

The 2011 Social Video Advertising Report

Annual Review of Social Video Advertising Performance from Visible Measures



Executive Summary

Over the past few years, social video has been one of the fastest growing advertising industries. 2011 was no exception. By the end of 2011, consumers had chosen to watch ads over 5.6 billion times. These are active, lean-forward, user-initiated views where a real person needs to press the play button with the intention of watching an ad. Audiences are directly responsible for 1.5 billion of these views for brand marketers by copying, mixing, mashing, spoofing, and reposting their ads across the Web. In all, social video views nearly doubled in 2011.

Over 500 campaigns topped 1 million views in 2011 (one in every twelve campaigns), the highest number to date. The average campaign launched in 2011 drove over 765,000 views, which is the best ever. The threshold to make the Ad Age Viral Video Chart, the benchmark for social video performance, powered by Visible Measures, is at its highest point in history.

Humor was the preferred creative choice of agencies, however, campaigns that spoofed real events were the most efficient creative approach.

The automotive industry was the most active industry in social video, though the cell phone industry was the most popular on a campaign per campaign basis.

Monday was the most popular day to launch a social video campaign in 2011, however Thursday was the preferred day of Top 100 campaigns. March was the starting point for the most campaign launches overall, but February, home to the Super Bowl, served as the starting line for many Top 100 campaigns.

Methodology

The 2011 Visible Measures Social Video Advertising Report spans data from 2009, 2010, and 2011. The report covers over 5.6 billion views, 6,400+ social video campaigns, 3,100+ brands, from 110,000+ video placements across hundreds of video sites. All performance in this report is based on True ReachSM measurement, a combination of brand-driven and audience-driven video clips across the universe of social video. All views in this report are user-initiated, where a real person needs to press the “play” button to watch an ad.

The data were compiled using the patented Visible Measures platform, a repository of analytic data on hundreds of millions of online videos across hundreds of video sites.

This analysis does not include Visible Measures paid-placement (i.e., overlays, pre-/mid-/post-roll) performance data or video views on private sites. Aside from the Top Lists section, this report does not include data from movie trailers, video-game campaigns, TV shows, or TV network promotions. Data discrepancies in the Top Lists section are due to publication dates.



5.6 BILLION VIEWS

To date, people have chosen to watch ads over 5.6 billion times. For one of these views to count, a real person needs to click the play button. 4.1 billion views have come directly from brands, though not all of these are paid views. Many of them come from Earned Media, social endorsement.

Audiences Drive Big Views

Over 1.5 billion views have been driven directly by audiences. Over 980 million of these views come from copies that audiences have reposted across the Web. Nearly 540 million views are from new content created by audiences, including mixes, mashups, spoofs, parodies, and more.

Social Video: Over 5.6 Billion Views

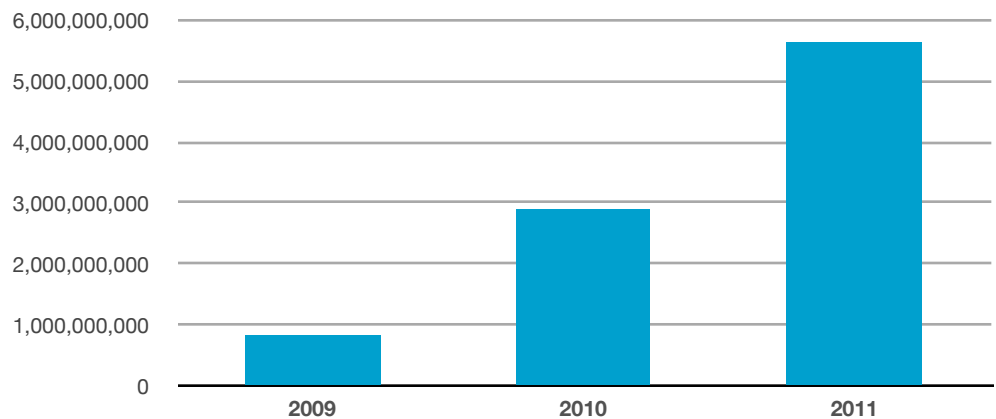


Figure 1: This figure shows the total view count for social video by year. In 2011, views nearly doubled in social video.



