

Creative Visual Marketing:

**Your Guide to
Getting Noticed Online**



Creative Visual Marketing



Pictures tell stories in ways that words cannot. Pictures combined with text will make your story come to life in a new way.

Anytime you have the chance to include images in your marketing – whether it's your social media profile, your website, your blog, or an advertisement, it's important to give a lot of thought to every image and all the visual cues that you put on your marketing material.

Whether it's a banner on top of your blog or a logo for your business card, each image speaks to your audience and tells them part of your story.

Marketing is all about communicating a precise message to a specific audience. With the advanced tools available today online, you don't even need to be a graphic designer to make very effective images to help complete your marketing story.

To be successful at creative visual marketing it's important to understand what it means, how it works, and the tools that you need to make it work.

What Is Visual Marketing?

Due to the fact that people are so visually oriented – in fact 90 percent of the information a person receives is said to be visually oriented – visual marketing allows you to use design elements, graphics, photographs and videos to tell the story of your brand. The visual cues you use to tell that story will help make your brand more memorable to everyone who views the information.

Using visual cues to help tell your story will attract the people in your audience who are interested in the topic but who don't want to read a long text-based story. They say a picture is worth a thousand words. If this is the case, the graphic images you show will enable you to tell your audience a thousand words of information with just a simple glance from them.

Plus, when you use graphics, photos, and/or video with your text information, blog posts, and sales pages, you make it easier and more likely that others will share the information via social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Pinterest. In addition, it makes it easier for the search engines to locate the information due to the tags you place with the images.

Images such as infographics are read more often than text-only information such as blog posts that deliver the same information and data. Some marketers estimate that infographics and

images are read more than 30 times as much as text-only information. This is quite a difference when you want many to receive and digest the information you are distributing. Using all the visually creative marketing material that you can craft will help you get information out to more people, because they will be more likely to share something that is great to look at.

Types of Visual Marketing

There are many types of visual marketing that you can choose from such as:

Banners	Kiosks
Blog posts	Letters
Books	Newsletters
Brochures	Postcards
Business cards	Premiums (tote bags, cups, shirts)
Direct mail	Presentations
Flyers	Press releases
Games	Social networking campaigns
Giveaways	Webinars
Google Hangouts	Widgets
Graphics	YouTube videos
Infographics	

Depending on the marketing channel you're using, you'll use one or more of these visual marketing tactics. If you can figure out a way to add visual interest to every marketing campaign, you'll experience more success and reach your goals faster than if you don't.

Standing Out Visually

Choosing the right images can make your content and marketing stand out better than plain textual content. You can use creative copy, gorgeous typography and graphical images that bring your content to life, and draw the eye through the copy quickly.

- **White Space** – When you create anything graphical and textual it's imperative to include plenty of white space by using bullets, spacing, and the right fonts. Choose images wisely and for a reason. Every word and every image should have a "why" for being in your marketing material.
- **Color** – It might take a little research into your target audience to figure out which colors will get the most positive reaction. You may want to cause emotions to come forth in your audience that only color can elicit. But, every audience is different so it'll take some research, understanding and testing to pick the right colors.
- **Contrast** – The more ways that you can make your call to action stand out from the rest of the copy and images, the better. By using contrast such as black/white, white/gray, or other colors that contrast but do not cause your audience's retinas to burn, you can create the view you want to attract your audience's eyes where you want them.
- **Surprise** – Most people today are practically blind to advertisements, and anything that wants to sell them something. The way to overcome this ad blindness is to use visuals to

surprise the viewer. Change the fonts; make the CTA stand out such that your audience cannot miss it.

- **Encapsulation** – Use robust, vibrant shapes to highlight your call to action or anything you want to draw interest to. Put your call to action inside a highlighted, outlined box, or other form that will enclose it to draw attention to it.
- **Arrows** – Using directional cues will also help draw the reader's eye toward the information that you want them to see. Anytime you want your reader to imagine the future or some destination in the future, for example, you could show a picture of a road that will take them on a trip.

