



BRINK

# ANIMATION CHAMPIONS GUIDE

FOR STARTERS

*Customers to engage and convert? Personalized content to create? Competition to stand out from? Growth pressures? New markets to conquer? Senior level recruits to lure? Sales targets to support? Colleagues to impress? But only so much money and time, right?*

It's a tough path ahead, but we just might have the tool to support your goals in 2019 and beyond - and that tool is called animation.

## 1 Why choose animation?

In 2018 54% of consumers want to see more videos of their supported brands based on [HubSpot Survey](#).

Videos will take up 82% of all internet traffic by 2021 as predicted by [Cisco](#).

Pages with video rank 50x better on Google than pages without video based on [Forrester report](#).

**Animation** is a technique where sequences of drawn, painted or computer-generated illustrations are played back rapidly to create an illusion of movement.

In the marketing hemisphere animation is a useful, versatile tool to have in your content-creation toolkit.

Content is key to marketing success. It's what enables you to reach and engage with your audiences. In the hectic world of today, content needs to make an immediate, scroll-stopping impact as well as leave an unforgettable impression. With our social feeds already full of photographs and videos, nothing holds as much power to do so as illustrations and animation.

### > Anything is possible

Want to have planets exploding or dolphins talking? Animation gets it done. With animation literally anything is possible. Tell your story just the way you want. Plus, at the same time you don't have to worry about scouting locations or actors, weather, bad hair days or any other real world storytelling circumstances.

### > Uniquely eyecatching

People and places can feel generic for a broad audience. You know you're not the first company with workforce diversity and cool office space. Animation lets you control not only what happens in your story, but also exactly how it's going to look and feel. This allows you to manifest your brand in a way that stands out from the competition.

### > Makes complex simple

Does your product or service have complex or even abstract elements? With animation a complex pieces of information can be told in a simple, yet entertaining way.

### > Emotionally charged

Animation has an unique way to evoke emotion through thought-out stylization and simplification. Even a short amount of time used correctly can grab your audience by their heartstrings.

### > Truly agile

Animation and illustration allows you to get started quick, test and develop based on data and then keep on building visual content that drives outstanding results.

## 2 How to get the most out of your animations?

Animation sounds pretty darn cool, right? Excited to get started? We are too, so let's dive right into it. As often in life, everything starts with a solid plan. Planning for animation is not too different from planning for other marketing schemes, but it has its unique elements too. Below you can find the four steps of crafting the perfect *Marketing Animation Plan* (MAP).

### Goals

Without a goal you can't score said the famous hockey player Wayne Gretzky. This is just as true for succeeding in animation marketing as it is in anything else. Choose carefully a business need and clearly define the goal. This can be anything from building awareness and generating sales leads for your brand to casually keeping in touch with your existing audience.

### Target Audience

Part of setting a clear goal for your animation marketing is defining the target audience for it. Who are you talking to? Are they potential or existing customers, or both? Are they business executives, those pesky millennials or anyone who likes organic coffee?

Making the MAP is not easy, and finding the right animation partner with suitable experience and transparent relationship is crucial. Good animation is not necessarily cheap, so half-assed planning can make for expensive mistakes. Only with careful planning, where all important stakeholders have been heard, can we achieve truly magical results.

### Message

Once your goal and audience are clear, we start putting together the elements to craft your message. At this stage we define what it is you want to tell your chosen audience. Is it the reason your brand exists, the upcoming event, the little detail that makes one of your products unique or the overall solution your future service will provide.

### Strategy

Last we need to define the path to get to the goal. What channels we want to use to reach your audience, and what versions of your message we want to place on which platforms and how we want your audience to follow them.

### 3 Animation and agile marketing

As the essence of agile marketing is getting started quick, animation, and especially illustration, make it possible to create compelling visual content fast to test out your message in different channels.

See, even in the beginning of your marketing animation journey, you can test the waters with test illustrations that tell a part of your story.



For example if to achieve your business goal you're planning an animation video to educate your audience about the benefits of your service, but are not sure which characters or colors or even the specific message to use in your animation video, you can quickly create two or more different illustrations that tell a part of your story to test which ones performs best and continue developing the animation video from that.

Once you know what kind of visual details works best with your audience, it is, wait for it, agile to build from there. You can even then create a few shorter animations to see further what your audience really likes and in which channels particularly. Eventually you have provided your audience an introduction to your masterpiece while simultaneously reduced your risk with the final content.