SOCIAL VIDEO VIEWS NEARLY DOUBLED IN 2011

Views are up in 2011. Way up. At the end of 2010, the social video advertising industry had driven a total 2.8+ billion views*. 2.7+ billion views came in 2011, nearly doubling the entire industry's performance in just one year.

Social Video Ads Never Die.

Campaigns launched in 2011 drove over 1.7 billion views this year. By contrast, campaigns launched before 2011 generated 960 million views this year alone, most with no paid media. This speaks to the stark contrast between TV and social video – ads on TV are there one second, gone the next. Social video ads, however, never die. In fact, they can surge at anytime when a new, related ad gets hot. Related video ads drive users back to older ads, a phenomenon we call viral reactivation.

**Through December 31, 2010.*

2011 Views: When Were the Campaigns Launched?

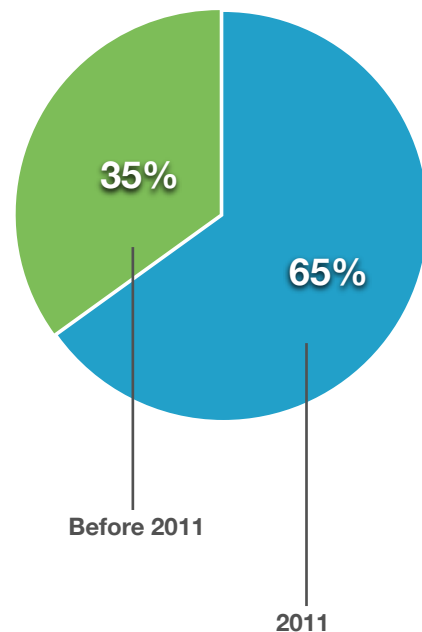


Figure 2: This is the breakdown of the views generated in 2011 by campaigns launched in 2011 versus 2010 and 2009. 35% of all views in 2011 came from campaigns launched before this year.



1 IN EVERY 12 CAMPAIGNS DROVE OVER 1,000,000 VIEWS IN 2011

View counts continue getting bigger for the social video industry as a whole, but what about individual campaigns? Did they generate more views in 2011 than in past years? We segmented campaigns into view count ranges to see if campaigns, overall, are getting bigger.

The Results

Campaigns are generating higher view counts across the board. We looked at the number of campaigns topping 10 million, 1 million, and 100,000 views in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

10 Million Views

In 2011, over 40 campaigns generated 10 million views, up from 33 in 2010 and 16 in 2009.

1 Million Views

Over 500 campaigns topped 1 million views in 2011, a big jump over the 360+ in 2010. In 2009, only 154 campaigns saw 1 million views. Campaigns had a 1 in 12 chance of breaking 1 million views in 2011.

100,000 Views

Well over 1,800 campaigns hit 100,000 views in 2011, triple 2009's 560+ campaigns. In 2011, one out of every three campaigns reached 100,000 views.

Campaigns by Year :
1 Million Views

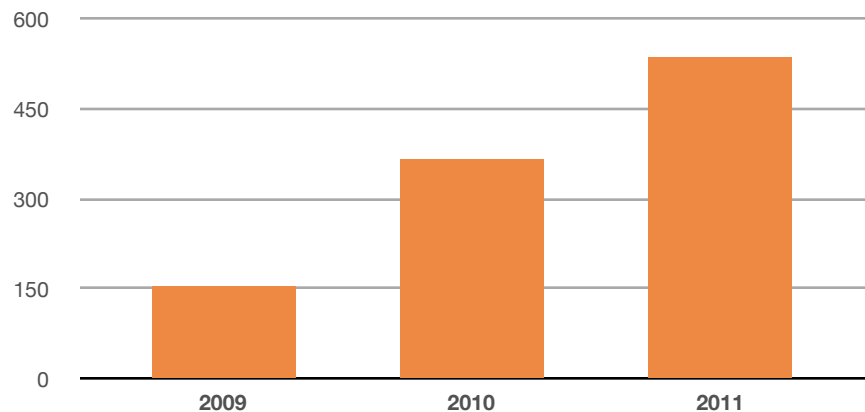


Figure 4: This graph shows the number of campaigns to reach 1 million views year over year.