Use your imagination when using images to get more visual with your marketing efforts, but also use well-known visual cues that help your reader get to the mindset that you want. As you study your audience, you'll come to know what types of visual cues will work best with them.

Tips to Make Visual Elements Work Better

When seeking to use more visual marketing it's important to know what works and what doesn't work. You may have to try different strategies to get the results you want, but you can get ahead of the game with these visual marketing tips.

- **Add Alt Tags to All Images** – When you add an image to your website, sales pages, or anywhere online, you should be able to add 'alt' tags to the image. While most people cannot see the tag, which is a description of the image, search engines and people who use screen readers such as blind people can read the description and get an idea of what is included on the image. You can make the alt tag as long as you need to so that screen readers and search engines can understand what is included in the content.
- **Understand Copyright Laws** – The thing to understand about copyright is that the creator of any image doesn't have to physically tell you that their image is copyrighted. The creator has the right to tell you whether you can use the images or not and how you can use them. It's important to be clear that even if you purchase an image it doesn't mean you own all rights to it. Read the fine print; understand how the laws work. This is a great post about image copyrights on [Social Media Examiner](#).
- **Know Where to Find Images** – There are many places you can get images that are both paid and free. The important thing is to read the rules and understand the copyright that the site gives you and follow it. Sites like, [Pixabay.com](#), [Death to the Stock Photo](#), [Unsplash.com](#), [Gratisography.com](#), and [morgueFile.com](#) offer free images for limited use. You can get paid images for more uses from sites like [Stockfresh.com](#), [iStockphoto.com](#) and [Dreamstime.com](#).
- **Choose Relevant Images** – When you pick or create images to represent the story and information you're trying to get across to your audience, it's imperative to choose images that are relevant to the content that you're writing. If the image disconnects from the message it will simply be a distraction. If the image helps move the story forward, there will be more understanding of the message.

- **Use the Right Tools** – When you create images they need to be the right aspect ratio, size, pixels, and properly compressed. If you create images with the wrong tools, such as in Word for example, they will not appear attractive online because the pixels will be wrong and the type of image will be wrong. Use free tools like GIMP.org, Canva.com, and Pixlr.com, or you can get a membership with Adobe Creative Cloud, to take advantage of many programs that will help you create the right type of images for the right visual marketing project.
- **Include Interesting Fonts** – Be careful about the fonts you choose; ensure that they are highly readable on your graphics. There are places you can acquire new fonts such as Dafont.com which can be used on many different operating systems. You can also get fonts from Google Fonts which can be used without any worry about issues.
- **Match Colors Perfectly** – There are a number of tools that you can use to ensure that your colors match. You can use Adobe's Color Tool, the color pixel picker or this color lover's palette chooser. Or upload an image and get matching colors generated with this color palette generator. You might want to read about the psychology of color in relation to your target audience to ensure that you pick the right colors and not just colors that you personally like.

Ensuring that you get the most out of every image that you choose is important. 90 percent of the information most people get come through visual cues. You want to be sure your audience is getting the right information from the images that you pick.

Mistakes to Avoid

Online marketing is becoming more visual by the day. The reason is that it works. Most humans need visual cues to help them understand hard to comprehend ideas, and to remain interested in your story. However, it's also important not to make common mistakes such as these:

- **Stealing Images** – You cannot just do an image search on Google and take whatever image you want. You cannot take images off other people's websites. You cannot use any image from any website without explicit permission no matter where you find it, even if it's watermarked. That image represented someone's hard work and they should be compensated for it.
- **Using the Images Incorrectly** – Even when you purchase an image, you cannot always use it however you want. Read the fine print of the terms of use for any photograph, graphic, or image that you buy. Especially pay attention to whether you can use an image or a logo more than once, because many of them cannot be used for those purposes.
- **Not Considering the Image Composition** – Depending upon where the image will be used, you will want to size the image in the right way to show up correctly on each social media where it's shared. Check with Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest to ensure that the images look the way you want them to. This might mean that instead of sharing an image directly from your blog post, you might want to upload the image separately and link to the blog post.