Then when your spectacular animation video has shook the world with its awesomeness, and your service gets updated, you simply and quickly update your animation video to match your new offering.

Agile, right?

## 4 Choosing the right animation style

The next step is to start producing your animations for real. But first, we must decide on the suitable type of animation for your idea. While there are other types of animation, we will focus on different digitally created animation types that are best suitable for modern agile animation marketing.

### Hand-Drawn Animation

► WATCH EXAMPLE **2D**

*In hand-drawn (or frame-by-frame) animation each frame of the movement is drawn by hand.*

- + Allows organic, fluid and personable movement
- + Puts the characters in spotlight
- + Great for evoking emotion

### Puppeting

► WATCH EXAMPLE **2D**

*In puppeting, characters are drawn and created in a paper-doll like fashion and are digitally manipulated to create movement.*

- + Allows painterly, complex stylizations
- + For simpler actions and movements
- + Easy to re-use, adapt and manipulate

### Stylized CGI

► WATCH EXAMPLE **3D**

*Characters and environments are made in 3D, but are not meant to appear photorealistic.*

- + Allows showing personality through stylization
- + Can have more imaginative camera work in addition to character animation
- + Easy to re-use, adapt and manipulate

### Realistic CGI

► WATCH EXAMPLE **3D**

*3D animation with a high level of detail and realism.*

- + For visualizing things that don't exist, like future products or dragons flying over Westeros
- + Allows controlling and showing substances that are otherwise hard to capture, like liquids and minute details.
- + Can take full advantage of existing reference material to achieve the desired level of realism
- + Easier to art direct and re-use than traditionally shot footage

### Motion Graphics

► WATCH EXAMPLE **3D** **2D**

*Motion graphics is graphic design in motion.* They can make up a piece on their own or be used with both live and animated footage to provide more information or support the core messages or feel of the film.

## 4 What affects the cost of animation?

Obviously an important part of deciding on the marketing animation most suitable for your brand is the price. A quick search online about the cost of animation and you immediately have a price range between 25 euros and a million euros per minute. This makes it hard to understand the pricing structure, possibilities and dangers when producing marketing animations.

Let's discuss the elements that influence the cost of animation, and how to navigate the different possibilities to find the best solution for your business needs.

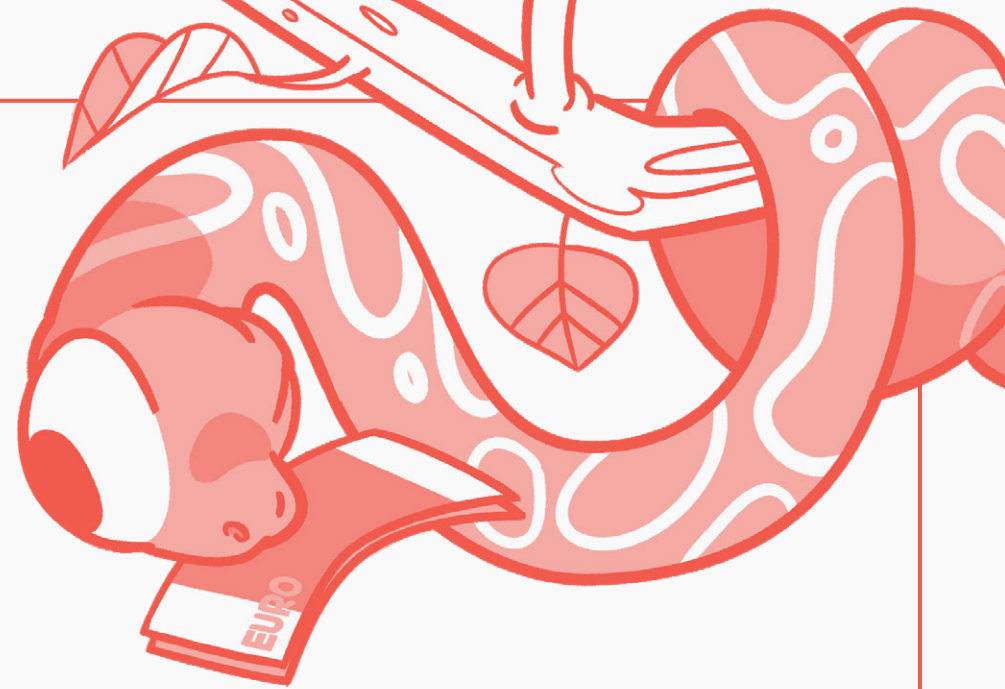
### Freelance vs Studio

First of all you have the option of using animation freelancers (self-employed) or studios (companies). Both have their pros and cons and the right decision for you depends on your business needs.