THE AVERAGE 2011 CAMPAIGN DROVE OVER 765,000 VIEWS

Campaigns are reaching higher view count ranges, but what did the average campaign look like in 2011? In this section, we look at the average views per campaign, video placement, and brand.

Average Views Per Campaign

Campaigns averaged 765,000 views in 2011. This is a huge uptick from 2009, when the average view count per campaign was around 460,000.

Average Views Per Placement

Views per video placement increased as well, suggesting that social video is becoming more efficient. In 2009, the average video placement received 19,000+ views. In 2010, it was 34,000+. In 2011, it jumped to over 70,000 views.

Average Views Per Brand

Average views per brand were up as well. In 2011, the average brand generated over 1.2 million views. In 2009, that figure was 720,000 views.

Social Video Advertising To Date

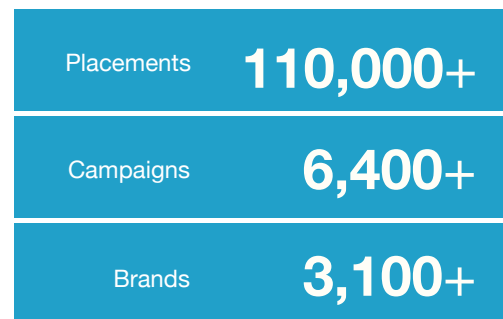


Figure 5: This figure shows the number of overall video placements, campaigns, and brands in social video advertising to date.

Average Views Per Placement

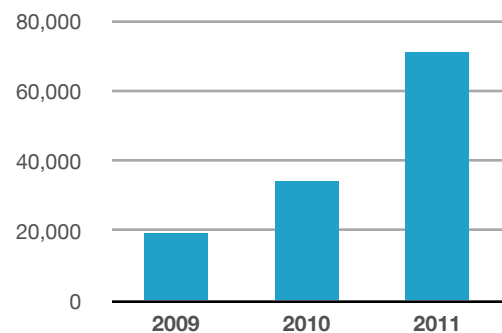


Figure 6: This graph shows the average views per video placement by year.



COMPETITION IS UP IN SOCIAL VIDEO ADVERTISING

AS ALWAYS

The Visible Measures Ad Age Viral Video Chart is the benchmark for social video performance. It features the Top 10 most-watched ads every week. When we launched it in March of 2009, it took less than 200,000 views to make the chart. Over the years, it's become increasingly difficult to make tenth place. In 2009, the average view count to make the chart was 220,000+. In 2010, that number almost tripled, reaching 605,000+. The competition continued to grow in 2011, with an average 700,000+ views needed to make tenth place. The last chart of 2011 topped 900,000 views.

Ad Age Viral Video Chart
Threshold Year Over Year

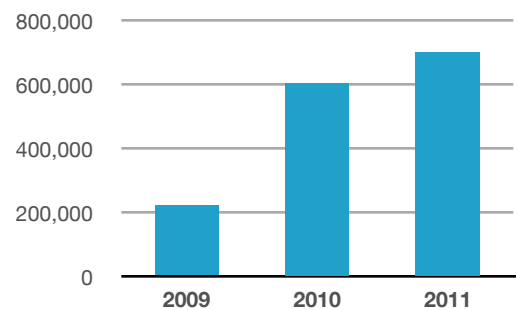


Figure 7: The average threshold to make the Viral Video Chart has increased significantly over the past few years. In 2011, it topped 700,000 views.