- **Forgetting Who Your Audience Is** – When you create any type of marketing, especially explicit visual marketing materials, it's very important to understand your audience. If you come out with visuals that are wrong for your audience, it could be a disaster. Never forget who you're doing it for, and why you're doing it.
- **Not Diversifying** – When you engage in visual marketing it's imperative to use many different marketing channels. Use your website, blog, and various social media networks as well as direct email marketing to convey your message to your audience. The saturation is necessary due to the fact that audiences like to consume information in many different ways.
- **Not Describing Images** – As mentioned previously, it's very important to use some method for describing images such as the 'alt' tag information and/or captioning of some sort. Search engines pick up on the description which helps with search engine optimization, but so do those in your audience who are using screen readers.
- **Using Poorly Crafted Images** – Pay attention to the sizes that each social media site asks for when it comes to using images. Even your website theme may have a specific size needed to properly show the images when shared. Ensure that you use the right sizes and high quality graphics in your visual marketing in order to set the right tone and standard for your marketing efforts.
- **Using Color Badly** – When you choose the colors to use for images, graphics and your entire visual marketing effort, be sure that the colors look good together and elicit the type of emotion and action you're looking for. Don't just assume they'll work without testing them out. High contrast images are great, but not if they hurt your reader's eyes.

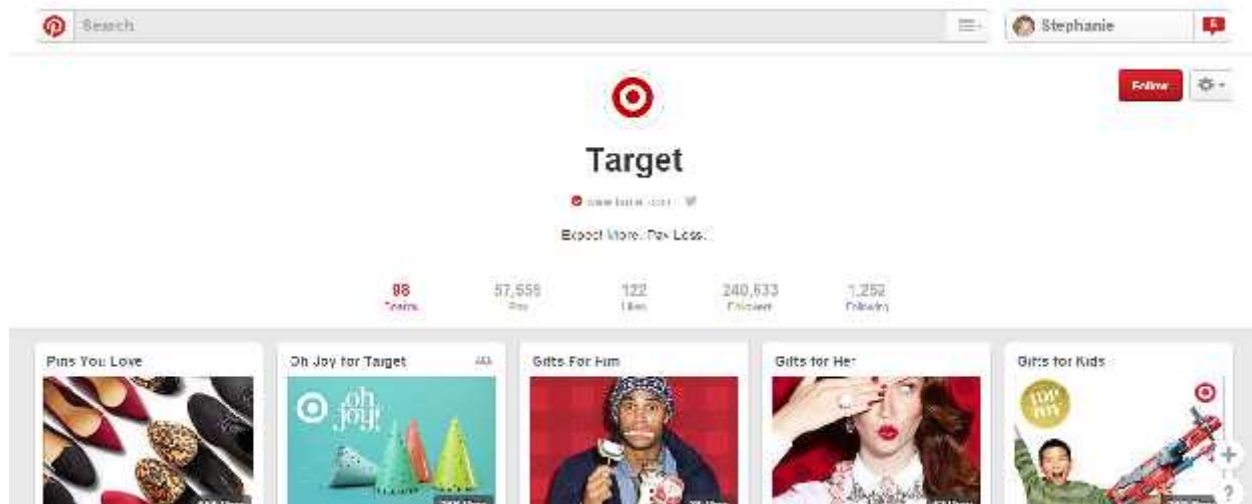
Avoiding these mistakes will help your marketing efforts exponentially. Realizing that visual marketing is an important part of your marketing efforts, online and offline, will help you develop better visual marketing that gets the word out about your products and/or services to your audience.

Twelve Successful Visual Marketing Efforts Using Graphics, Photos, and Video

To get a better idea of what visual marketing entails, here are twelve mini case studies to help illustrate how visual marketing works (or doesn't work) and to show how you can use these ideas in your own visual marketing efforts.

These examples of websites show how creative visual marketing can help you share your information with others and get others to share their information for you. The more beautiful, attractive, creative, accurate and informative the information you share is, the more likely others are to share it.

