

8 Ways Brands Can Use Animation to Enable Digital Content, Especially Now

Here's the deal: doing anything live has become a lot more complicated this year. With COVID-19 ripping through the country, halting day-to-day activities, and dealing a heavy economic blow to businesses, brands have had to rapidly change the course. For months, content and event productions stalled, creatives went into hibernation, location shoots died, and all were left picking up the pieces for their new normal.

Even now, as stores begin to reopen and business (sort of) returns, business, and personal brands are still up against a major challenge: Where does that leave all the digital content planned for the (pre-COVID) year? How do we iterate the digital content plan strategically? And how can digital content be produced efficiently when social distancing, safety precautions, and budget expenses are all on the line?

COVID can't stop the visuals

There's still the digital content fever and the best remedy is animated content.

In today's recovering COVID world, animated content offers brands, businesses, and people an opportunity to tell a story while sidestepping the challenges that come with [live production](#). Unlike live-action content, animation can be done anywhere, anytime, while being **drum roll** *actually affordable*. Before we dive into how brands can use animation, here are some of the perks to consider:

- Animation is a low hanging fruit. Got the story but need impactful visuals to help tell it (or help *sell* it)? If

you have the vision, strategic animation is a rising tide in execution.

- Tell a complex story in a fun, engaging way. Sometimes abstract concepts can be challenging to communicate while keeping audiences hooked.
- Less investment than a live shoot. Casting calls, test shoots, hair & makeup – these are nonissues for animated content.
- Quick turnaround time. Need I say more?

Now, let's get into it.

1. Podcasts

Podcasts have seen a massive surge in popularity this year – but the space is becoming even more crowded with the U.S. listener base alone [expected to reach 105.6 million](#) by the end of the year (a 14% increase from last year). With people spending more time at home, animated podcasts offer exposure to even bigger audiences than usual.

In order to differentiate your podcast (or even just a podcast segment) from the rest, you need to break through the noise. [Podcast animations](#) give your content an edge – keeping audiences on the hook and adding longevity to the shelf life.

Podcasts are all about storytelling anyway, so give your audience something they can visualize with solid animations that paint the picture. Whether it's podcast trailers, teasers for the episode, or even the full podcast show – make it visual, and engaging, and fun for your viewers. Give your podcast the VIP (very important podcast) treatment with visual hype, organically enabling both your subject matter and your audience to partaking in the sharing frenzy. We call that Leveraged Exposure.

When it really comes down to it, what would you be more likely to share – an audio link or a video link? Exactly.

ANIMATED PODCAST: History Hyenas

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2. Explainer Videos

Animated explainer videos help translate complex ideas and intangible concepts into simple, engaging, and meaningful content. This could mean translating your company's message, products, or services in a way that resonates with your audience's pain points – introducing your solution as the best solution.

Explainer videos help connect the dots for your most important people. It gives them a deeper understanding of your offering while helping *you* deliver on your company's bottom line. Generate leads, reduce bounce rates, foster brand awareness, and increase conversions – all from a single piece of content.

3. Launch Trailers

Whether it's a new book, a short film, an upcoming event, or a new kick-ass product you want to share with the world, [animated trailers](#) let you show off all the best parts. Extend the marketing life of your announcement with animated content versioned across digital platforms – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and even your own website.

EXPLAINER VIDEO: The Marketing Rebellion by Mark Schaefer

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4. Social Media Content

With social media as the cornerstone of most brands and personalities, there's no denying that video content makes the biggest impact. And video content in the form of unconventional animation can grab attention and stand out in

news feeds. It catches eyeballs, leaves a lasting impression, and makes it easier for audiences to connect with and share your message.

Your audience craves ongoing, consistent, and strategic animated content that connects. Give an animation studio (eh hem, like us!) just one month to work on a package of strategic shareable for your brand – and the value will speak for itself. If a picture paints a thousand words, animations make a thousand connections (just saying).

ANIMATED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT: [@realjoedesena](#)



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5. Advertising

Don't back out of the ad buy just because you can't get to the studio. Animations take the studio virtually by aligning the campaign and strategy with innovative visuals. Consider your product or service's need to pivot in positioning as the exemplary way you should pivot the ad content.

Consumers are tuned in to whether brands are tone-deaf to the times from the messaging, to PR, to pre-rolls. Our behavior has quickly adapted to the sensitivities of "precautions" and a big production will be evident in this day and age.

ANIMATED AD: Amazing Whip-It: New Year, New Me



ANIMATED AD: Amazing Whip-It: Back to the Future



ANIMATED AD: Amazing Whip-It: Back to the Future

6. Documentary / Film

For documentary and film directors, the creative is in the details. Think Breakout explainers, interstitial animations, or special graphic effects. Got a stack of old school film photos, news clippings, or tapes that need to be brought to life? Create an in-depth visual experience with just about any piece of existing content to showcase the point with animations.

From the simplicity of kinetic type to fully produced character design and scene development, if you can dream it, animations can help visualize it without the need for a full, live production.

DOCUMENTARY/FILM ANIMATION: [Choose Yourself: The James Altucher Story](#)

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7. Virtual Events

With live events still (mostly) on pause with no guarantee on when they'll return, virtual events are here to stay. If you're still on the fence as to how, when, and who will pull off your next virtual show, take a breath. There's a solution that requires much less production overhead than a live event. One that can even keep audiences engaged beyond just the keynote address or opening track. Say it with me: Animated content.

Whether it's a trade show, conference, webinar, concert, or just a good ol' gathering with your community, high-quality, strategy-driven animation means you won't have to compromise on the production value.

VIRTUAL EVENT ANIMATION: [Wyclef Jean Live at the Apollo](#)

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8. Music Content

Audio + visuals = magic. Just ask MTV. Music visuals have always existed in the following places: Thumbnail art, music videos, lyric videos, karaoke backgrounds, etc. But not every music video has to be live-action. Besides, imagine how limited you would be if it was *always*, purely just live-action?

[Animated music content](#) gives your audience something to sink their teeth, ears, and eyes into. Unlike a live film shoot – which requires producers and talent to scout locations, apply for permits, prep for scenes, and be physically on set for hours (if not days) at a time – music animation can be created with the audio you already have and within the budget you need.

ANIMATED MUSIC CONTENT: Proceed with Caution

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Ready to talk animation? [Get in touch.](#)