

Measuring ROI: Save Money on Creative Production

Creative production can be exciting and inspiring, but far away from the finished product of bright and arresting images or captivating video content are the many hours crafting the finished product.

It is essential to have a good creative team in marketing to realize the visions you have for a media campaign. Not only will it make your brand memorable, but it will also help you craft an image and brand which becomes recognizable.

Of course, creative production doesn't come for free, and there is a need to invest in this side of marketing to guarantee an ROI.

Revenue generated from campaigns represents success but stretching that ROI out means keeping your costs down too.

There are many ways to save money in the creative process without compromising quality, and placing a sharper focus on where your budget is being spent can lead to a better end product.

Sometimes ROI can be better measured by what you invest in a project as much as what you get out of it, and a reliable project management system can help you keep on top of that.

Being efficient

The purpose of business is to turn a profit, and while revenue generated through fulfilling orders plays a large part of that, reducing your costs should also be a priority.

Trimming costs don't necessarily have to involve downsizing or compromising aspects of your operation. Many of the most effective cost-saving measures can be done by investing in more efficient ways of working.

Spending money to save money seems a bit counter-intuitive. Still, when you consider that an investment in project management systems can help eradicate unnecessary costs elsewhere, you will soon see the benefits.

For a start, the software is expensive, or certainly getting the complete versions of particular applications you need for creative projects. You may try to limp by stitching together various disparate parts of vaguely related apps, but sooner or later, you're going to have to bite the bullet and purchase software and the licenses that go with them.

Photography software, illustration and design packages and apps for video editing all play a massive role in the creative and marketing process. With a project management system that can link all these tools together, the process becomes much smoother.

At GlobalEdit, we can design systems that integrate Adobe apps such as Photoshop, Illustrator and Bridge, and other assets and applications.

Management systems can draw together the best aspects of APIs, giving PMs a detailed overview of the process and the tools to control all facets of the project, from budget control to reviewing and approving proofs.

Consumers are increasingly demanding varied and engaging content and, from a marketing point of view, giving them this involves staking a lot in your creative process.

Creative project management will give you the overview you require and essential to achieving the goals you want. A smooth and efficient project management system allows you to keep tabs on all aspects of the creative process. It will also enable markets and creatives to collaborate in real-time, meaning time is not lost with campaigns that yield little ROI.

With an efficient creative process, you can bring projects to market much quicker and invite input from stakeholders at each stage of the process. This ensures that a project is sticking to the stated brief.

By investing in a project management system, you get access to various software pieces that are specifically designed to dovetail together, working smoothly for a more efficient process.

And greater efficiency means higher productivity. With a boost in productivity, your company will be able to take on more projects, which will build revenue.

Communication and collaboration

One of the main stumbling blocks to effective marketing can be the belief that creatives and marketers occupy radically different spaces. Creatives and other production personnel are there to beaver away and present projects for use in a marketing campaign, often based on a brief from a marketer.

The first draft is usually marked with revisions and tweaks to be made, and this can be a back and forth process which eats up valuable time and money.

Efficient creative production relies on shortening and honing this process, meaning marketers and creatives work side by side to achieve the common goals.

Creative project management helps keep everyone on the same page while allowing a PM to overview all aspects of the process, such as task allocation, time management, budgeting, and reviewing.

Shared resources

An efficient production process relies on all team members sharing access to resources and assets. Digital Asset Management (DAM) allows files to be stored and shared with everyone involved in the creative process. This cuts down on time spent on locating image files, photos or video files required for a particular project.

A creative DAM system allows team members to access assets, even if they are working remotely, and they can communicate with other team members through a PMS to share ideas and concepts.

With a reliable Cam system, files are available in the correct format for all team members. Meaning time isn't wasted requesting particular files and reformatting them for use in different software.

DAM also helps a company retain continuity of branding and message. Carefully curated creative assets mean that the files creatives have access to all related to the brand's tone and image. This means the branding can be continuous across different platforms.

Bringing that kind of reliability means creative projects have more chance of sticking to a stated brief and providing the message a brand requires for their campaign.

Therefore, this can save money in creative production because time isn't wasted on using unrelated assets or those which are at odds with a brand's themes and messages.

ROIs are generated from consistent branding and messaging as they don't confuse consumers or make them feel unclear about what a brand is trying to say.

