

2021

State of Video Report



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About our report

Marketers have had to adapt a lot over the past five years to keep up with the times. With new social media platforms popping up every day and marketing priorities shifting to go all-in on digital, it's safe to say that the landscape we once knew has changed forever.

One thing that has remained constant, however, is the demand for video marketing. Video continues to be an essential tool marketers leverage to communicate and connect with their audiences and customers. Here at Wistia, we've helped businesses grow with our video marketing software for over 12 years now, giving us plenty of time to see firsthand just how impactful video can be for companies that make the investment.

In this report, we'll share data and trends that showcase where video stands today and how it has evolved over the past five years. We'll explore topics like monthly video consumption rates, how businesses leverage video for demand generation, and more.

We'd love for you to get the most out of this information as well! So please feel free to use the statistics listed in this report in any commercial or non-commercial capacity; all we ask is that you link back to this report as the original source.

Thanks for stopping by, and happy reading!



About our data

The State of Video Report is not a survey; everything you see here is based on real user data from the Wistia platform. We analyzed over 44 million videos that were uploaded between 2016-2020 across more than 500,000 accounts to build this report.

SECTION 1

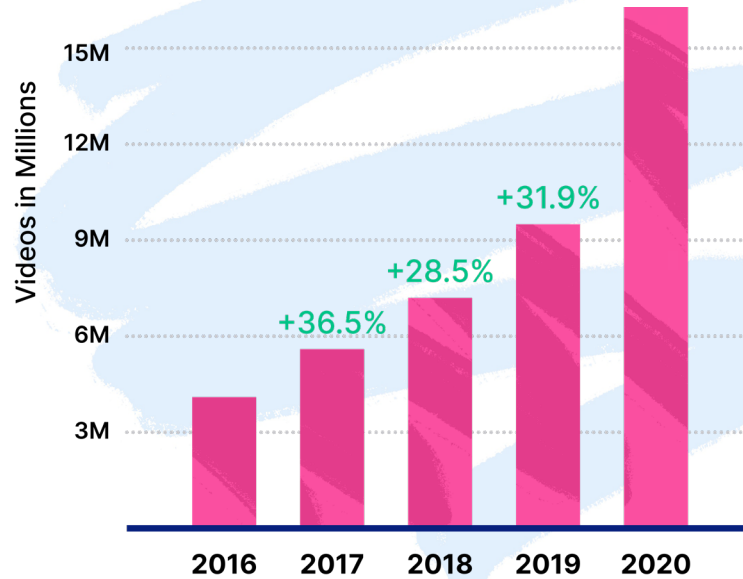
Video creation

Here, we looked at how many videos were uploaded to our platform.

Businesses have been leveraging video as a tool for years now—and that usage isn't slowing down anytime soon.

Since 2016, the amount of videos uploaded has increased by 263%.

Videos uploaded to Wistia over time



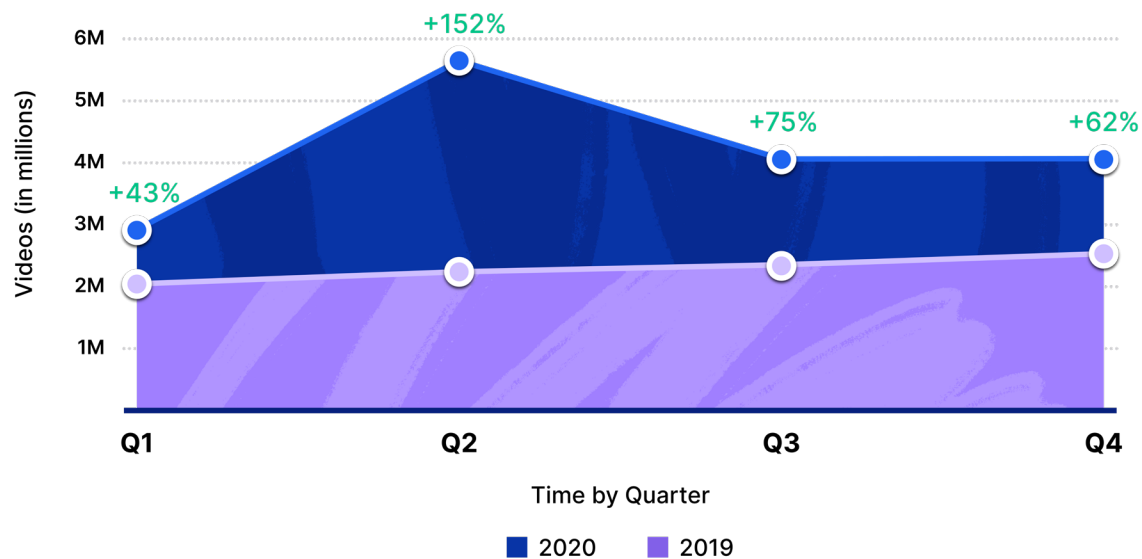
YEAR	TOTAL VIDEO FILES CREATED	% CHANGE
2016	4,716,543	N/A
2017	5,569,018	+18%
2018	7,188,764	+29%
2019	9,469,886	+32%
2020	17,139,976	+81%
5 Year Change		263.4%