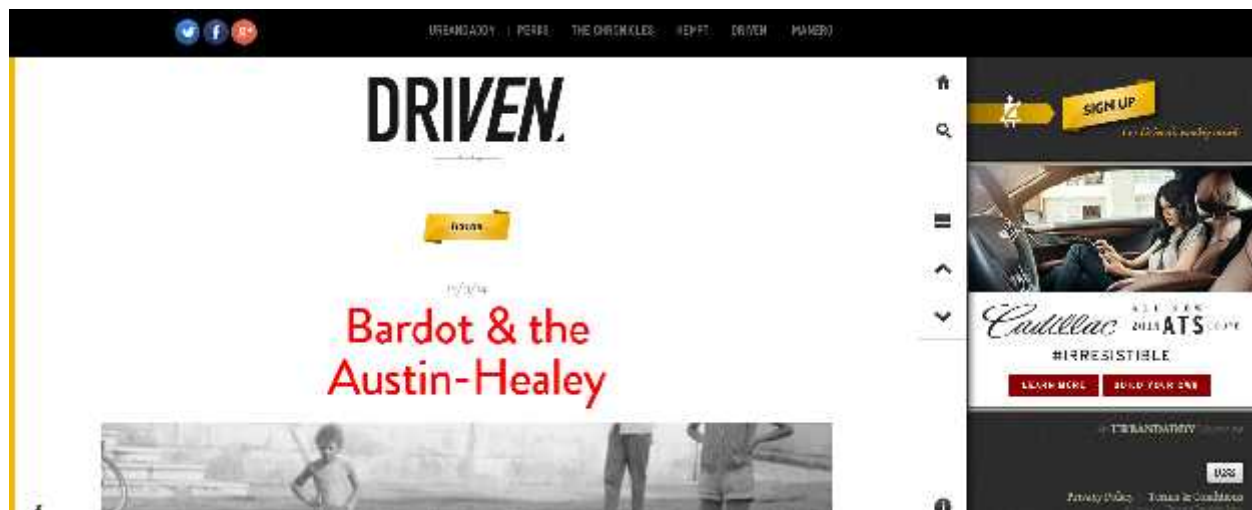
1. Target on Pinterest



[Target's Pinterest account](#) is very popular due to the well-designed photography and images that they use and the way they separate each category for their different audiences. Due to this they have over a quarter million followers on Pinterest, along with thousands of pins.

To duplicate the success of Target on Pinterest be sure to show your prices, and enable your audience to click through to actually make a purchase. The faster your audience can buy what you're offering, the more sales you'll make.

2. Driven



This is a website that focuses on automobiles. It uses gorgeous photography and creative fonts to make the reader feel as if he or she is part of the action. As you [look through the photographs](#) you're taken to a new place. On this website even the advertising is spectacular.

Telling a visual story using fabulous photography is a great way to transport your audience to the place of fantasy. You can make them believe that by making a purchase of your products or services, they too will be as happy and healthy as those pictured.

