Audiences delivered by country, state, city, DMA, zip code or destination

# Build your brand online the right way

Today, your customers spend more time online than they do watching TV. So if you want your brand to succeed, you need to tend to your online customer relationships with the same care you've always used offline.

That's why AOL has created the largest premium brand platform on the web, full of content that nurtures brand awareness and consideration, and stocked with formats that let your creativity shine. We give you:

**Share of voice** Make a greater impact with Project Devil – the largest 100% SOV platform on the web – and beautiful, powerful premium ad units from Pictela.

**Valuable audiences** Reach the audiences that drive purchases – including women and influencers – in the local areas where they're most likely to spend.

**Engagement platforms** Delight consumers with our sites' 80% original content, plus the web's fastest growing video platform – with views up over 300% from last year.<sup>1</sup>

**Targeted scale** Improve results with AdLearn – the industry's most effective optimization technology, matching over 178M users with the right ad at the right time.<sup>2</sup>

It's no longer enough just to be online.  
What you do – and where you do it – makes all the difference.

Environment matters at [advertising.aol.com](http://advertising.aol.com)