Key takeaway: Brands are committed to video

In 2020, we saw the highest rate of year-over-year growth, with an 80% increase in video uploads. We also experienced a first—more than 100,000 video uploads in a single day, peaking at 103,603 video uploads on April 22. This strong shift showcases that the global pandemic has accelerated the creation of video content.

Though video uploads did begin to slow over the summer, the overall number of uploads is still 88% higher than before the pandemic.

Videos uploaded in 2020 vs 2019





Video uploads increased
by 80% in 2020 alone.

SECTION 2

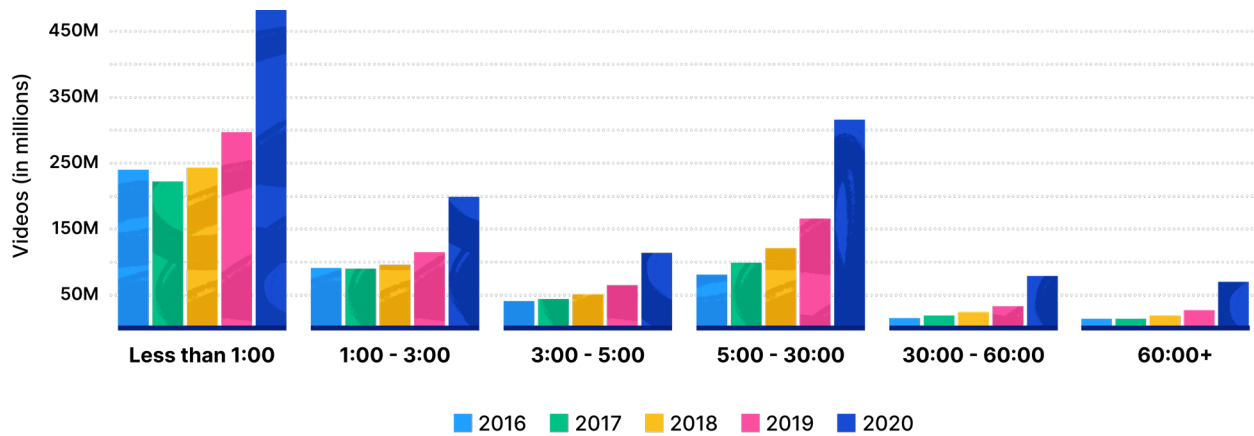
Video length

This analysis looks at the average length of videos uploaded to Wistia.

Over the course of five years, we've seen the most total volume in the short-form video category, with over 4.8 million 0- to 30-second long videos uploaded in 2020.

This is a 62% increase over 2019 and a 100% increase since 2016.

Videos uploads by length over time



VIDEO LENGTH	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5 YEAR % CHANGE
0-1 Minute	2,404,273	2,218,802	2,429,919	2,969,667	4,816,548	100.3%
1-3 Minutes	907,597	895,634	968,081	1,154,094	1,990,224	119.3%
3-5 Minutes	411,033	438,855	510,753	652,863	1,142,465	178.0%
5-30 Minutes	814,523	985,829	1,214,832	1,658,610	3,161,752	288.2%
30-60 Minutes	145,577	191,152	244,725	331,605	794,942	446.1%

Key takeaway: Longer videos are gaining traction

Though video volume is up across the board, [long-form videos](#) stole the spotlight from a growth perspective. The number of videos in the 30-60 minute category grew 140% compared to 2019 and 446% compared to 2016. This suggests that longer-form content is becoming a more popular option for businesses as more companies embrace video series and other long-form video content.



In 2020, we saw the biggest jump in videos uploaded to our platform that were over 30 minutes in length—a 140% increase compared to 2019.