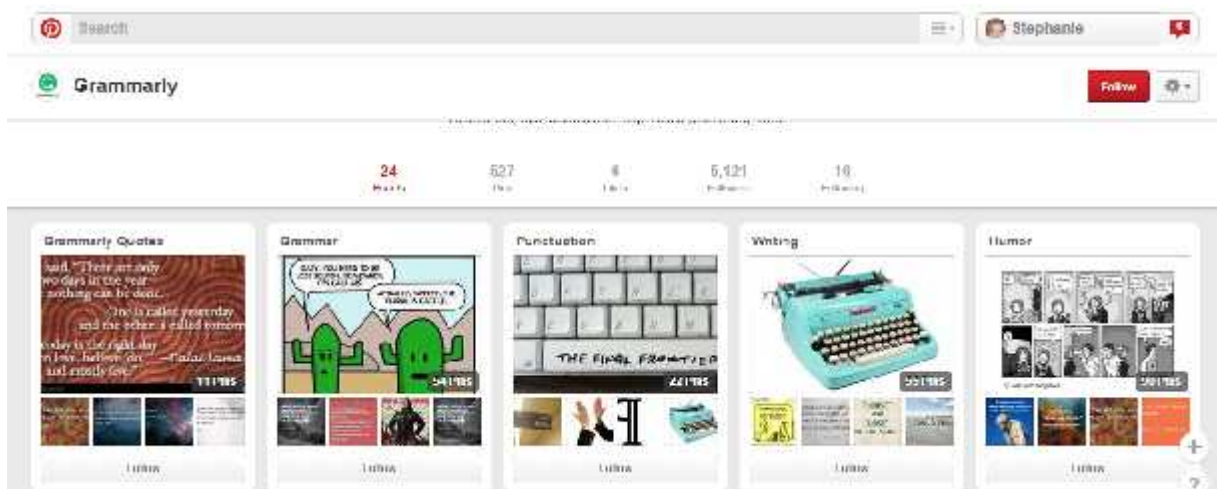
3. KISSmetrics



This website often uses visual graphics, [especially infographics](#), to get across the information to their audience that they want. They not only create excellent and factual infographics using data that is accurate, but they also explain in text the meaning of the infographic. Their creative use of infographics has increased their backlinks exponentially and made their website very popular.

You can use infographics too. Any blog post you've ever created that has a lot of data is an excellent starting point to create an infographic. Try using online software like [Piktochart.com](#) to create the infographics. Share on your blog and all social media, using an easy to create embed code.

4. Grammarly



This website is set up for individuals and schools to use to check for plagiarism and proper use of grammar for the English language. They have created [many memes and graphics](#) that are funny, and get the attention of their audience. They share them on Pinterest, Facebook, LinkedIn and other social media, as well as on their own blog.

If you have anything to teach your audience, a great way to do so is with funny memes that consist of a thoughtful quote that links back to more information on your blog, website or sales page – but is sharable on its own terms. Using humor and “quotable quotes” can go far in helping your business be remembered. Be sure to watermark your work.

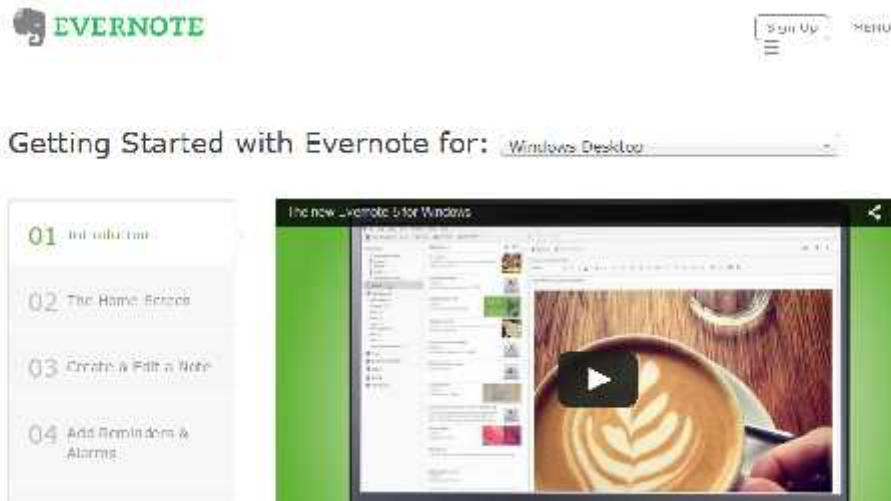
5. Whole Foods Market



This is a healthy supermarket that has used Facebook and graphics to their ultimate advantage. They use graphical images on their website and all social media because they're simple to share and get a story across easily. The combination of beautiful photography and creative graphics makes the [Whole Food website](#) and visual marketing strategy work.

You can use a combination of graphics, infographics, and photographs with creative text to highlight what you want your audience to know. Think in terms of colors that give the audience something special to look at and to dream about. Fabulous product pictures tell a story all on their own.

