

Win the Room: How *Real Voices* Help Agencies *Win Clients*



What your clients want from you.

Audience understanding.

In today's competitive agency landscape, great ideas aren't enough. To win new business, agencies need to prove they truly understand the people their clients are trying to reach.

According to the IPA's 2024 New Business Survey, 62% of agencies say demonstrating audience understanding is now the single biggest factor in pitch success.

Where pitches could once open with broad concepts or strategies framed around a client's needs, today's decision-makers expect more. They want proof that the thinking reflects the real world – ideas grounded in how people actually feel, behave, and respond.





Video is strategy

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**“People do not care how much you know
until they know how much you care.”**

TEDDY ROOSEVELT





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We know... we've seen it all before.

get to know us

At Vox Pops International, we've spent **over 37 years** helping brands and agencies get closer to their audiences through video. Our work spans global consumer brands and leading creative agencies, producing high-quality content that feels real, authentic, and meaningful.

We've seen first-hand how consumer-led video can give agencies the edge. The right clips, produced quickly and cost-effectively, can **turn an idea into proof** – and make the difference between being remembered or overlooked.

In this report, we bring together industry trends, insight, and examples that show how you can use **real voices to win pitches**, engage clients, and deliver ideas that resonate.



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“Without data, you’re just another person with an opinion.”

W. EDWARDS DEMING





Video is strategy

When landing a new brief, you want to learn everything you can about the client and their audience. You might rely on the information available online, or do your own bit of fieldwork. What we're seeing more of today are agencies using video as part of that discovery. Video that captures real-world perspectives is helping shape strategies and creative routes that feel grounded in how people actually think and behave.

Some may see this kind of data as a threat – as if it could limit creative freedom. But when used well, it does the opposite. Data can help brands tell different stories in different contexts, ensuring relevance in an age where audiences are fragmented across countless platforms.





Data is not your boss, it's your best mate. It should inspire, not instruct. It should open up new possibilities rather than shut them down.

A clear example of this is **Leo Burnett's** "Raise Your Arches" campaign. Research revealed that the most emotional moment in the McDonald's experience wasn't the first bite – it was the instant someone suggested going. That single insight unlocked a universally relatable gesture, the arched eyebrow, that captured a feeling everyone recognised. The result: over a billion impressions and a 7% increase in sales.

It's a reminder that the best creative work doesn't start with assumptions; it starts with audience understanding – and that understanding can be deepened and brought to life through video.



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**“Connection is an exchange
of our humanity.”**

SEAN STEPHENSON





People need people.

Video is one of the most powerful ways people consume and retain information. Studies show that people remember up to 95% of a message when it's delivered through video, compared with just 10% when reading it in text (Insivia, 2024). And when real people appear on screen, engagement rises even further – content featuring human faces holds attention for up to twice as long as other visual formats (ScienceDirect, 2023).

As expectations of audience understanding grow, agencies are recognising the value of bringing consumer insight to the table. Many are now using real voices and real stories in pitches to help clients feel closer to the people they want to reach.