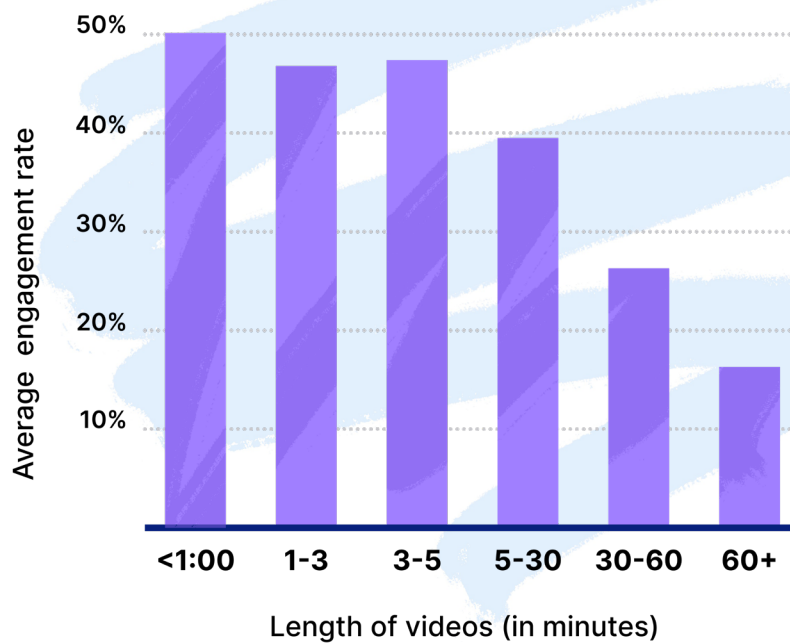
SECTION 3

Video engagement

At Wistia, engagement is calculated by looking at the total plays on a video and multiplying that number by the length of the media. This gives us the total amount of time your audience could have spent consuming your content—a 100% engagement rate, in other words. Then we take the actual time people spent watching the videos and divide that by the first number. Boom! Engagement rate.

This chart showcases video engagement rate compared to video length. Engagement tends to stay just at around 50% for the first three minutes and drops steadily after that mark. Folks that stick around longer than this are super engaged and good candidates for additional content.

2020 engagement rate over playing time



When we looked at the average engagement rate over the years, we found that the change from year-to-year was not significant.

Despite narratives on shrinking attention spans, it seems that people will still stick around and watch your content if it's compelling.

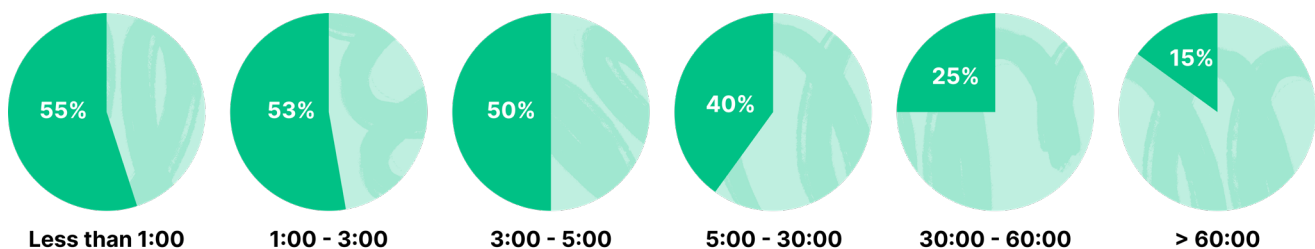
VIDEO LENGTH	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	AVG. ENGAGEMENT
0-1 Minute	53.3%	55.5%	55.5%	54.9%	50.1%	53.9%
1-3 Minutes	49.7%	51.9%	52.7%	52.2%	46.7%	50.6%
3-5 Minutes	46.6%	49.1%	50.3%	51.1%	47.4%	48.9%
5-30 Minutes	39.1%	40.7%	41.4%	42.3%	39.4%	40.6%
30-60 Minutes	25.8%	26.8%	27.1%	27.4%	26.3%	26.7%
60+	16.2%	17.3%	0*	18.1%	16.3%	13.6%

**This appears to be an anomaly in the data, so it has not been included in the average.*

Key takeaway: Map engagement benchmarks to video length and goal

Remember that your [engagement rate](#) will vary greatly depending on the video length and the goal of your video. A product launch video will likely have a very different goal than a video that's part of an entire series, so keep that in mind as you look at engagement rates for each video. In general, be sure to put your best foot forward by making your content discoverable on your website and using a snappy intro to keep folks engaged longer.

