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What is a Video Sales Letter?

Marketing your products and services using the written word has been enhanced through the use of videos. Yes, companies and marketers worldwide are using video to encourage consumers to buy their products. These days, it's not uncommon to visit an online business and see a video sales letter.

A video sales letter is a marketing strategy for getting better sales results when customers come to your website to make a purchase. Below is a screenshot of a sample video that could be inserted into your sales page.

Google TV Ads Channel



If you click the play button inside the video window (or in this case, click the hyperlink inside the graphical image) what you'll see is that instead of arriving at a website that only contains text and navigation buttons, the hottest and most trendy online businesses showcase a video as a component in their sales letter.

The video is intended to capture your attention, and make you want to buy the product or learn more about it. That's why a video sales letter can be as simple as:

- Displaying a video
- Featuring a "Buy Now" button
- Offering more information through email signup
- Bullet points that highlight the product offering

Although video sales letters are popping up everywhere, some businesses use this method of marketing as a more sociable and personal way for you to connect with the business owner.

Customer Preference?

Do your customers absorb information quicker when they read it, hear it, or see it?

If they don't understand the language, it's easier to look at something visual to help them understand what you're selling. Or maybe they're traveling, sitting in a public place, or resting quietly, and they'd prefer to hear the information rather than read it or see it.

A person's learning preferences will determine if they're encouraged or turned off by video sales letters, especially the ones that don't have a fastforward button. But we'll get to that later.

Video Sales Letter = TV Commercial?

TV commercials try to appeal to your emotions or a problem that needs resolving so you buy what they're selling. Is it any wonder that the volume would always get louder during a commercial? The intention was to "get your attention!"

The video sales letters that you see on the Internet are like miniature TV commercials. They get you to stop what you're doing. They command your attention. They intrigue you with music, action, or the person who's speaking.

But with a video sales letter, you know that to get to the valuable information, regardless of what's being sold, you're most likely going to have to trade your email address to get the rest of the information or to buy the product!

Do you have a video sales letter on your website or blog? Do you ask your customers to give you their email addresses before they buy anything from you?

It's all about marketing!

Have you ever stood in line at a store waiting to check out and the cashier asked you for your zip code?

Their purpose, most likely, was for demographic marketing reasons. They wanted to know who shopped at their store and how far they traveled to get there. That helps the marketing department target their store's advertising campaigns.

Nothing wrong with that, right? Most customers will nonchalantly provide their zip code and think nothing of it.

Yet, if that same customer were to shop online and the website owner asked for your email address before letting you "check out," would you "leave the store" or would you enter your email address into the form just to quickly complete your transaction?

Many business owners claim that having a video sales letter as the entrance page to their website gives them the opportunity to introduce themselves.

They want to establish social contact that would not have been possible if the website visitor had only been reading textual information about the product.

But some websites aren't a candidate for featuring a video sales letter on their site. Let's take a look at the reasons for and against.

Does Your Business Qualify?

Not every website or blog will benefit and realize increased sales just because it has a video sales letter on it. Let's look at five reasons "for" using a video sales letter, and then we'll look at five reasons "for not" using a video sales letter.

Five Reasons for Using a Video Sales Letter

- 1. When you want more **exposure** on search engine results pages
- 2. When you want to **attract customers** who use a mobile device
- 3. When you're **better at speaking** than writing
- 4. When you want to **sell your product or service** using the latest technology
- 5. When it's **easier** to show your product than to explain it with words

Five Reasons for Not Using a Video Sales Letter

- 1. Your **customers** have told you that they don't like video sales letters
- 2. Your **sales numbers have dropped** since displaying a video sales letter
- 3. You're afraid of **exceeding your bandwidth limitations** on your domain's hosting account
- 4. Your **product sells well** without using a video presentation and you don't want to jinx yourself by making changes to your website
- 5. You're **too timid** to try new things and besides, you don't know how to create a video sales letter page

Videos and Video Sales Letters Are On the Rise

At the **SMX Advanced** conference in Seattle, **Matt Cutts**, principal engineer and head of Google's web spam team made it absolutely clear that Google video sitemaps are extremely important when you want your video content indexed. He recommended that after you create a video and upload it to your site that you submit a video sitemap.

Matt stated... "We want to be able to crawl and find all the video across the entire web, so that we can return them, and so I think we are going to be putting more and more weight on video sitemaps going forward, like this fall and into the future. If you make video, if you are a site owner, or a publisher, please start exploring video sitemaps."

For those of us who are still contemplating whether it's worth it to put a video on the first page of our website, we might want to consider the advantages of the evolving technology and algorithms for generating increased search engine results that bring customers to your site

Video Recording Devices

With all the new electronic video equipment being sold today, video sites such as YouTube continue to thrive even more.

You don't need to be too computer literate to create a professional looking video. You don't even need to sign up for an instructional course at your local college to learn how to take a video.

Even most Smart phones, regardless of the manufacturer, have video capabilities.

To make things easier, it doesn't take long to learn how to turn your video into a YouTube presentation.

It also doesn't take much knowledge or experience to embed the video code into a website. But maybe this is all new to you, and you have no idea where to start; so let's start at the beginning.

What You Need To Get Started

To record a live video, you'll need an electronic device that will allow you to record video, such as a video cam on your computer, a smart phone with video capabilities, or a video recorder such as the Flip which sells for about \$99.00, the upgraded Ultra HD version sells at around \$170.00.