Ad Age Viral Video Chart
Threshold in 2011

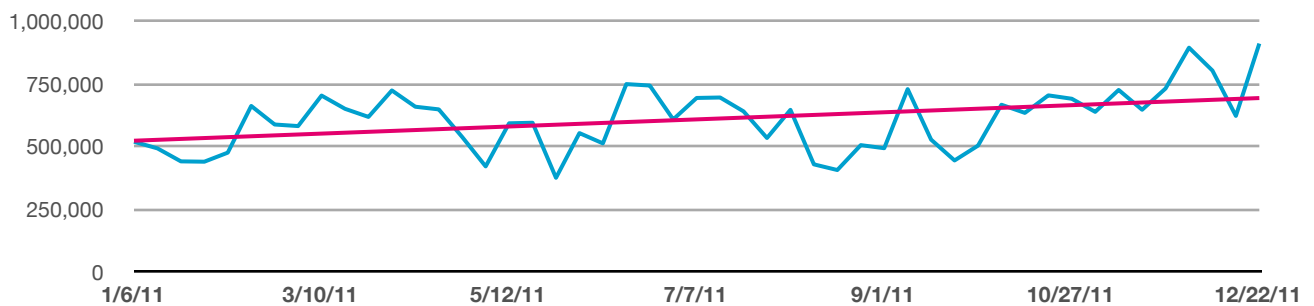


Figure 8: This is the weekly threshold to make the Ad Age Viral Video Chart in 2011. The trend is increasing, reaching 900,000+ views in December. (We've excluded the week of the Super Bowl to maintain consistency.)



HUMOR WAS THE MOST POPULAR CREATIVE APPROACH IN 2011

BUT SPOOFS WERE THE MOST EFFICIENT

Humor was the preferred creative approach for brands and agencies in 2011, with over 860 campaigns taking a humorous tone. Humor was also the most-watched creative type, with nearly 770 million total views.

The Most Effective Creative Approach

However, this isn't the full story. On average, Spoofs, Celebrities and Icons, and Contest campaigns were the most efficient approaches. Spoofs, like T-Mobile's *Royal Wedding* and *Angry Birds* campaigns, topped the list this year in terms of campaign efficiency. More than 50 campaigns employed a creative spoof approach. They generated 1.6+ million views on average.

Celebrities and Icons were the second most efficient creative approach, generating an average 1.6+ million views in 2011. There were 380 Celebrities and Icons campaigns for the year.

Humor campaigns averaged 890,000 views. Sex Appeal campaigns, all 112 of them, drove just under 880,000 views on average.

Social Video Advertising Creative Approach in 2011

Creative Approach	Campaigns	Views	Average
Humor	864	769,756,968	890,922
Celebs and Icons	380	609,807,519	1,604,757
Musical	663	544,268,695	820,918
Animation	368	314,841,898	855,549
Product Demo	315	284,117,689	901,961
Events and Stunts	184	231,839,399	1,259,997
Short Film	118	121,071,234	1,026,027
Contest	71	99,224,752	1,397,532
Sex Appeal	112	98,368,841	878,293
Spoof	53	85,507,053	1,613,341

Figure 9: This figure shows the number of campaigns to use the Top 10 creative approaches and the overall views those campaigns produced in 2011. The figure also shows the average views per campaign by creative approach. For example, spoofs averaged over 1.6 million views per campaign, while humor campaigns generated an average 890,000+ views. The list is ranked by views.



THE AUTO INDUSTRY WAS THE MOST ACTIVE IN SOCIAL VIDEO IN 2011

BUT CELL PHONES WERE THE MOST CONSISTENT

The Automotive industry launched the most campaigns in 2011, close to 300. Automotive campaigns also drove the most views out of any industry in social video with over 265 million.

The Hottest Industry

However, in terms of the hottest categories, Cell Phones generated more views on average per campaign than any other industry with 2.3+ million. Tech-related categories like Software* and Computing Products* were also among the top categories in terms of average views per campaign. The Automotive industry saw 910,000+ views on average per campaign.

