Speaker 1:   All right. In this class, we're going to talk about VSLs. What is a VSL? As you saw in the opening slide, it's a Video Sales Letter. Why are they effective? We'll talk about that, you'll learn about the tools you need to create Video Sales Letters, the video format you must use for online use. Also talk about some of the common video players for playing video online, services that host your videos, provide players and convert your videos so that they're web optimized. Then we'll talk about do it yourself versus outsource.

A Video Sales Letter is basically a sales … Well it's sales copy in a video format with a voice over, right? Instead of just copy, you have a human factor in there, so there's someone speaking and delivering with inflection which empowers the copy to those who are listening. The common format is to use PowerPoint presentations and record with video screen capture software such as Camtasia which is what I'm using for this video. However as seen in the previous lesson, there are other common types of video such as whiteboard and explainer videos as well.

Why are they effective? I've said this before, because they deliver the important information and the critical benefits of the product to the prospective customer in a spoon-fed method. This ensures they do not miss the critical information that ultimately benefits them and makes them want to hit the buy button, it's bite-size information. Now of course, the other factor is that video is also an entertaining, less boring way to deliver a message and it can trigger emotion through voice inflection, sound and visual images and even music for some that use those. For example, some of the explainer videos may have music in the background, some of the whiteboard videos may have music in the background as well in addition to voice, so a lot of factors at work.

What's needed? Well of course you need your sales copy and we talked all about how to create sales copy in the previous video. Once you get that down, you're happy with it, you have a script. Now you can start piecing it together into PowerPoint or Keynote, by the way an alternative to Microsoft PowerPoint is in Openoffice.org it's free. If you don't have Power Note or Keynote and you don't have the budget, just check out openoffice.org and download the free suite there, okay?

You're going to need some screen capture software, the most common and the most popular is Camtasia and it's made by TechSmith. If you go to techsmith.com you'll be able to find out more about it, now it's several hundred dollars for the Camtasia. That said, you can get a trial, okay? Don't worry about it. If you want to use Camtasia, jump on it, you can get a trial and you can have plenty of time to get your video recorded. Of course there are alternatives to Camtasia out there that can help you, just type in Google, "Alternative to Camtasia," and you'll find many references.

You're going to need a voice-over as well, someone who's qualified and experienced with doing voice-over work. You can actually get some very high quality voice-over artist at fiverr.com. For those who know about Fiverr that's getting jobs done for $5, but it starts at $5. At Fiverr, you can get some voice-overs done but it may not be for 5 bucks unless you get just maybe 15 seconds or maybe 30 seconds. Typically it's done by X number of words, but when you go over to Fiverr and search for voice-overs, they'll provide you with all the instructions there as far as their pricing.

Sales copy, you need a PowerPoint, you need screen capture software and you need a voice to voice the script. Camtasia along with most of the current video recording software will render or save, another term is called produce, to this format. The final version of the video can be done through most of these screen capture software sources. Camtasia can take that if you're using that to MP4 format, and then what you really need to do if you're going to be playing this online, and that's what we're going to be doing is using a tool like Handbrake to then optimize that video for the web.

Here's a quick demonstration of using Handbrake, so what I can do is pull up my folder where I've saved my video. I can just click and drag it, just release it into the interface, and it's loaded it into the application. You want to go to the destination, click on browse and find where you want to save this video so you'll know where it saves in, first things first. The quick and easy demonstration is to tick this box right here that says, "Web optimize." This is otherwise known as fast start because there's a header code or codec that's built into the video.

As I've mentioned in the previous video, in one of our previous classes is that the video will want to load entirely before it plays by default. Because there's a piece of information in the video that tells the browsers to do that, but you need to optimize it for the web so it doesn't do that. You want it playing before it actually loads the entire video, you don't want people waiting around for the video to start. This is what this does, the tool is free from Handbrake. You can go to Google and type in, "Handbrake." Actually just go to handbrake.fr as in French, so you can go there and find the download link for that.

Once I tick the box that says web optimize, all I have to do is go up here and click the start button, depending on how long or what size your video is, this could take a couple of minutes. Once it's done, you now have a web optimized video.

One question you might have is, how do you create PowerPoint using the copy that we've created? I've got PowerPoint open here, and let's just say I've got all of my copy here in a text pad. Just copy and paste into a slide, I won't need the default subtitle box, I'm just going to highlight the edges and click delete. I can right click and duplicate the slide, now this is how I do it and others might do it a

little bit better. This is a quick way that retain the previous formatting and font, whatever I've done on the first slide that I want to include on the second without having to redo it. I like to duplicate it and then take the next bit of copy, highlight it and then highlight what's already there and replace it with the new text. We just continue to do that so forth and so on.