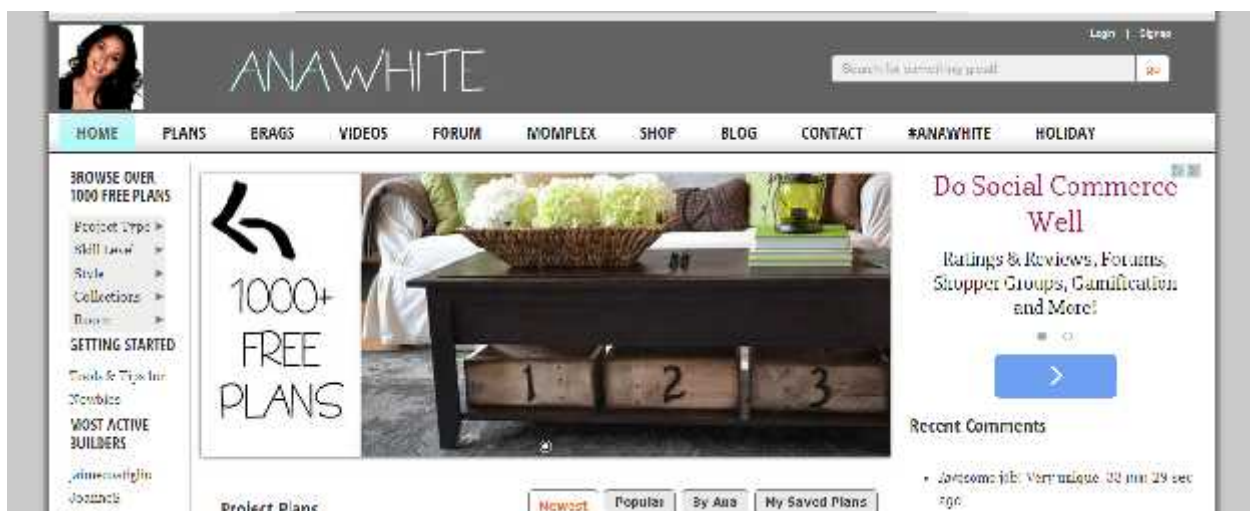
6. Evernote



This website and app provides [beautifully put together tutorial videos](#) to help users learn how to use Evernote, but also to market Evernote. Anyone can watch the videos which assure the viewer of the ease of use and the functionality of the software. Not only does the information help users, it also helps those who haven't become users see the good that Evernote has to offer.

You can do this too with your visual marketing. Create short videos covering one small topic related to things your audience needs to know. Shoot for no more than five minutes long – better to be less than two minutes if possible, so that your audience can watch in small short pieces each thing you want to teach them.

7. Ana-White.com



This [website features do-it-yourself woodworking projects](#). The owner of the site includes professional level photographs and video of the work to demonstrate how great it looks when finished. Using this photography makes the work easy to share online with social media because people love looking at pretty images and imagining doing it yourself.

This website is very successful due to the high level of expertise demonstrated with the plans, pictures and videos. The only thing that would make it better is enabling sharing the videos more easily via social media, like she does with the images. You can recreate this process yourself by ensuring that you have a video for every “how to” blog post as well as well-made photographs of the process too. Ana proves giving it away can be profitable too.

8. Sunday Suppers



This [food website offers beautiful photography](#) that looks good enough to eat to demonstrate the results of the recipes. What's a shame about this gorgeous website is that there is no easy way to share the fabulous pictures, and they're not watermarked. Although the creator does use social media and shares the items herself with social media, it would be great if readers could easily share too.

If you have a website and subject matter that allows for the display of beautiful pictures, it would be a pity not to take excellent pictures and share them with the world. As demonstrated by this website, the pictures can be very simple yet tell a beautiful story.