As a very broad rule of thumb, aim for these engagement benchmarks depending on the length of your video.



**Engagement varies heavily depending on multiple factors like the content within the video itself, where the video is embedded, and more.*

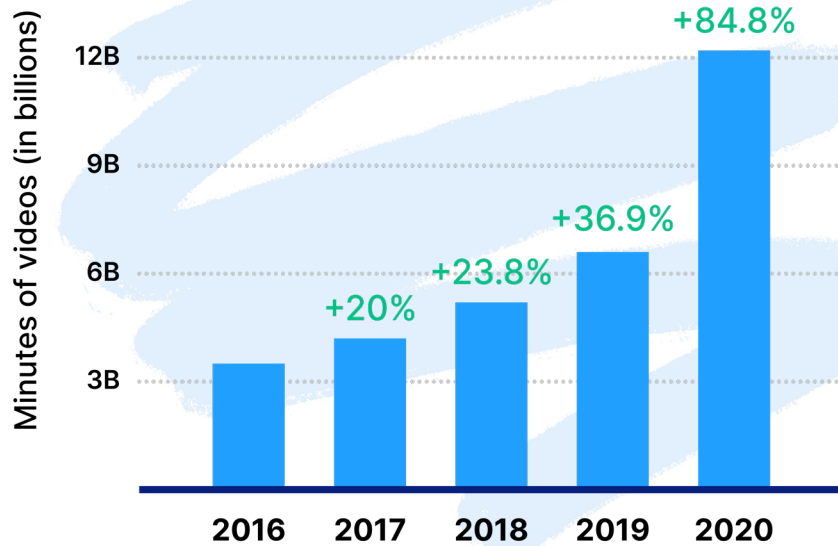
SECTION 5

Video consumption

Since 2016, we've seen time spent watching videos increase from 3.5 billion minutes to 12.2 billion minutes—a 249% increase in time spent watching. This is mostly attributed to a dramatic increase at the onset of the pandemic.

When looking at data from 2016 to 2019 on a month-to-month basis, we noted fairly consistent trends around when viewers watched videos: There are usually slight peaks at the beginning of the year and in the fall, with a valley around the summer months. However, 2020 told a very different story.

Minutes of videos watched by year

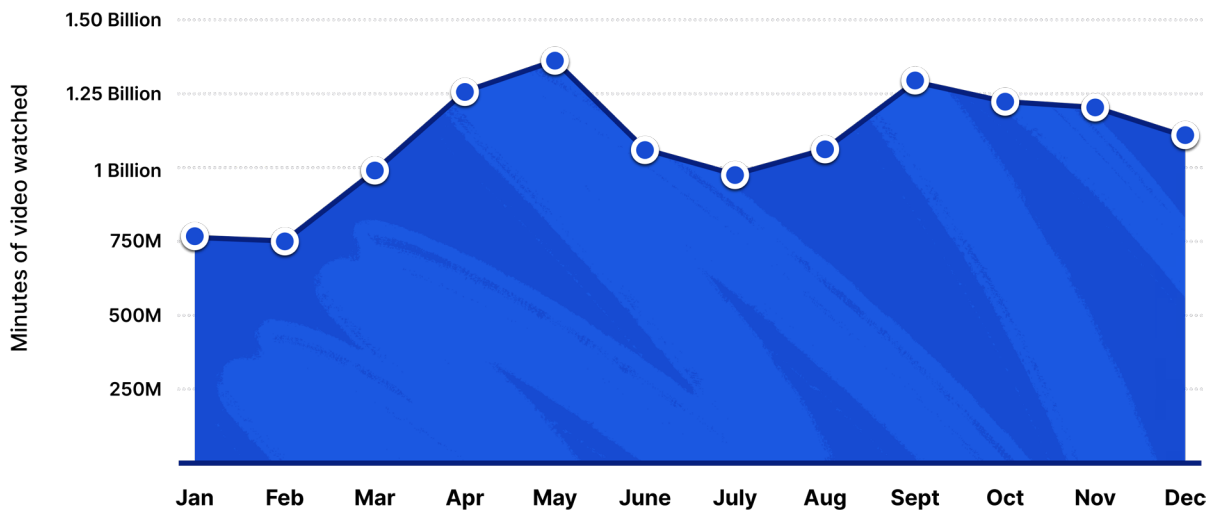


YEAR	MINUTES WATCHED (BILLIONS)	% CHANGE
2016	3.5	N/A
2017	4.2	+20%
2018	5.2	+23.8%
2019	6.6	+26.9%
2020	12.2	+84.8%
5 Year % Change		+248.6%

