

Social media and influencer promotion is becoming a larger part of the digital marketing mix each year.

Text edited by G. Symes
Images courtesy of Brent Durand

Branding videos, sponsored posts, social media marketing... confused? We interviewed digital media marketing consultant and underwater photographer Brent Durand to get the scoop on what these services are and how they can benefit your dive business and increase your sales.

What exactly is digital media marketing? Durand says, digital media marketing encompasses all aspects of a company's online sales and promotions efforts.

“Well-planned and targeted digital marketing efforts not only drive sales but engage consumers at all stages of the customer life cycle.”

— Brent Durand,
digital media marketing consultant

X-RAY MAG: As a digital media marketing consultant, what kinds of things do you advise clients about or what services do you offer?

BD: I try to start with the big picture and then work down into the details, ensuring that all of our efforts deliver smart return on investment. Every company has a

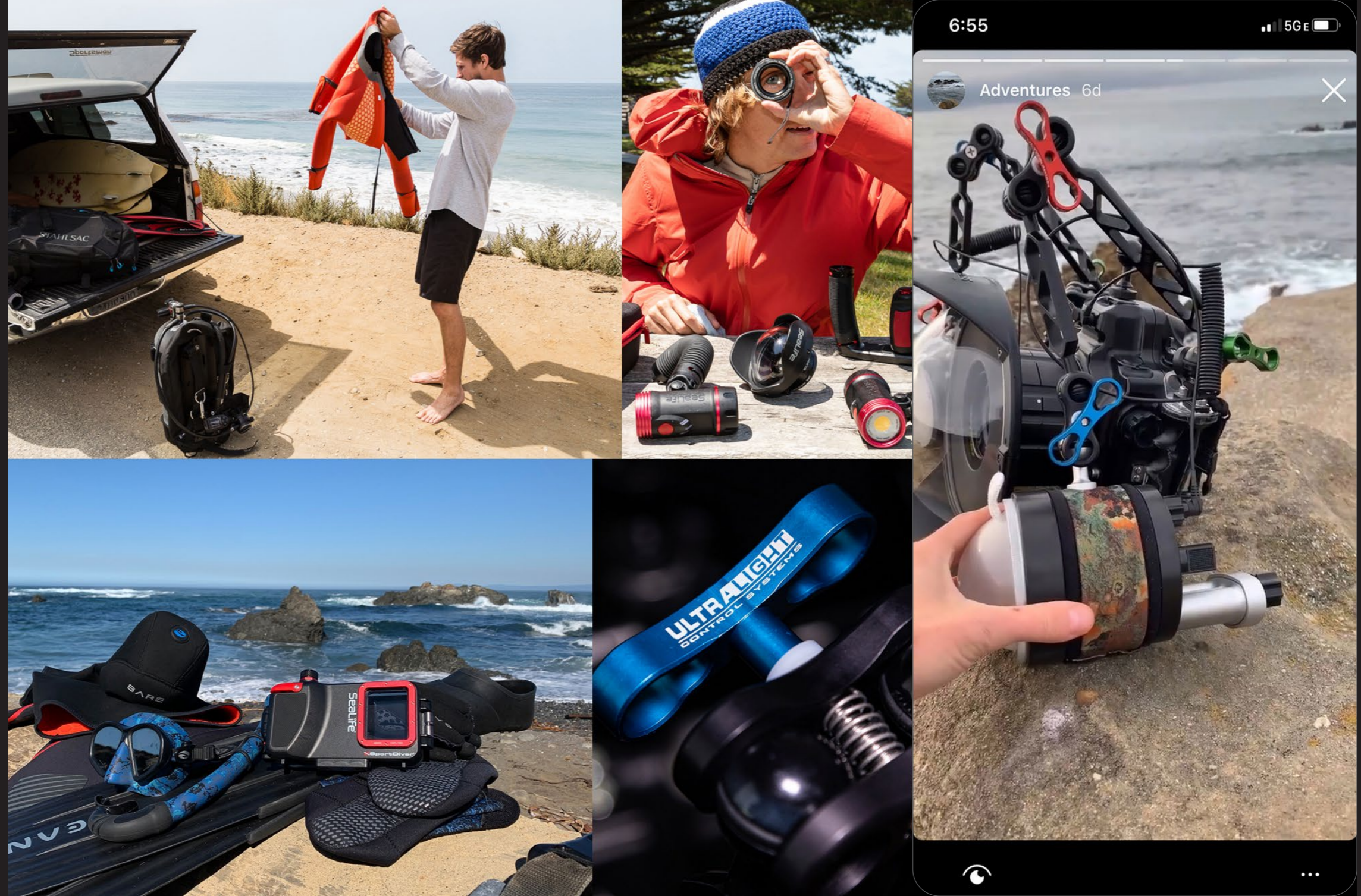
different online presence and different business goals they hope to achieve through digital. I learn where the company is now and where they want to be, and then fill in a detailed roadmap and action plan that might cover website