**Not shown – They did not make the Top 10 list, ranked by overall views in 2011.*

Social Video Advertising

Industry Performance in 2011

Industry	Campaigns	Views	Average
Automotive	292	265,734,640	910,050
Apparel & Accessories	209	213,195,725	1,020,075
Health & Beauty	108	119,766,715	1,108,951
Online Services	93	112,341,772	1,207,976
Beverages	114	99,548,840	873,235
Cell Phones	40	95,114,520	2,377,863
Food	199	94,329,254	474,016
Telecomm	97	86,389,187	890,610
Alcoholic Beverages	125	73,337,663	586,701
Retail	96	67,641,934	704,603

Figure 10: This figure shows the campaigns, views, and average number of views per campaign by the Top 10 industries, ranked by overall views in 2011.



LAUNCH YOUR CAMPAIGN ON A THURSDAY

One of the biggest questions we get is when to launch a social video campaign for the best results. What day of the week, what time of year, etc. To answer this question, we dug into the data to see what it would reveal.

The most popular day to release a campaign in 2011 was Monday. Interestingly enough, the ranking goes almost in the exact order of the week, except Saturdays are less popular than Sundays.

Top Performers

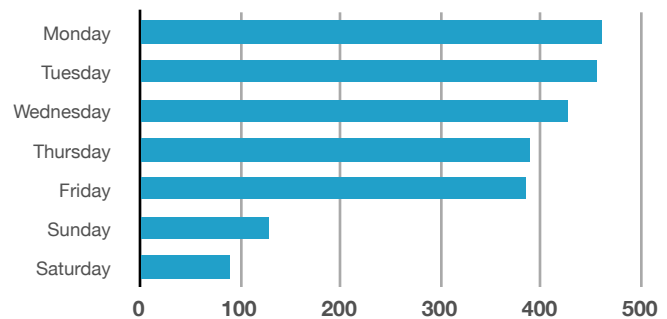
However, the top performers behave differently. We took a look at the Top 100 campaigns from 2011 and found that Thursday was the most popular day to release; 25 of the Top 100 campaigns launched on Thursday.

Underperforming Days

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday were the bottom three days of the week for both lists.

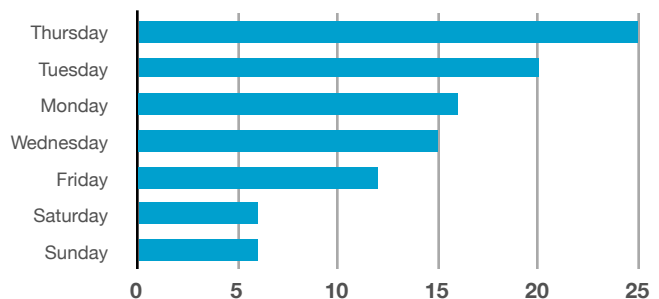
All Campaigns

Release Day in 2011



Top 100 Campaigns

Release Day in 2011



Figures 15 & 16: Campaigns were most likely to be released on Mondays and Tuesdays in 2011. However, a Top 100 campaign was most likely to go live on a Thursday.



IN SOCIAL VIDEO, SEASONALITY MATTERS

In addition to the day of the week a campaign goes live, seasonality seems to matter as well. Out of every campaign, March was the most popular month, followed by January and February.

