



2022 SET TO BE A YEAR OF BOLD, TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATIONS REFLECTING THE REALITY OF A POST-PANDEMIC EXPERIENCE

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iStock Releases Top Tips for Effective Visual Marketing in 2022 New York – December 13, 2021: iStock, a leading ecommerce platform providing premium visual content to SMBs, SMEs, creatives and students everywhere, today announces its top actionable marketing tips for 2022. While 2021 has proven to be another difficult year for businesses of all sizes around the globe, people and organizations have pivoted to adapt to the new normal, and for small businesses, the opportunities of a more localized society have never been brighter. iStock's Visual GPS research shows that younger generations are no longer driven by in-store experiences, but instead look to shop with businesses that share their values and give back to their local communities. This provides a great opportunity for small businesses, however they need to embrace new technologies, especially online video, to engage with this potentially lucrative market. The Visual GPS research shows that 40% of Gen Z and Millennials have increased their local shopping habits over pre-pandemic levels, and this is not just down to restricted travel. The research shows that their purchasing decisions are driven more by informative, online video content than in-store experiences. In fact, 43% of Gen Z and 41% of Millennials state that they actually prefer online video product demonstrations (67%) to in-person experiences. Additionally, these shoppers are also more likely to shop with businesses that share their values, with supporting their local community (78%) and offering more expertise and personalized service (81%) as major factors. So how do businesses go about engaging this burgeoning market? iStock experts have released a list of top tips that will improve marketing and help engage customers in 2022:

- *Grant Farhall, Chief Product Officer*

Embrace Video: Video has seen huge growth over the past few years and only increases in importance. Our research shows, it is the key to communicating with younger, growth markets and thus an essential for any marketing strategy. The key here is the move to more affordable, stock footage edited to communicate your company values over the costly custom video shoot that we have seen in the past. This allows small organizations to embrace video by using simple tools such as our iStock Video Editor so that even the most inexperienced can make compelling video content.

- *Dr Rebecca Swift, Global Head of Creative Insights*

Prioritize Sustainability: Visual media reflects the ways that people view the world. At iStock, we have seen keywords such as 'environmental social governance' (ESG) increase by over +900%, 'net zero' increase by +500% and 'circular economy' by +375%. In news, there's been a +420% increase in the number of visuals related to the keyword 'global warming' and a +472% increase in visuals around 'clean energy'.

Consumers now expect ALL brands to be transparent about their commitment to sustainability and, broadly, towards 'social good.' This dovetails with ESG efforts on the rise at large organizations today but are just as important in 2022 for small business too so a key factor to keep top of mind when creating marketing campaigns. Embrace sustainability as a fundamental of your business, and don't be shy about shouting about it!

Facilitate Personal Connections: Pent-up demand for travel across all audiences will mean that there will be a need to encourage travel but also to emphasize the safety protocols. We are calling it Conscious Travel – consciousness of how providers are adapting to the current traveler's needs. There is also a perceived luxury in getting away – more so than ever before and a third of respondents specifically see travel as an opportunity to connect to partners and family in a way that they didn't pre-pandemic. While travel may not be relevant to your business, illustrating the importance of reuniting with friends and family, and those personal connections is key to engaging with your audience.

- *Kat Hargrave, Marketing Creative Director*

Connect On A Human Level: As the world continues to change and adaptability becomes essential, people are seeking representations of individuality that confronts tropes of social norms. This is translating to design that strives to reflect the way we now relate to each other and communicate. Celebrate individuality and inclusivity in your use of imagery and recognize the way we connect has evolved.

- *Paul Braga, Associate Creative Director*

Be Bright & Bold: Bold backgrounds can help your brand stand out and grab your audience's attention. Bright colors and patterns will really resonate in 2022 and can help communicate your message and make sure you stand out from the crowd.

Go Big!: Oversized type and graphics can help tell a straightforward story and emphasize transparency. Having an oversized headline, icon, or logo can show to the viewer what your brand represents and the message you are trying to convey.

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