Key takeaway: Viewers are consuming more video than ever before

The global pandemic has overwhelmingly impacted the amount of [time people spend watching videos online](#)—we saw an 85% increase in minutes watched on our platform in 2020. People watched 12.2 billion minutes of video last year—that's 23,211 years worth of content!

Minutes of video watched in 2020 by month





People watched 12.2 billion minutes of video last year—that's 23,211 years worth of content!

SECTION 6

Video interactivity and conversions

With Wistia, customers have the opportunity to add [interactive elements](#) to their videos.

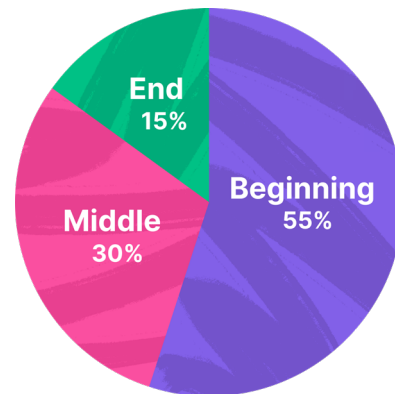
These tools include video annotations, Calls to Action (CTAs), email collector forms, video chapters, and more.

Customers use these handy add-ons to make their video content more engaging and generate leads directly within their videos.

Video conversion placement

In 2020, for videos that contained an interactive element, 55% placed the tool at the beginning of the video, followed by 30% at the end and 15% somewhere in the middle.

Interactive element placement
by location in the video
across all uploads in 2020

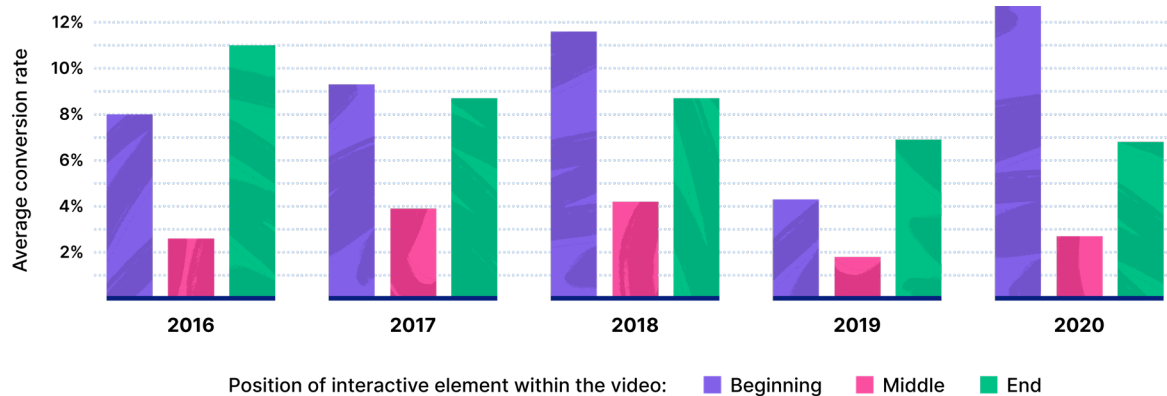


MEDIA POSITION	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-YEAR AVG.
Start	569,507	257,741	261,258	199,532	288,480	59.3%
Middle	44,647	38,450	70,323	57,618	75,558	10.7%
End	143,414	186,394	197,291	119,144	152,443	29.9%

Video conversion rate

When it comes to demand generation, interactive elements placed at the end of videos had the highest conversion rate over the past five years, averaging 8.7%. The average conversion rate has also increased over time, from 8.6% in 2016 to 12.7% in 2020.