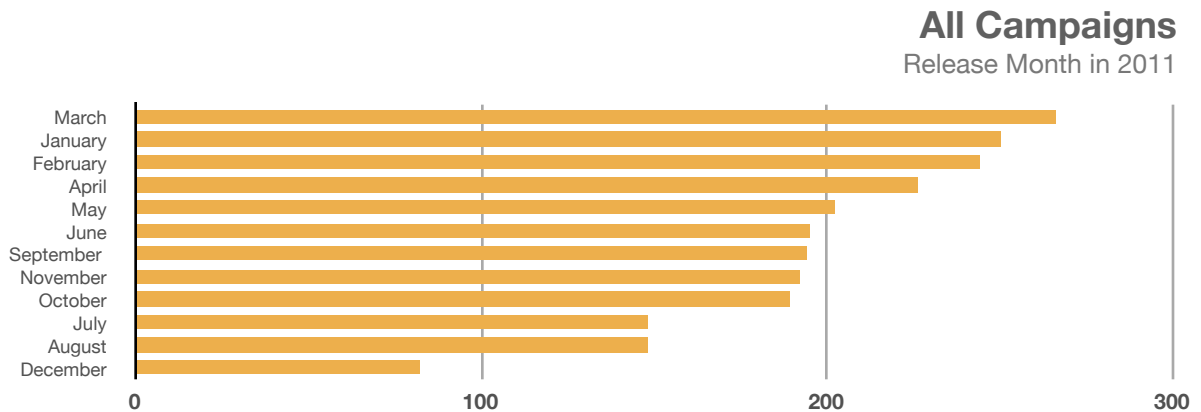
Top Performers

For the Top 100 campaigns, February was the most popular month, which is unsurprising because Super Bowl

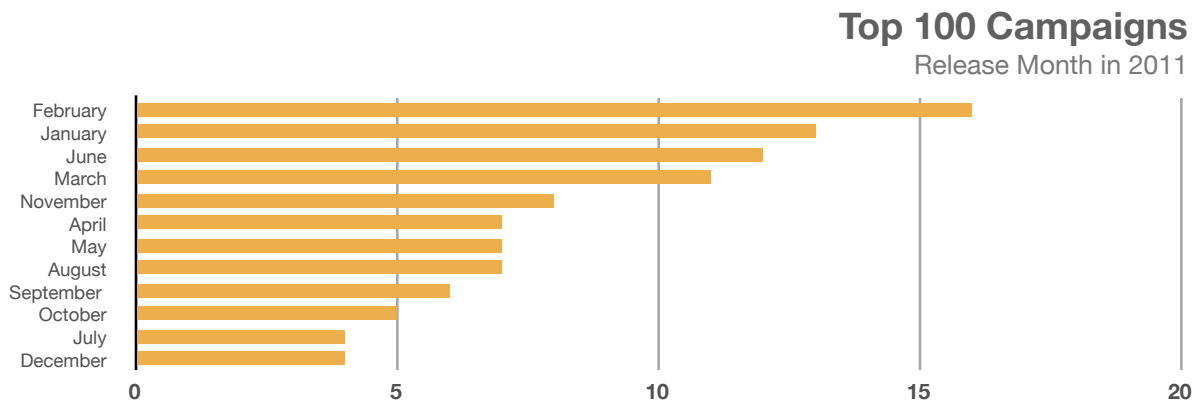
campaigns, bigger than average social video campaigns, usually launch in February. January comes in second, followed by June and March.

Underperforming Months

December and July were in the bottom three for both lists.



Figures 17 & 18: In 2011, most campaigns launched in March and January. However, Top 100 campaigns were more likely to hit the Web in February.



TOP SOCIAL VIDEO LISTS

The Most-Watched Ads

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: Advertising Age(R)

Date Published: December 12, 2011

[Read the full article in Advertising Age](#)

Rank	Brand	Campaign	Agency	True Reach
1	Volkswagen	The Force	Deutsch, Los Angeles	62.7 million
2	T-Mobile	Royal Wedding	Saatchi & Saatchi, London	28.4 million
3	Apple	Introducing the iPhone 4S	TBWA Media Arts Lab	27.8 million
4	Fiat	Life Is Best When Driven	---	27.4 million
5	Dirt Devil	You Know When It's the Devil	Filmakademie Baden-Wuerttemberg	26.4 million

The Most-Watched Brands

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: Advertising Age(R)

Date Published: December 28, 2011

[Read the full article in Advertising Age](#)

Rank	Brand	Campaign	True Reach
1	Old Spice	New Old Spice Fabio	95,607,032
2	Volkswagen	The Force	85,095,129
3	Google	The Web is What You Make of It	78,721,389
4	Nike	Back 4 The Future	64,308,331
5	Apple	Introducing the iPhone 4S	64,314,155

The Top Creative Agencies

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: Advertising Age(R), Creativity(R)