updates, social media and influencers, paid advertising, building a content library, and newsletter strategy. I also shoot photo and video myself, making my boutique agency, We All Roam, a one-stop shop for digital media.

X-RAY MAG: What are the components of a successful digital media marketing plan and what role does a branding video play in the overall strategy?

BD: A brand video is a great introduction

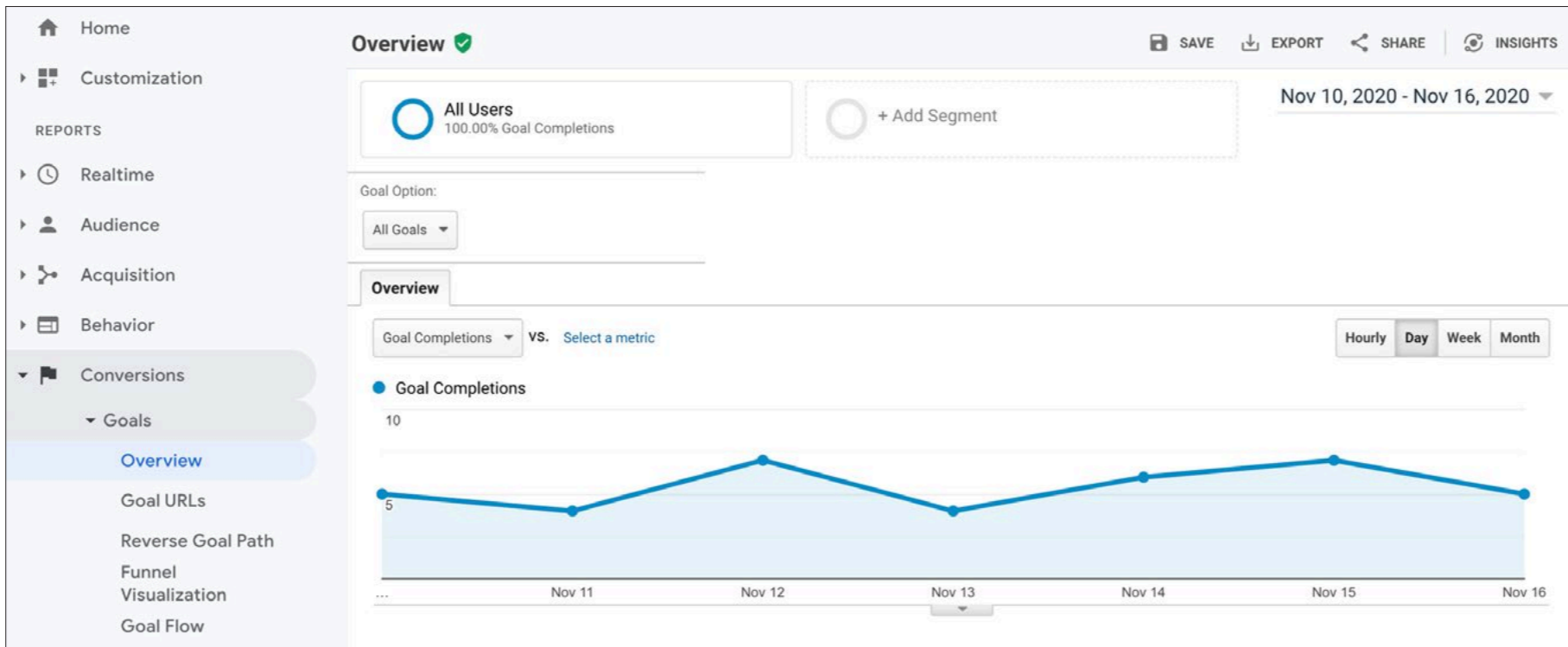
to your company. It is a first impression. Video now comprises over 80 percent of content consumed online, so a short, attention-grabbing video can really tell your story. It can be used on your website or for any of the new digital trade