I can click and drag a slide around if I want to resequence it somewhere else. I can also come in here and just go back to the home tab at the top, you see a lot of options here at the top of the PowerPoint. Just like going into Word, I can text things, I can make something italicized. I can underline, I can also add a picture. To do that, I might want to slide or shift this text over if I want to put it to the left or the right, so I'll just click within the text with my mouse. Then this border, if I click on that or just hold my mouse over this dot in the center toward the arrow instead of becoming four arrows, it becomes two. I can click and drag that whole segment of text over like so, and then just click and drag the border so I can move the text the way I want it.

I go up to insert, at the top. Go to picture, browse a picture on my hard drive and just double click and now I've got a picture that I can move around. If I want to resize that, I can highlight everything and then come up here and change the number. Let's pull that up, makes it look a little better. Okay, so that's just a quick way to get pictures in, get your fonts, adjust and get your text in and create various slides. Just don't forget to go up and hit save often as you continue your work.

What else are we going to need? We're going to need a video player to display the video on your webpage, so you have a lot of options to choose from with various budgets. You can include JW Player is one of those options, now it's a player only. There's a free version but of course it's going to put their logo on top of that video as long as it plays, and that's not what you want for commercial video. You'll have to pay if you want to use something for commercial purposes.

However there are better options out there, you can type JW Player into Google and it's actually at jwplayer.com but you can get more information by starting there. There are better services out there who will do a couple of things, not only will they manage the videos, many of these will host the videos for you, give you stats, tracks like tracking your plays. They'll do an auto conversion to a web ready format for you, and then plus a lot of other bells and whistles if you choose to use them.

One of those services is EasyVideoSuite.com, it's a little expensive. I think it's almost $300 a year but you can check it out on the website for the current pricing. I like Easy Video Suite, it does have a little application that you download to your computer. You can click and drag your videos over into that application

and it will auto upload to Amazon S3. Easy Video Suite doesn't host the videos, they integrate with S3 but in the previous video I told you that's probably the best place for storage for bandwidth because it's Amazon S3 and they're huge storage facilities.

You're never going to have a problem with buffering or videos not playing if they're being pulled from Amazon S3. There is a cost for that bandwidth but it's like pennies per gigabyte, so unless you have just a massive amount of traffic and these videos just are really pulling from a lot of traffic, it's going to be pretty affordable. Look into it at Amazon S3, so Easy Video Suite integrates with them. When you use this application, you drag and drop your video into it, it automatically uploads to your S3 account and then it automatically optimizes that video for you and makes it web ready. Then when you log in to your Easy Video Suite account, you just copy and paste some code and put it onto your webpage. Of course you're going to put that code where you want the video to appear on your page.

Another great service is Wistia.com. You can actually get 50 free videos at Wistia, and it's going to be a great service for you, and it's about $25 a month. It's really simple to use, they're all about video at Wistia so that's one that I would certainly recommend. There's also Vimeo, Vimeo.com but you have to go to the pro version and that adds to about $17 a month, but you have to pay that annually at about $204 a year. Vimeo will also optimize your video when you upload, it does that for you automatically and then it produces a piece of code again that you copy and paste in your web page.

The procedure is generally the same, it's just some of these offer more features than the others, or different features. It's important at someone who produces video or uses video to have that built in auto conversion and a simple copy and paste for your code. Check out Wistia, in fact let me just give you a quick demonstration there.

Here's my Wistia account and I've pulled up one of my videos under my account, and if you see where it says video actions. If I hover over that, I have a lot of options. If you want to quickly grab the embed code, I click on embed and share. Here's the code, you can click this copy button and it automatically copies it to my clipboard, so I'm ready to paste into my webpage. A couple of things you can notice here, I can choose the video size if I want, iframe is by default and that's probably the one you're always going to use.

There are some advanced options that you probably won't use here unless you're going to be putting into WordPress, and then you might want to use the Embed version here, okay. Really it's just a matter of grabbing this code, copying it and then pasting it into your webpage. Before I show you that, let me show

you something else. If I go to video options and click customize, let me pull this over. Here's something that's going to be important as far as settings go for someone using a sales video. Because you probably want the video playing on auto play when the page loads, you may not want to show the control such as the play button. This is where you make those changes right here, okay?