Date Published: December 29, 2011

[Read the full article in Creativity](#)

Rank	Brand	Campaign	True Reach
1	Wieden + Kennedy Portland	New Old Spice Fabio	191,361,089
2	Deutsch Los Angeles	The Force	90,238,873
3	Goodby Silverstein & Partners	Doritos, Pug Attack	85,036,550
4	TBWA\Media Arts Lab	Introducing the iPhone 4S	62,952,509
5	BETC Euro RSCG	Live Young	58,245,849



TOP SOCIAL VIDEO LISTS

CONTINUED

Top Fortune 500 Brands

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: AdWeek(R)

Date Published: December 20, 2011

[Read the full article in ADWEEK](#)

Rank	Company	Top Campaign	True Reach	Fortune 500 Rank
1	Google	The Web Is What You Make Of It	78,721,389	92
2	Nike	Back 4 The Future	64,308,331	135
3	Apple	Introducing iPhone 4S	63,314,155	35
4	Microsoft	Megawoosh (Make It Possible)	41,894,378	38
5	Motorola	Goodbye 1984	23,984,890	116

Top Auto Ads

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: AutoWeek(R)

Date Published: December 15, 2011

[Read the full article in AUTOWEEK](#)

Rank	Company	Top Campaign	Agency	True Reach
1	Volkswagen	The Force	Deutsch Los Angeles	63,121,112
2	Fiat	Life Is Best When Driven	N/A	27,417,342
3	Chrysler	Imported From Detroit	Wieden + Kennedy Portland	22,365,980
4	Kia	Share Some Soul	David&Goliath Los Angeles	13,447,336
5	Bridgestone	Bridgestone Super Bowl 2011	The Richards Group	11,478,160

Top Tech Ads

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: All Things Digital(R)

Date Published: December 14, 2011

[Read the full article in AllThingsD](#)

Rank	Brand	Campaign	Agency	True Reach
1	Apple	Introducing the iPhone 4S	TBWA\Media Arts Lab	28,754,014
2	Google	The Web Is What You Make of It	BBH (New York), BBH (London), Google Creative Lab	22,053,113
3	YouTube, Lenovo	Spacelab: What Will You Do?	N/A	16,984,733
4	Sony	Playstation 3: Long Live Play	Deutsch Los Angeles	15,774,078
5	Samsung	Gamer Commute	Digitas Boston	11,469,099



TOP SOCIAL VIDEO LISTS

CONTINUED

Top Film Trailers

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: Advertising Age(R), What's Trending

Date Published: December 21, 2011

[Read the full article in What's Trending](#)

Rank	Film	Studio	True Reach
1	Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 1	Summit	194,384,204
2	Transformers: Dark of the Moon	Paramount	155,949,595
3	Cars 2	Disney	153,344,844
4	Fast Five	Universal	83,480,281
5	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	Warner Bros.	75,019,348

Top Video Game Trailers

In Social Video in 2011

Publishing Partner: Advertising Age(R)

Date Published: December 12, 2011

[Read the full article in Advertising Age](#)

Rank	Game	Studio	Genre	True Reach
1	Battlefield 3	Digital Illusions CE	Shooter	137,583,145
2	Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	Infinity Ward	Shooter	126,504,952
3	Assassin's Creed Revelations	Ubisoft	Action	84,253,278
4	The Old Republic	BioWare	RPG	49,901,970
5	Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	Bethesda Softworks	Role-Playing	47,093,891

Top Presidential Ads

In Social Video in 2011

Date Published: December 15, 2011

[Read the full article on the Visible Measures Blog](#)

Rank	Candidate	Campaign	True Reach
1	Rick Perry	Strong	13,218,506
2	Herman Cain	Now Is the Time For Action	3,254,776
3	Rick Perry	Proven Leadership	2,168,670
4	Barack Obama	It Will Begin With Us	1,164,724
5	Ron Paul	New Gingrich: Serial Hypocrisy	1,149,706



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The data in this report powers Viewable Media,
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