Video conversion rate by position

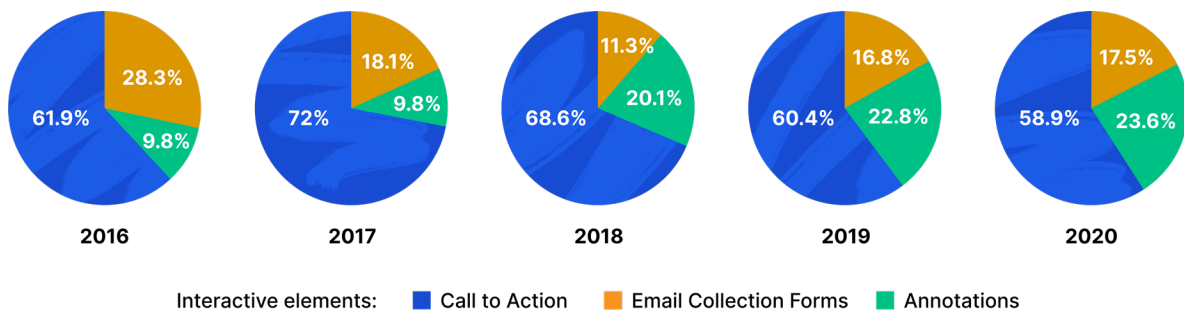


MEDIA POSITION	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-YEAR AVG.
Start	8.0%	9.3%	11.6%	4.3%	12.7%	7.9%
Middle	2.6%	3.9%	4.2%	1.8%	2.7%	3.0%
End	11.0%	8.7%	8.7%	6.9%	6.8%	8.7%

Types of conversion events

For lead generation, Wistia users have three options to engage viewers and capture leads: Calls to Action, email collection forms, and annotation links. Calls to Action are the most popular type of conversion opportunity added by customers.

Types of interactive events used over time as a percentage

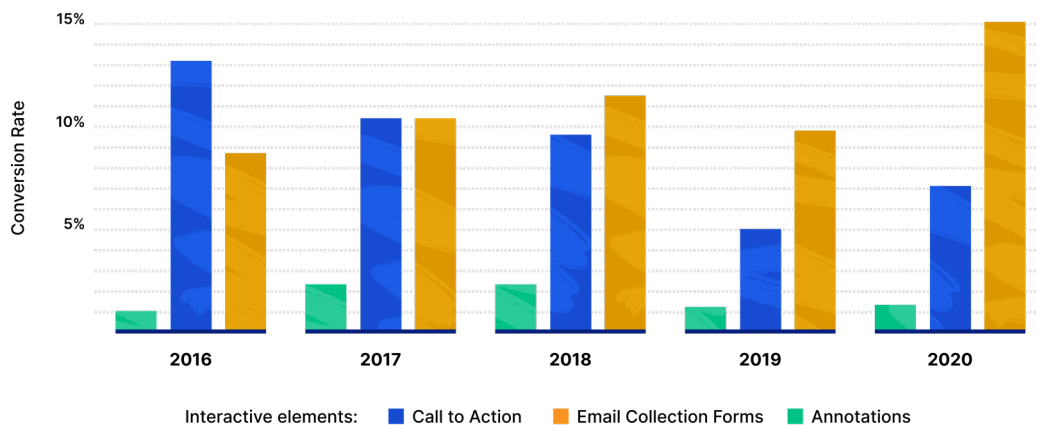


	CALL TO ACTION	% OF TOTAL PER YEAR	EMAIL COLLECTION FORM	% OF TOTAL PER YEAR	ANNOTATION LINKS	% OF TOTAL PER YEAR
2016	133,955	61.9%	61,235	28.3%	21,223	9.8%
2017	181,741	72.0%	45,867	18.1%	24,774	9.8%
2018	200,976	68.6%	33,182	11.3%	58,839	20.1%
2019	124,111	60.4%	34,480	16.8%	46,916	22.8%
2020	157,341	58.9%	46,827	17.5%	62,990	23.6%

Video conversion rate by event

All of this info is great, but what types of conversion events are the most successful at generating engagement and leads? When segmented this way, our email collector feature is actually the most successful at converting viewers, with a 15% conversion rate in 2020. Calls to action had a 7% conversion rate, followed by annotation links with a 2% conversion rate.

