

Meaningful connections, by design



By [Tyler Greer](#), issued by [VDX.tv](#)

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Charles Eames, mid-twentieth century modernist designer and creator of the legendary Eponymous chair, viewed design in a pragmatic and results-driven way. "Design," he noted "is a plan for **arranging elements** in such a way as best to **accomplish a particular purpose**." To Eames, this meant understanding the materials and tools available, and figuring out how best to draw them together into a singular solution which best fulfils a particular need. Clearly, it also meant understanding that need in the first place.

It's an instructive way to think about media, especially in a space now driven by technology and data, because it is incumbent on us to ensure we arrange the elements we have at our disposal to accomplish our own purposes. For brands, the first and most important purpose is to make a connection between themselves and their audience. That connection, even if only fleeting, is essential to driving whatever action the campaign is required to perform thereafter. Today, there are three elements which are critical to this outcome: **impact**, **access** and **relevance**.

Exploring each of these in turn helps us understand not only how important each one is, but the opportunity brands have to better foster connection when the right elements are aligned. Starting with Impact, what this really refers to is creative, and in the case of digital the most impactful creative tool is video. The numbers around video's impact are well documented, something exemplified by the industry's willingness to throw ever more money at it. But we can easily be lured into the idea that digital video simply means pre-roll. We shouldn't be. Video can shine brightly across a range of ad units and sizes, capturing audience attention and making significant contribution towards ROI.

But no matter how great video creative might be, if it cannot be seen it ain't gunna make much of an impact. This is where access matters, the opportunity for the audience to experience the brand story, and in this we must rely on viewability.

Whilst it's important to always rely on third party vendors for verification, buying models and billing attached to minimum viewability thresholds are critical. There's ample evidence to demonstrate that increased viewability aids in campaign performance, but we need not look to the numbers to see common sense in this approach.

So, great creative delivered with the best opportunity to be seen will go along way to driving that critical connection. The final piece of the puzzle, relevance, speaks to placement – is this message being placed in front of the best audience. Video is frequently delivered as a reach and awareness tool, and in this its powers of conversion are greatly undersold. Video does a fantastic job at not only pushing audiences towards purchase but, with the right data and optimisation, can act as a potent performance tool.

Once again, this means thinking outside the pre-roll box. Video, when all the elements that make a great campaign come together, can play a variety of roles, bringing whatever actions are needed to deliver requisite outcomes. It is simply a matter of campaign structure.

Reach and awareness, delivered with great impact; engagement, providing extended content and as a gateway to further brand exploration; performance, supported with clear calls-to-action and optimised using the best available data. Video has its place in each of these approaches.

"Eventually" Charles Eames also noted, "everything connects - people, ideas, objects. It's that quality of the connections is the key." For media planners and brands, it is indeed the quality of connection that should matter most. Video is great at making it, it just needs the right elements to help it shine.

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