ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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How long should last the video of an online course?

Is it better to make a long video which explains in detail the topic of an online course, or more short videos on the same topic? How to define the short and long concepts in eLearning?

The length of the videos in your online course is not trivial: too long a video is likely to annoy the interlocutor, while too short a video could compress the content of a course too much and make learning more complicated. How do you select the lenght of the video for an online course?
Choose the length of the video based on the topic to be treated

The first starting point for deciding the length of a video is the type of online course offered. A scenario-based and storytelling course can take several minutes because it is important not to interrupt the flow of the story. In a course of procedures to be applied, however, the videos will tend to be short to allow students to better remember the information. Subdividing complex notions into short content facilitates learning, also because students can take advantage of the content when they need it most. It is easier to find the information you need with more short videos than with a long video on the same topic. In addition, a trainer must always keep in mind that learners follow the online course in different places (in the office, at home, on the way home) and moments (during working hours, on weekends, in the evening).

Some general rules for establishing the length of a video in eLearning

That said, in eLearning it is a common opinion that videos must be short-lived to be effective. The reason is that in the digital age, readers or students make the decision to read or watch a video in a matter of seconds and their degree of attention is always lower. Analyzing the platform dedicated to videos par excellence, YouTube, several studies have shown that the moment of maximum attention is concentrated between 2 and 4 minutes. This means that if a video lasts more than 5 minutes, there may be a decrease in attention by learners and the trainer can not ignore it. The goal of eLearning is to transmit skills and knowledge in the most digestible way for learners and this implies a great capacity for synthesis and communication also in the creation of videos.

The duration of a video for eLearning based on its function

It must be deduced that, as a general rule, a video lesson should not exceed 5 minutes? In reality there is no single answer. Rather, the trainer is asked to adapt his course online to his target, the type of topic to be treated and the function that the video covers. In fact, a video can have a promotional purpose, that is to present the online course to attract new students, or it can be a real lesson where knowledge is transmitted, or it can still be a summary of previous lessons.

Indicatively, the length of a video in eLearning varies in this way:

- Promotion video, 1-2 minutes
- Video tutorial, 5-6 minutes
- Video lesson of specific content, 6-18 minutes

In choosing the length of your video it is essential to take into account the preferences of your target, the more or less specific content of the lesson and the purpose with which a video is made. There is no standard length of a video for eLearning, but an indicative time frame ranging from 1 minute of video on social media to 18 minutes of online conferences.