9. Kahn Academy

[The Metropolitan Museum of Art comes to Khan Academy](#)

Nov 10, 2014 at 11:33 AM



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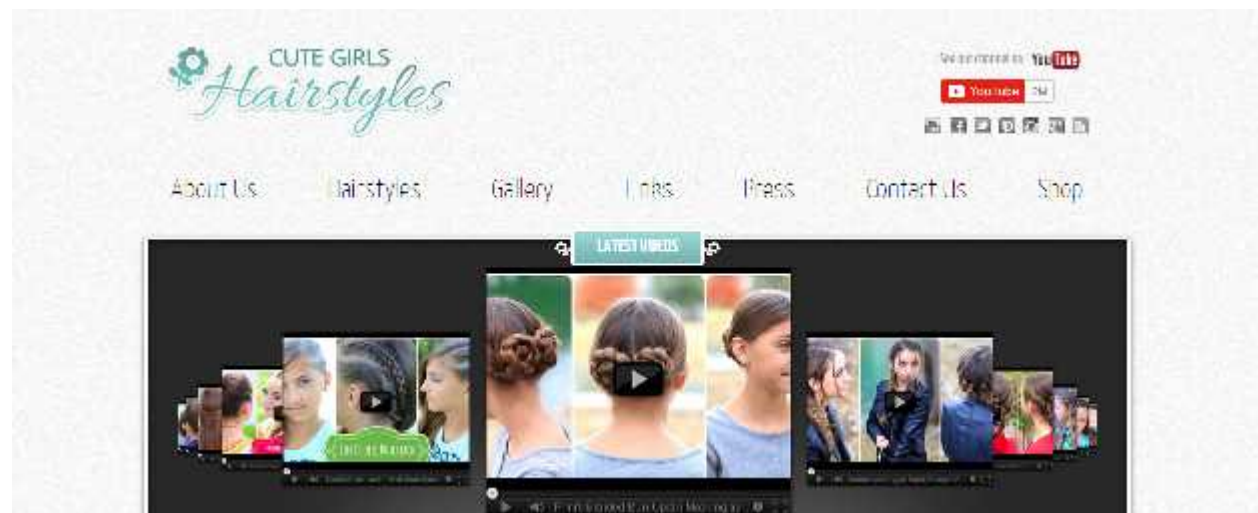
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This learning website uses video, photography, graphics, quotes and more to get the word out about their offerings. They [put Facebook to good use](#) by sharing interesting information regularly about how others are using Kahn Academy, and also just about the world at large.

If you have a lot of information that you want to share with the world, following Kahn Academy's example of consistency along with high-quality information will go far in helping your business succeed. They demonstrate that even if something is free, it doesn't have to be cheap. You can provide top-notch information that far exceeds the price.

10. Cute Girls Hairstyles



This successful vlog has been mentioned on many TV Shows, and is super popular on YouTube. The reason it is popular is because the mother who started this uses her real children and real-time newsworthy information, such as the Hunger Games phenomenon to [create](#)

[hairstyles for girls](#). The videos are organized and easy to watch through the website or through the YouTube channel. She also uses social media effectively to market her vlog.

You can repeat this effort by creating a very simple website and using a lot of white space in between the videos. Make it easy for everyone to share your work, watermark the videos, and brand them in some way so that when they are shared people will be led back to your website for more information.