I would tick auto play because I want that video to start immediately, and then I would untick the options where the play bar is shown et cetera. This is where you access that, so it's important to point that out because in sales videos, you usually don't have that option to let people to pause the video and it's usually started on auto pilot. Wistia has these features available to you here, of course you can do that on Vimeo as well. I really love the simplicity of Wistia and how you navigate and how you access the settings and of course your embed code. Let's just say I'll save that, well actually I'm not going to save I'm just going to close that for now.

Yes, discard. Let me pull this back over. Let's go back to video, let's go to embed and share, and I'm going to click on this and copy it. Then I'm going to put it into my text pad, just right click and paste it in here, now I'm ready to take that and paste it into my webpage. Let me pull up my HTML editor, so I've pulled this up into code mode, this is just a basic webpage with nothing on it. If I go to design mode, you see nothing's there but let's just say I'm ready to copy and paste this code, and what I want to do is put it where I want that video to appear. All right, let's just say I've written my sales letter and I've made a text note that says, "The video goes here." See the top of the page? If I highlight that and then go into the code mode, I'll see it highlighted there, so now I know exactly where to copy and paste that code or paste the code. I right click and paste, there's all of the code, I can go back to design mode. Actually I don't have to do that, all I really need to do is go up here and save the web page. Then when I upload it to my server, the video will appear where I've pasted the code.

Now here's something cool for you, it's a free resource that I discovered some time back that provides a fill in the blank option for creating your player and the embed code, and allows you to choose whether it's auto play and hide the control bar and those sort of settings. You can try this one out, maybe before you do anything else, check this resource out. It's at webvideouniversity.com/basicvideoplayer. Let me show you that right quick.

Here's the basic video player, and again 100% free even for commercial use. First, you put in your width then put in your height, by default it's in that 16 by 9 ratio which means widescreen. 640 wide, 360 high, your video URL, this means wherever you're hosting your video you need the full path to that video right here, and it's of course going to end with .mp4. In this case, you can see that a

video is being pulled from Amazon S3. This is their link for all videos in the S3 storage, has some unique identifiers in there.

Anyway, this is being pulled from there, so you just need that full path to wherever that video is being hosted. A pre-play image is the picture that's shown before the video plays, but you don't really need that if you're going to be using auto play. That could be left blank, loop video? No. Auto play video? Yes, if we go down and select true, we're good there. Show the play button? By default says true, we want that to be false. Control bar settings docked, I believe that's now going to show we will double check it. I don't hide the control bar, that is true.

Okay so let's click the preview and see what happens here. (Video playing) All right, so we are showing the control bar, so let's go up and make a change. Okay. Under control bar settings, make that none, let's click preview again. (Video playing) That's exactly the way we want it now. If we keep scrolling down we now have our video embed code at the bottom. I click in it, and then I highlight everything, right click and copy. Then I go back to my webpage using the steps I just showed you with Wistia and paste it where I want it to appear, so a great free resource for you.

All right. Now let's talk about DIY or outsource, so if you're doing it yourself this is going to take some time and a bit of a learning curve and some investment in some tools and instruction as I've discussed and shown you. Of course, if you outsource, gets things done much faster, gets your order ready and up online much quicker, but may require a larger budget. Here's a checklist of some tools and resources. Earlier we talked about what it might cost you to have a copywriter. Maybe a minimum price for a decent copywriter around $1,000, PowerPoint or Keynote up to $100. Camtasia about $300 full featured or you can use the basic free alternative which is Camstudio.org, we do have some budget friendly options including the free player that I mentioned. You can get the basic free alternative called Camstudio as opposed to paying $300 for Camtasia, and again I told you if you wanted to use the full featured you could certainly get started with a trial.

Now, JW Player is around $149 a year I mention that, I also mentioned Wistia and Easy Video Suite and also Vimeo, but the pro version is what you'll need and you can check the sites for pricing. Maybe you want to get someone to do your voice-over, now approximately $79 and up on Fiverr depending on the length or the number of words in the script. That's probably an average price you can expect to pay if you're talking about maybe a 20 to 30-minute script, that just gives you an idea, something to work with.

Outsourcing the presentation creation, now price is going to vary for that too but depending on the type of video you create, this can be in the hundreds. If you're

having someone especially do the whiteboard animation videos, or the explainer videos. Unless you're purchasing some software and then you can do that for probably a hundred bucks or less. Regardless, you can search Google for Create Video Sales Letter for resources, or you can just go to popular outsource sites like oDesk.com, Freelancer.com, there's Elance.com which is well known and of course use Fiverr.com.

That's a little bit about creating your Video Sales Letters, so ready to go to the next video and in the next lesson, Creating Webinars, some common practice and rules.