Conversion rate by interactive element over time

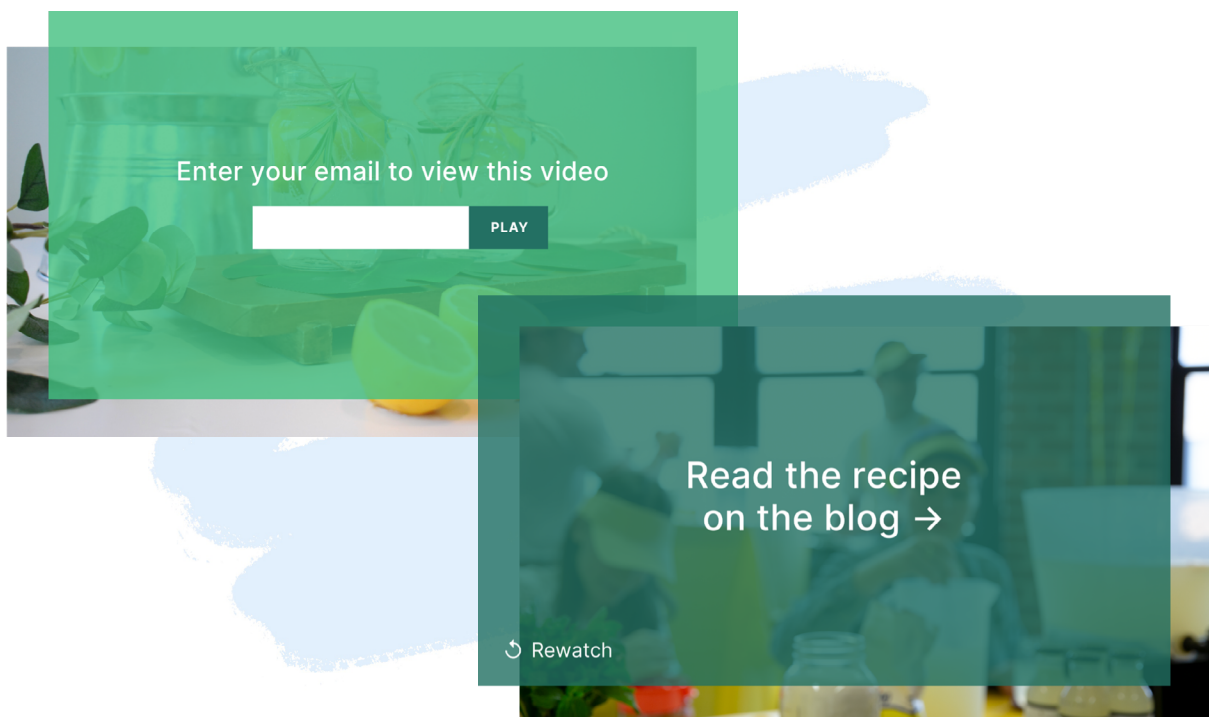


MEDIA POSITION	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	5-YEAR AVG. CONVERSION RATE BY MEDIA TYPE
Call to Action	13.2%	10.4%	9.6%	5.0%	7.2%	8.76%
Email Collection Forms	8.7%	10.4%	11.5%	9.8%	15.1%	10.32%
Annotation Links	1.0%	2.3%	3.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.8%

Key takeaway: Video can be used to generate and nurture leads

In 2020, we saw a large uptick in the number of videos using conversion events—a 30% increase over 2019. We've also seen a 24% lift in the volume of videos using conversion events over the past five years.

This finding correlates with the increase in video content consumption overall, suggesting that viewers are willing to [give their email addresses](#) to businesses when engaging with their video content.





The average video conversion rate has increased over time, from 8.6% in 2016 to 12.7% in 2020.



Final thoughts



Video will continue to be an essential tool for businesses

There was once a time when video marketing may have fallen under the “nice-to-have” category for most marketers. But if we look at the past five years as an indication of where we’re heading, video will continue to be considered an essential tool. The global pandemic only accelerated video content creation, so we predict that companies will continue to leverage these tools to grow their businesses.



Marketers will double-down on live virtual events

Throughout 2020, marketers did a ton of experimenting with [live video and virtual events](#). Experience producing these types of events will become a default for marketers moving forward. Whether that means being comfortable on camera or knowing how to best engage with viewers on a live stream, marketers will need to keep up with best practices and industry standards in this space.



The barrier to entry for video creation will continue to drop

Lastly, we think more marketers will adopt video as creation becomes easier thanks to new tools and software. However, creating quality content will remain important for businesses that want to stand out against the competition. It's easier than ever to start experimenting with video, but companies should do so while still prioritizing creativity and quality.



About Wistia

Wistia is proud to offer video marketing software that helps more than 500,000 businesses grow with video. From their ad-free hosting and lead generation tools to detailed analytics, Wistia's software helps you get more from your videos.

[Learn more about Wistia](#)

[See more free resources](#)