Scaling up

Creative production software doesn't just save time and increase productivity, but it also allows for quick and effective scalability.

In-built tools allow for projects to be scaled up to reach more eyes quickly while also allowing for customizing to suit platforms or audiences.

This is where collaboration between creatives and media and marketing can be useful as your media team can tweak the scaled-up projects to ensure they are helpful where they need to be.

Content can be mass-produced and distributed thanks to scaling, which saves time and money.

Clear goals

Creatives and marketers can often think in different ways. Creative production can involve a lot of imagery and ideas, whereas marketing can sometimes deal in cold hard numbers – engagement rates, ROIs and KPIs.

However, when you are engaging creatives for marketing, there needs to be a synergy between those two fields. Marketers need to communicate a clear goal or endpoint for a campaign, while creatives need to share a vision of how they will go about that.

That's why establishing the scope of a project is key from the outset, and greater communication and collaboration helps to do that.

Ensuring everyone is on the same page also makes good business sense and can help cut down on needless waste, whether that be wasted time or resources. You may have even found yourself in a situation where a client has refused to pay because a project isn't completed to their specifications.

Reworking projects can mean more billable hours for your creative team, and before you know it, your margins are shrinking.

Finding a straighter path to a common goal is a much more efficient way of working, saving time and money.

With good project management, marketers and creatives can help establish an agreed endpoint and outcomes, meaning they are all pulling in the same direction.

This means that any deviations can be quickly flagged up and the project brought back on track.

Task setting and reviewing

Each project starts with a budget and an expected delivery date, although many end up breaching one or both of these. One of the reasons for this is that a PM often loses track of who is doing what, and perhaps just as important, who is doing nothing.

Keeping all team members on task is essential to completing a task, but it also ensures a PM will get value for money from their creatives. Many creatives will bill by the hour, or if they are contracted staff, may be entitled to overtime if projects needlessly run over.

This means that your budget starts to get thrown out of whack, and your delivery date can get kicked down the road, meaning you're not going to get paid until later.

A lot of this wasted time and money can be avoided with a reliable project management system.

A PMS can allow a project manager to see who is working on what task and when they are due to finish. Setting deadlines for individual tasks ensures a much more fluid creative workflow.

If a team member finishes one task and doesn't have another assigned while others are overloaded, this will create problems down the line.

Tired, overworked staff are more likely to make mistakes that need to be corrected later. On the flip side, having creatives sitting twiddling their thumbs is a waste of valuable working hours.

Effective project management allows for tasks to be set and reviewed, and you can even get an insight into the number of billable hours that are being chalked up in a particular project.

Keeping on top of tasks allows you to keep a tight rein on the budget while also supporting the project on schedule.

Be sociable

Let's not forget that one of the most effective and low-cost ways of engaging with your audience is through social media. This is increasingly becoming a place where creative production can pay dividends.

Posting on social media costs nothing (unless you invest in sponsored posts), and this means you can maximize your ROI with great creative content.

Savvy social media users are demanding even more professionally curated content across a range of platforms. Visual platforms such as Instagram and TikTok give you a chance to showcase your creative production for a minimal cost.

Free analytical tools can also help you keep track of how your content is performing.

Therefore, an investment in creative production can prove good value when you use free social media platforms to drive customer engagement or drive traffic towards your brand's website.

Supplementing this with the tools to measure your original content's performance on social media and you will find an effective way to measure ROI on creative production.

Creating content that search engine friendly is another cost-effective way to use creative production to boost ROI.

This is another area where a collaborative approach from marketing, particularly SEO, and creatives can help produce results.

Content created with keywords in mind will have a better chance of delivering the hits you seek from online marketing.

Keeping you on track

GlobalEdit can provide creative DAM solutions that help with creative asset management, allow for the smoother running of projects, both in terms of cost and time.

Efficiency comes from using reliable tools to organize creative production projects and monitor their progress.

By managing creative assets, you can allow greater collaboration among team members, ensuring that creative content is geared towards the marketing brief and retains the brand identity customers are familiar with.

Project management systems bring savings to creative production by allowing for more efficient working, more communication and collaboration, scalability, greater access to resources and the ability to set and monitor tasks.

And while you are saving on costs, you can still maintain production quality.