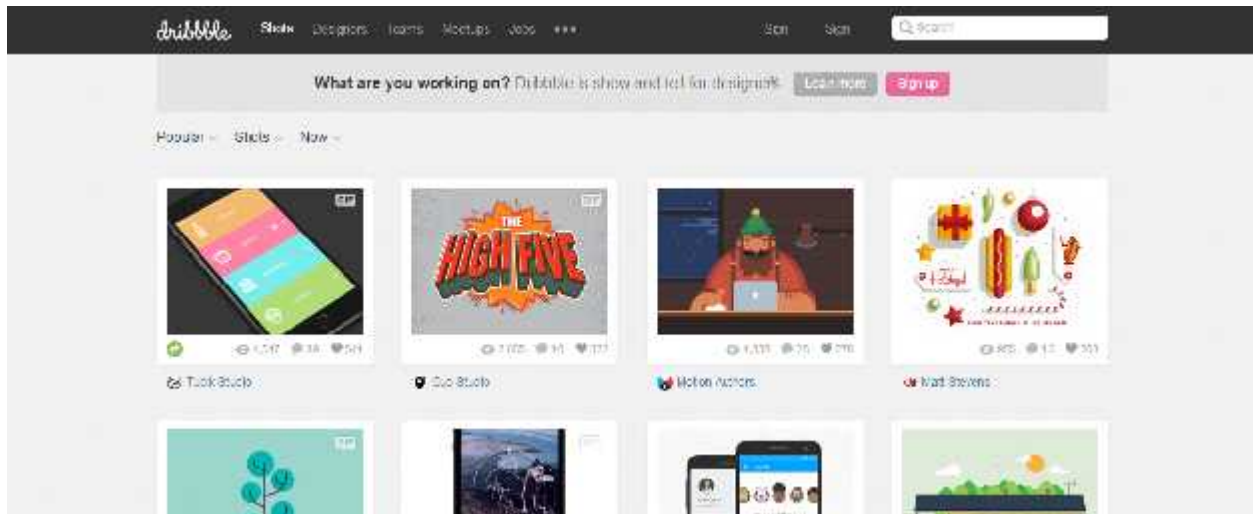
11. World Food Clock



This very [simple website depicts complex information](#) in a way that can help readers get the idea of the message in just a few seconds of looking. It uses colors and graphics beautifully and makes it easy to share and spread the message of world hunger. This is a demonstration of simplicity at work.

If you have one message that won't change much over time, or that has one central core that you need to get across to your audience, this is an excellent way to do it. Keep it simple – use few colors, few graphics, and detailed information that are easy to digest.

12. Dribbble.com



This [website is a design website that offers a service](#) and is a show and tell for designers to show what they've done. It is a great example of using visual graphics, white space, humor, and other elements that we have covered in this report to market your services. They are very good at showing their process and demonstrating their personality with their website and social media marketing.

If you have a lot of samples of your work, you can use their ideas and make it work for your own website. Even if you are a team of "one" or a service provider of one, you can show examples of your work in this manner, on social media and your blog. Visually showing your expertise will speak for itself.

A Couple Really Bad Examples

Just to prove that visual websites and online marketing is important, let's take a look at a couple really bad examples of visual marketing. Look at your own risk.



visual in nature.

MrBottles.com – [This website is just really difficult to look at](#). It uses all the mistakes that you should avoid. There are terrible fonts, bad pictures, and more. Use this as your guide of what not to do for your visual marketing. This website could easily be updated to make it really look great considering the subject is very



FastCoDesign.com – This [website has correctly identified the very worst infographic so far in America](#). You don't want to miss this. It very adequately shows how using the wrong image to depict data can completely change the meaning of the information that you mean to get across to your audience.

The Next Step

Looking at the best and the worst of visual marketing can help you to understand what works and what doesn't work. You want to emulate the best of what you have to offer and what you can afford to create. You can do a lot of it yourself, or you can hire a professional graphic designer. The important thing is to add visually pleasing graphics to your marketing consistently, regularly and with your audience in mind.

Create memes with interesting quotes using an online platform like [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) that will put you on the mind of your audience. Be sure to watermark each meme, and use images that evoke the types of emotions that you want your audience to feel. Memes are good to share on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. Be sure to make them the right size for each network.

To create awesome video, use a good camera and learn about editing software such as [Camtasia.com](https://www.camtasia.com) or [Movie Maker](https://www.movie-maker.com). It doesn't take that much effort to learn to edit short videos. If you aren't sure how to do it, or don't want to learn, there are a lot of contractors that you can work with. Just be sure to see the results of their work, and get references. Be prepared to work under the contractor's timeline.

By paying attention to the visual elements of your online marketing, you can create beautiful and effective marketing material that gets the message out about your offerings in a way that makes you proud and makes others want what you have.



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