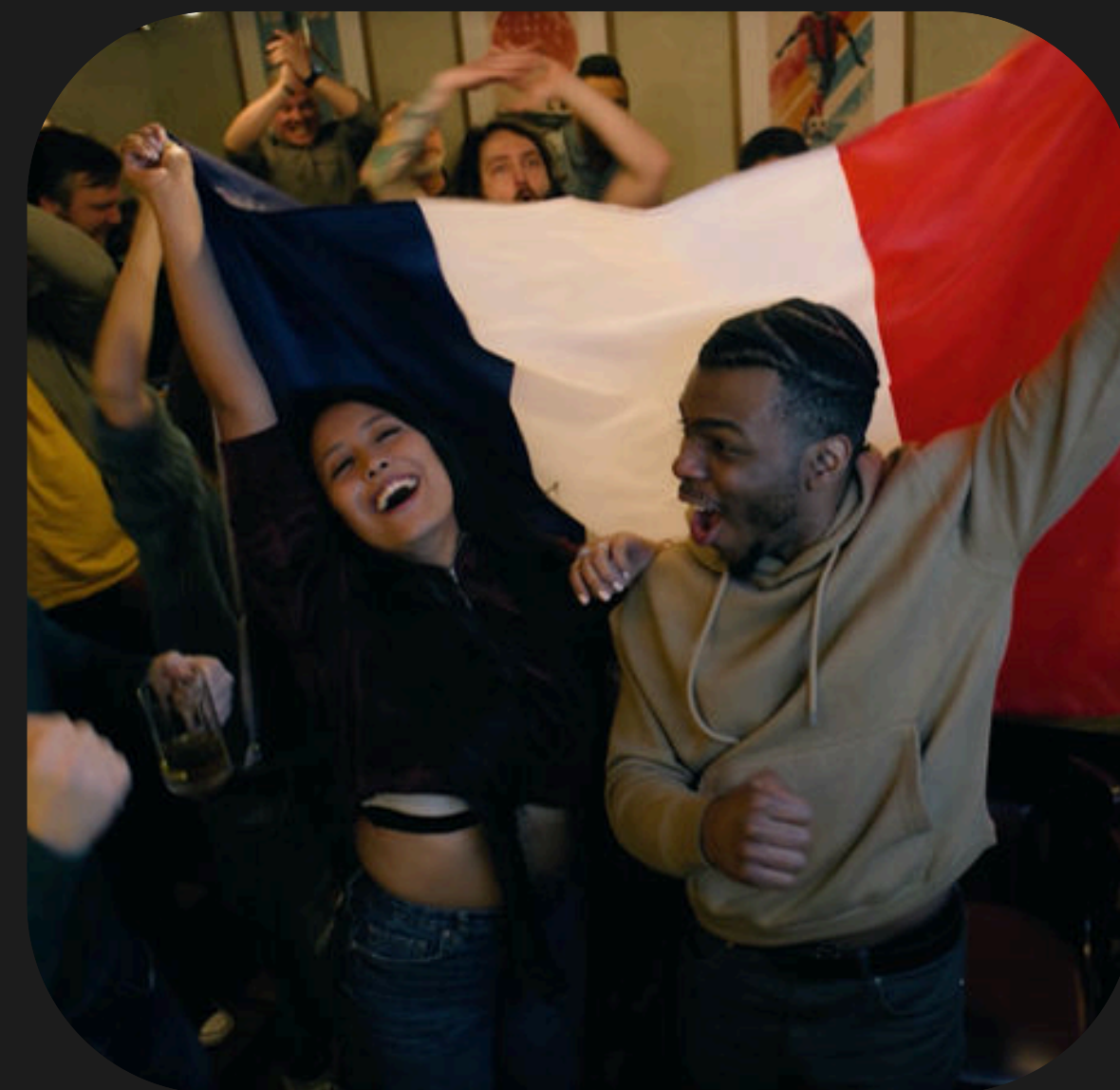




We've seen how powerful this can be. When **OMD** integrated clips of consumers into a major client pitch, the content was described as "emotive" and "incredibly well received," delivering "exactly what we had hoped to convey."

VML recognised the same impact when preparing a pitch for the Paris Olympics. Interviews with fans across the world revealed how people watch, share, and celebrate the Games – giving their team "amazing pitch theatre and insights to wow our stakeholders." [Go to the case study →](#)

You might be thinking that the process is time-consuming, but our team combines research expertise with production experience – meaning we can move quickly to find respondents, create task and discussion guides, film, and edit the footage all in one go (more on this next).





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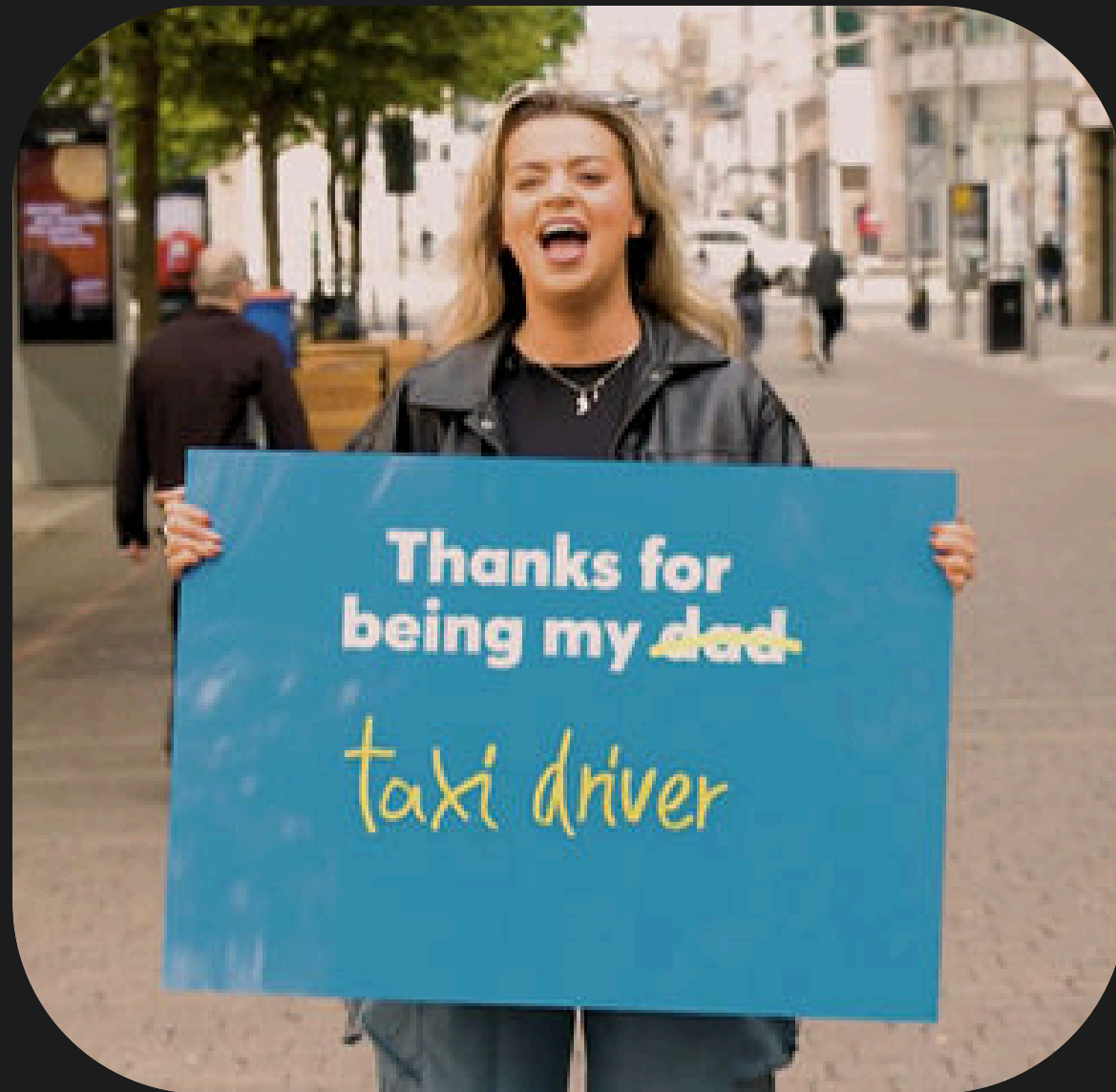
Be more human

