

2018 Downtown Achievement Awards: Marketing and Communication

Rosslyn Business Improvement District – Welcome to Rosslyn Video Strategy

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In the past five years, Rosslyn has transformed from a 9-to-5 commercial hub to a vibrant, mixed-use urban center. With over 14,000 residents, 25,000 employees, 65 restaurants and cafés and 160 events year-round, we have become a sought-after location to both live and work in the Washington, D.C. area. As Director of Marketing and Communications for the Rosslyn Business Improvement District, I leverage visual design, written messaging and curated photography to share the evolution of the Rosslyn neighborhood and tell our brand story.

By June 2017, we had reached a critical point in our evolution where the momentum of recent growth (like Nestlé moving their corporate HQ to Rosslyn) combined with the activation work of the BID had created a fresh, energized and electric vibe in our community. I wanted to share it!

I felt confident that people could see what Rosslyn was like, and could read about what was happening in the neighborhood, but I saw a huge opportunity to create a way for them to *feel* what it is like to be in Rosslyn. I wanted to create and share the visceral feeling of what it is like to be in Rosslyn and to provide a glimpse into the events, activations and eateries you're missing if you aren't here.

To accomplish this, I conceptualized, implemented and launched a comprehensive video strategy to take our brand story to the next level and create an overview video of Rosslyn that would capture the feeling of what it's like to be in Rosslyn today. I sought to achieve two of the BID's high-level strategic planning goals with this video project: 1) enhance the perception of Rosslyn, and 2) increase awareness of the neighborhood.

METHOD / EXECUTION

After extensive research on video used to create and share a sense of place, I engaged a video production start-up company and developed a comprehensive video strategy. My plan outlined b-roll to shoot throughout the year and targeted short-form videos that could be produced along the way serving as additional content pieces as well as key milestones for the master deliverable: a long-form overview video of Rosslyn. This strategy allowed me to accomplish several key elements before producing the final overview video including:

- Deliberately and thoughtfully developing a visual brand for our video content
- Establishing a trusted working relationship with my videography team
- Capturing a wide-range of events, restaurants, businesses and scenes from the neighborhood to tell a holistic story of Rosslyn that would be relevant to multiple stakeholder groups
- Producing seven short-form, videos highlighting specific program areas and BID initiatives allowing me to test what resonated with our stakeholders both personally and via social media
- Cataloguing raw b-roll footage into comprehensive, sharable video library

After pitching the video project and receiving approval from leadership, I developed Rosslyn video brand standards evaluating what resonated best through social media testing and personal interviews with staff and board members. Key features of our video brand include: an animated Rosslyn logo, fonts and colors aligned with our visual brand, upbeat music and pacing, short bursts of messaging throughout and inclusion of slow motion and time-lapse video footage to highlight details and movement respectively.

Once the style for our video content was established, I methodically worked through the master video strategy I had outlined, capturing footage throughout the year (ensuring each BID program area was well represented) and created seven promotional videos targeted to specific stakeholder groups. Then using best practices defined throughout the process, I storyboarded and crafted the final Welcome to Rosslyn video.

Please watch the Welcome to Rosslyn video now: www.RosslynVA.org/Video

OUTCOMES / NEXT STEPS

The response to the Welcome to Rosslyn video has been overwhelmingly positive. We first released the video to our partners at Arlington County followed shortly after by our Board of Directors. I was elated to watch captivated faces for the duration of the video and receive responses of praise but more importantly of excitement and motivation to share the piece.

I am a firm believer that our best advocates can be those who work with us most closely. This video project has turned our board members into active Rosslyn champions with four (a hotelier, two restauranteurs and a developer) leaving the launch screening and immediately showing the Welcome to Rosslyn video in their own establishments/websites. I've received direct feedback from Arlington County staff that they use the video frequently to tell the story of Rosslyn to potential businesses looking to locate here as well as national press outlets. This directly helps accomplish the key goals of enhancing perception and increasing awareness.

Staff members have also been able to use this video content to promote, share and explain Rosslyn to a variety of different stakeholders. The overview video provides an in-depth look at the neighborhood that is relevant to brokers, residents, employees, retailers, businesses and government partners—a resource we did not previously have to share. This combined with the more targeted video pieces provides BID staff with a library of relevant content to seamlessly define our neighborhood.

We have also seen measurable improvements of enhanced perception via our 2nd Annual Perception Survey and increased awareness on social media. With nearly 1500 responses, our survey asked participants to describe Rosslyn in three words that they could write in at will. This year, "boring" was replaced in our Top 10 words by "growing," "safe" and "fun"! Results also indicated that the people are becoming more interested in Rosslyn as a going out destination and that stakeholders are viewing Rosslyn as *more* than just a place to work. In fact, the survey reported that the two most-valued events among residents, visitors and employees were Rosslyn Cinema and our weekly Farmers Markets, both of which had targeted, short-form videos.

With a 1% engagement rate as our standard for success on social media, the Welcome to Rosslyn video garnered an amazing 9.78% engagement rate on our Facebook channel upon its release with 1462 views and 143 engagements. Further, 44% of these views were from shares (organic user-produced posts) indicating the excitement and high-touch engagement created by this piece. Overall our Facebook page's overall engagement rate has risen to 5.1% up from 3.8% in July when the first video project was introduced.

Perhaps the most fun part of this video project is the opportunity to continue to create new content and innovate distribution of each video. Moving forward, I have already outlined several follow-on projects to continue to increase our video presence and tell the Rosslyn story. I am currently working to embed video footage on our website, edit and release a Spring 2018 events promotion video and launch our comprehensive video b-roll library to serve our stakeholders on their own video projects.

Each time someone watches one of our videos, I feel that they better understand the unique neighborhood we are helping to build. I look forward to using video to continue to share the Rosslyn story as we evolve and encourage new faces to explore our one-of-a-kind community.