**Freelancers** are generally cheaper than studios. When working with a freelancer, you are working with a single animator and their specific knowledge and expertise. Some freelancers can be highly specialized and some are more full stack.

**Studios** on the other hand employ multiple artists and animators with different specialized skillsets. Animation studios also vary from one and other; some may offer marketing, planning and measuring services as well as production, and some can be deeply specialized in their expertise, such as ultra realistic 3D animation. Using animation studios often comes with a higher price tag, but they also usually offer a wider range of options as well as more secure continuity for your projects.

Take your time to look at different options and compare their references with your desired end result in mind and interview the few most suitable candidates to find the future partner of your dreams.



## Production Elements

With both freelancers and studios, the final price of your animation is a sum of the different production elements as well as the rights to use the animation in different channels. Here are some key things that are taken into account when estimating the cost of producing animation:

### *Ideation & Development*

The development phase sets the blueprint for the production. Here we refine your message and develop a visual style that best suits your MAP. This is not just a single price tag for buying the idea, but also the total cost of ownership (TCO), since a good idea can carry on for years and years.

### *Campaign size*

How many different assets, or deliverables, you get at the end of the production hikes up the cost of the production. Consult your MAP to determine whether you're all set with few versions of one animation or if you need multiple episodic animations. The higher total number of assets done in one production will increase the price for this single production but lower the TCO of the marketing animation plan.

### *Animation style*

Some types of animation have a higher initial price tag than others, but can also get cheaper the longer you adapt existing assets for new purposes.

For example, 3D animation has a higher initial price tag than its 2D brethren, but gets relatively cheaper the more you can use the existing characters and environments.

### *Characters*

The amount of characters, and the level of detail in them and complexity of their movement all affect the price of the animation. Discuss carefully with your animation partner how to use characters to maximize their value in your animation.

### *Environments*

Environments form the stage where your animation takes place. They help to set the mood and tone of your animation, but can also be an unexpected factor in marketing budgets. Creating large and complex realistic environments can be time-consuming and end up devouring a lions share of your budget.

### *Music and sound design*

Role of music changes depending on your idea and the channels you choose for your video. Sometimes composing a tailored emotional music to support the message you want to convey is a great investment, and sometimes inexpensive stock music will do the trick. In addition, sound design is used to liven up and support the animation, as well as to literally give your characters a voice.



# Marketing Animation Checklist

## FIRST ROUND

- ☒ Choose a business need that requires solving now.
- ☒ Create a MAP to rapidly create the visual content you need.
- ☐ Market and measure your content.

## RE-USE

- ☐ Review and analyze what worked and why.
- ☐ Boost the content that performed well and drop the things that didn't.
- ☐ Try different channels and, depending on the business need, even different audiences and markets.

## DEVELOP

- ☐ Now that you know what your audience likes, raise the stakes, put on the next gear and pump out more of that animation magic.
- ☐ Create bigger and better animations to truly develop the value of your brand.

## GROW

- ☐ Once you have tasted the animation marketing success, set bigger goals and expand to give your audience more of the good stuff.
- ☐ Give the people what they want and grow your brand it's full potential with animation.

### *Versions*

You will usually need different versions of your animation to publish in different channels. This means getting different edits of the same material for different durations to use in platforms with set durations (TV or Youtube advertising) and those without length restrictions (your website, Instagram, Facebook).

### *Future use*

Even if you're unsure how to utilize your marketing animations in the future, make sure that they are made in a way that allows your brand to benefit from them later on. This means preparing and organizing original animation files in a way that easily allows re-use later, as well as securing the rights to use them in your future projects.

Be transparent from the get go with your animation partner about the budget range you're looking to work with, and demand them to explain how their pricing structure is put together and why.

How much you should pay for your animation video depends on the business goal you're trying to achieve and what requirements reaching that goal has as well as the near and far future plans and dreams your brand has. Transparent dialogue with your animation partner is key at all stages of partnership.