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**“There isn’t a stronger connection
between people than storytelling.”**

JIMMY NEIL SMITH





Land your message.

We know that pitching is hard. You're under immense pressure to deliver groundbreaking ideas in a short space of time. Nothing compares to that moment before walking into the boardroom – that heavy feeling of everything resting on how well your message lands. You've tested, debated, and refined your ideas, but you're still wondering whether you'll really get through.

Agencies spend, on average, 180 hours on each new business pitch, so we've made it our role to take some of that weight off. When we plan filming for a pitch, we handle the process end-to-end – identifying the right respondents, creating discussion and task guides, and producing edits that distil the strongest moments according to the brief.



Typically, we'll deliver a best-of edit and then shape shorter edits that highlight the most relevant quotes or themes – giving teams content that's easy to use, emotionally engaging, and designed to complement the story they're telling in the room.

Our work with **Sky** illustrates this impact well. During our event on *How to Make an Impact with Video*, the team shared how short-form films have helped them engage their C-suite and senior stakeholders. They explained that names and stories from consumer videos were often referenced across the organisation as examples of real audience understanding brought to life.

Hear how others are using video to make an impact →

Attention has never been harder to hold. Every second in a pitch counts – and when your insight is seen, heard, and felt, your message is much more likely to land and be remembered.





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**“A satisfied customer is the
best source of advertisement.”**

G.S. ALAG





Take it further.

In a world where only 4% of consumers believe companies act with integrity, brands are looking for more authentic ways to build trust with their audiences. Agencies and brands alike are warming up to consumer-led video – whether through street interviews, self-filmed diaries, or documentary-style content – as part of their wider marketing strategies.

The same footage that brings a strategy to life in the boardroom can continue to deliver value long after the pitch. A single day of filming can produce far more than one set of clips – it can generate a library of material that supports clients internally through training resources, and externally through campaigns and social content.





We've seen this first-hand. When **Buyagift**, a leading gift experience retailer, needed engaging content for their growing social media platforms, we used vox pops to connect with audiences on TikTok and Instagram in a playful, authentic way. [Find the full story →](#)

For **CardFactory**, we interviewed children on the street about their mums and pre-recruited adults who had funny stories to share about their dads – creating warm, relatable content for Mother's Day and Father's Day campaigns. [Watch the videos →](#)

The demand for this kind of content is growing fast. **Over 40% of companies** now produce at least one video a week, with mid-sized firms creating around three. As clients' appetite for video continues to rise, the opportunity for agencies is clear: the same content that wins the pitch can continue to drive impact long after it's over.





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Be more human.

The rise of AI has introduced new opportunities for creatives, opening up faster ways to plan, produce, and deliver content. But in an industry where many feel that AI threatens job security, there remains a lot of skepticism around the tools available.

We're seeing how **AI can support the process** by helping with practical tasks such as sourcing quotes and summarising insights; but it cannot replicate the empathy or nuance that comes from hearing a real voice, seeing a real reaction, or feeling a real story unfold.

Consumer-led video continues to prove that authenticity is a competitive advantage, and in a world increasingly shaped by automation, human moments connect more powerfully.





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What you can do now.

get in touch

You may think that video feels out of reach – limited by time, resources, or budget. Or perhaps by geography, when your clients and their audiences are spread around the world.

But that's where collaboration makes the difference. At Vox Pops International, we work fast and flexibly, capturing authentic perspectives wherever they are. We know how to find the right people, ask the right questions, and bring their stories to life in a way that inspires action.

If you'd like to explore how video can help you make a stronger impact – we'd love to continue the conversation. Stay connected with us for more insights, inspiration, and examples of how real voices are helping agencies win the room.



Ready to win the room?

Get in touch with our team to explore how consumer-led video can help you win your next pitches and projects.

[book a meeting](#)

