

current...



VIEWER CREATED AD MESSAGE

# PRODUCER'S GUIDE

Get Creative. Get on TV. Get Paid.



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# The VCAM Program

- It's a commercial produced by you for our sponsors that runs on Current TV
- A VCAM can be any length, but is typically between 15 to 60 seconds
- For every VCAM that goes to air, you'll get \$2,500
- If your VCAM airs on Current and the sponsor of your VCAM shows it elsewhere, you can earn between \$5,000 and \$60,000, depending on where the VCAM is shown.

## Here's how it breaks down:

- The internet, other than web sites owned or controlled by the sponsor or Current: **\$5,000**
- Cable or satellite television other than Current TV: **\$10,000**
- Print advertising embodying a still image of your VCAM: **\$10,000**
- Network television: **\$15,000**
- Any other medium (a theatrical trailer, a public billboard, a stadium jumbotron, etc.): **\$20,000**

- The number of votes a VCAM receives is an influential factor in the selection process, but Current and the sponsor associated with each VCAM will ultimately decide which will air.
- For the latest VCAM assignments, go to <http://current.com/ads>

# Making Your VCAM

## Your audience

Always keep your audience in mind as you develop and shoot your VCAM. At Current, our audience is young – generally 18 to 34 years old. They're smart and they expecting nothing but the best. Whatever you do, make sure your VCAM is compelling, clever, and authentic.

Never insult the audience! Current's audience can smell a fake a mile away, so don't over-hype or over-sell in your VCAM. A really good VCAM entertains and relates to the audience as much as it pushes a product or brand.

## Keep it simple

Even the coolest, most dazzling ads are based on a single good idea. Avoid making your VCAM too complex to understand. Even if you venture into the 60 second range, your VCAM should be easy to absorb at every moment.

## Be creative

Your VCAM can be anything you can bring to life on the screen: live-action, fiction, non-fiction, animation, claymation -- anything. Take risks and be as creative as possible.

## Less is more

The best ads on TV are based on good ideas that play pretty quickly. So once you get into the editing stage, remember: less is almost always more. When making a commercial, get to the point or get lost!

## Break the mold

We all know how lame ads can be. Avoid advertising clichés and conventions. VCAMs at Current are your chance to reinvent what advertising can be, so make the kind of ads you want to watch, not commercials you've already seen. It is important to note, however, that mere ideas may not be subject to copyright protection.

# Tips & Tricks

## Have No Product?

That's okay – some of our best VCAMs don't include the product. It just takes a little flexing of your creative muscles to make it happen. Some tips:

- 1) Show how life would be different if you didn't have the product
- 2) Use animation or motion graphics
- 3) Do a testimonial/interview style VCAM

## What Makes a Successful VCAM?

### Content

Successful producers generally use the creative brief as a guide when making their VCAM. While you are free to be as creative as you'd like when making your VCAM, we will be using the creative brief as a reference when reviewing the spots. Chosen VCAMs also do not have third-party logos, copyrighted music, and footage from video libraries.

### Length

Generally, VCAMs are 15 to 60 seconds long. Remember, less is almost always more. Respect your audience and get to the point!

## Got Logos?

Because these are commercials promoting a brand, you should try to cover up any third-party logos. Turn away soda cans, wear logo-less clothing, and cover up any advertisements that may appear in the background.

### *Votes, Comments, and Views*

Votes, Views, and Comments get your VCAM noticed! So submit your VCAM early so the Current community can start watching and voting on it.

### *Execution*

Production value is just as important as having a solid idea for your VCAM. Make sure you check your audio, lighting, and framing. Don't fret if you've never picked up a camera. We have a whole section of Current.com dedicated to giving you tips on how to get started here: <http://current.com/producerTraining.htm>

# Uploading 101

- 1) After registering on Current.com, go to <http://www.current.com/ads> and click on the desired VCAM assignment.
- 2) Click on “upload your video” right above the assignment brief.
- 3) If your video is less than 200MB, press “BROWSE” and navigate to your file. A green bar should say “uploading” and then should say “complete” when the uploading process is... complete. See below if your video is larger than 200MB.\*
- 4) Add a title and a description of your video.
- 5) Under “suggested topics” make sure that there is a check next to the appropriate VCAM assignment (i.e. Toyota VCAM, T-Mobile Sidekick VCAM, etc).
  - a. If you are a college student, check “other” and type “College\_Current”. Check “other” once more and also type in the name of your school.
- 6) Check the box, “I want this upload to be considered for broadcast on Current TV, and I own the rights to this file” and then select the VCAM radio button (of course, this only applies if you own the rights to this video!)
- 7) Click “SUBMIT” and then you’re done!\*\*

\*If your video is more than 200MB, you will need to use VideoEgg. Click “Advance Upload” and drag your video into the VideoEgg window. During the upload process, you must enter in a title, description and a thumbnail graphic of your VCAM.

\*\*Because all VCAMs need to be screened prior to being made available for public viewing, your video will say, “Not Yet. We need to look at this first...” until it has been screened. This process takes about two business days, so check back soon!

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is VCAM?

VCAMs (Viewer-Created Ad Messages) are commercials created by our viewers for our sponsors. If your VCAM is chosen, it will air on Current and you will be paid \$2,500 and up to \$60,000, depending on where it airs.

## Why does my submissions say, "Not Yet, We Need to Look At This First?"

Every VCAM uploaded to Current.com is screened before it's made available for public viewing. This process may take about two business days.

## What should I take into consideration before making my VCAM?

- Brand Sensitivity:
  - o Some companies are more sensitive than others when it comes to content, so it's always best to err on the safe side. Do not use profanity (even if its censored), third party logos, or copyrighted materials (including music, background art, photos, etc).
- Release Forms:
  - o These are crucial! ! If there are any recognizable faces in your spot, they will need to sign an Appearance release form. Also, if you are shooting your VCAM on private property, you'll need the owner to sign a Location Release. For all of our release forms, visit <http://current.com/producerResources.htm>
- Copyright:
  - o You should own all of the rights to every element used in your VCAM (i.e. b-roll, music, images, etc). Unfortunately, materials from royalty-free and public domain libraries are not allowed in VCAM submissions.
  - o Please also note that mere ideas may not be subject to copyright protection.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## When will I know if my VCAM is selected for air?

VCAMs are generally selected two to three weeks after the assignment has ended to give all submissions an opportunity to generate some votes and comments, however, the sponsor will sometimes choose a submission while the submission period is still open, so get your VCAMs in early!

## How are the VCAMs selected for air?

VCAMs with lots of votes will be considered for air. Ultimately, Current and the sponsor associated with each VCAM assignment will decide which spots will air.

## Can I submit more than one VCAM entry per assignment?

Yes. The more, the merrier! You never know, all of your submissions may get picked.

## Where can I learn about the open and upcoming assignments?

You can check <http://current.com/ads> for our open assignments.

## Where can I find music for my VCAM?

You can download tracks from the APM music library or create your own. For the APM Music Library, visit: <http://current.com/apm.htm>

## How do I access the APM Library?

If you have never uploaded to Current before and you want to use APM, you'll need to first upload an unscored version of your VCAM. After we've screened it, you'll be given download credits to access the library. If you want to plan your score in advance, all registered Current members are able to browse and preview the APM library.

## I have more questions! How do I contact you?

You can email us [vcamoutreach@currentmedia.com](mailto:vcamoutreach@currentmedia.com)