Branding Videos & Digital Media Marketing

— An Interview with Brent Durand

Tracking and optimizing performance is essential for digital marketing.



shows. Sometimes, the exercise of creating a brand video or other ad creative helps solidify a brand image and identity that has not been totally clear.

A strong digital marketing plan will vary, depending on the client. For example, a dive center with an online store would look towards a conversion-oriented marketing plan composed of a seamless website shopping experience, paid ads, newsletters, and sale and new product calls to action. This would naturally fit in with the multisensory brand experience at the physical store, personalized instruction, and group dive trips that all turn a one-time shopper into part of the local dive community.

X-RAY MAG: Why is video more important for social media these days?

BD: Video is the future. Social media is rapidly shifting to favor video, so it is only natural for brands to be right where the customer is consuming content. Video also makes it very easy to relay more brand messaging—visual, audio or text—than what you might find in a traditional ad.

X-RAY MAG: How can a dive business make the most of their efforts to create a brand video?



This screen in a brand video clearly demonstrates that the magazine delivers cross-platform content for the reader to view anytime, anywhere. Audio voiceover also relays the same message. [Click image to see video >>>](#)

Audience

- Audience dashboard
- All contacts
- Signup forms
- Tags
- Segments
- Surveys
- Inbox

Newsletter

click to add a message

Email Address

First Name

Last Name

Add a field **Field settings**

- Text
- Number
- Radio Buttons
- Check Boxes
- Drop Down
- Date
- Birthday
- Address
- Zip Code (US Only)
- Phone
- Website
- Image

Feedback

BD: This boils down to having a strong content strategy. Pre-planning will streamline production efforts and allow you to accomplish several marketing goals at once. For example, if a dive resort would like to film new underwater content for a brand video, I would suggest finding a videographer who can film and produce that project while also creating a library of short clips and spin-off videos for social media, YouTube and other sharing venues. Better

yet, hire someone who is also very active on social media, which means they will be creating some buzz and exposure while they are on location filming. They might even be able to line up some magazine articles focusing on the resort and dive destination.

A dive gear manufacturer would do the same thing—shoot for the brand video, plus short-form content about the products and even clips or stills for social media or other advertising creative.

X-RAY MAG: What are the next steps in the process and how do you measure the results?

BD: Once the digital marketing plan is mapped out, it is time to execute. I am a big fan of assigning responsibilities and deadlines, since these things can get hazy in small companies where folks wear many different hats.

Viewing the results is easy; the hard part is knowing what the key metrics will be. How will we meas-

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Website updates, newsletters, online ads, and other components of a digital marketing plan can be complicated to set up in a way that maximizes their value.

ure success in our new marketing plan? Sometimes, this involves several stages within the sales funnel—each of which is important. We might look at newsletter signups or we might look at direct sales. Or we might simply look at engagement rates.

Once we understand our early results, we can take the next step, which is optimizing the strategy from top to bottom. ■

Brent Durand is a professional underwater photo and video creator, writer, photo instructor and digital content guru. He publishes an active YouTube channel and companion website with over 40 free video tutorials, articles, gear guides and virtual lessons for underwater photographers. Durand also helps dive businesses develop smart digital media strategies. Learn more at [BrentDurand.com](#).