To record a video using pictures, music, and text instead of a live location with people, you'll need computer software to create a slideshow, and you'll need photos and royalty free music to create your video.

Free Solutions for Creating a Sales Video

When you want to create a video that you'll use on your website or blog, these are the items you'll need:

• A video script—this is something that you will write and then when you're recording the video, you'll read it as if you were just speaking into the camera. (Naturally, you shouldn't be holding a piece of paper and reading from it in front of the camera.) Important, however, is to create a compelling call to action several times during the video, and for sure before the video ends. To locate samples of free video scripts, search the Internet for "free video scripts."

Here's an example of what you could use to get your thoughts in order before shooting the video.

VIDEO SCRIPT

Desired Length of Video Clip	Hear It	See It	Text Overlay
5 seconds	Intro dramatic sound bytes	Visual display of product	Name of product
15 seconds	Music softens,	Male	Address of

	male voice	sitting/standing/walking	website
	introduces	while talking	embedded on
	himself		lower portion
			of video
1 minute	Male	<this i="" is="" td="" want<="" what=""><td><this is="" td="" the<=""></this></td></this>	<this is="" td="" the<=""></this>
	continues	my viewers to see>	text overlay I
	speaking and		want my
	background		viewers to
	music stops		read>

Then this is what the person in the video will say:

This is what I want to say (Duration = 60 seconds):

This is my call to action statement: (Duration = 15 seconds)

This is what I want to say to conclude the video: (Duration = 60 seconds)

• Free software for editing your video—If your computer does not already provide basic video editing software, a quick search on the Internet for "free video editing software" will provide a sufficient

number of free resources that you can download, even if it's a 30-day trial product. That's certainly long enough for you to record several videos for your website and for you to discover if the software is easy to use and something that you wish to purchase.

Here's a brief list of free video editing software sites, but there's many more packages available, should you choose to do your own research.

- Windows Movie Maker No charge Windows video editing software
- <u>Virtual Dub</u> a SourceForge program
- Adobe Premium Elements 9 (Free trial) Microsoft® Windows® and Mac OS
- Avidemux Open Source video editing software
- **ZS4 Video Editor** Open Source video editing software
- **LiVES** Open Source video editing software
- Free presentation software—Impress, by OpenOffice, is a
 presentation software program that can be downloaded free of charge.
 It is comparable to PowerPoint and it's capable of opening and saving
 PPT files in addition to its own files. The link below will take you to the

download page.

OpenOffice **Impress** - presentation software

Your Video To-Do List

Regardless if you hire someone to do all the work, or if you decide to do the work yourself, you'll need a list of tasks to complete your project.

- 1. Write the **script**
- 2. **Create presentation slides** that you can read to create your very own personal voice files that will be used with the video
- 3. Voiceover work for the slides you just created
- 4. **Video creation** using Camtasia, Flip cameras, laptop cameras, or another video recording/capturing device

VIDEO SALES INLVEACED
5. Edit the video footage for visual appeal, mistakes, introduction, sound,
text, narrator speech and mannerisms, and length of the video
6. Branding your video with your company name and website link (URL)
7. Saving the video file to a format that's suitable for your website
Lating the rides his to a format that a baltable for your website
8. Adding the video to your sales page or squeeze pages
9. If you have an affiliate program , then the video will need to be added to the affiliate member area
added to the anniate member area
10. Perform extensive keyword research before submitting your videos to online sites
11. Make a list of the video sharing sites where you would like to submit your video

- 12. **Manually submit** your video to those video sharing sites that will bring you more traffic to your website or blog
- 13. **Add analytical code** to your video sales letter page so that you can track your traffic, the keywords used to access the sales page, and for the purposes of split testing a non-video sales page to see which page generates the most traffic and the most sales.
- 14. Make a **second video**, mixing up the components, and add it to a test market page to see which video sales letter brings you the most sales.

Paid Solutions for Creating a Sales Video

When you have more money than time, or you don't want to learn the technology, you can pay someone to do the job for you.

This section of our report offers you the benefit of our research, and provides you with paid solutions for getting a top-notch video production company to create a sales video for you.

The following companies do it all. In general, you can get a 3 to 5 minute customized video ready to upload to your website for under \$900. Some companies charge less, and for sure, if you were to do your own research you could find companies that will charge much more than \$1,000 to create a five-minute video for you. However, this section could save you hours of research if you elect to hire someone else to do everything for you.

Done for You

Here are several resources that you can consider when you want a company to do everything for you. Since their primary function is to create video productions for the web, these companies do it all for you. They'll tell you exactly what they need and then they'll do the work—from writing the script,

creating the video, and designing your web page. Be sure to get references, a solid price quote and a date when they will deliver everything.

Live On Page - http://www.liveonpage.com/

I Speak Video - http://www.ispeakvideo.com/ (Starting from \$399)

Onsite Videos - http://www.onsitevideos.com/

Visual Impact - http://www.visualimpact.us/web-video-production

Video Tile (UK) - http://www.videotile.co.uk/

Shoot You Video Production (UK) - http://www.shootyou.co.uk/

TurnHere - http://www.turnhere.com

Outsourced Solutions

When you don't have the time or equipment to create your own sales video, then look to individuals and companies who will do various pieces of the project for you.

When you hire someone to do the creative and production work, that process is called outsourcing.

In other words, you own all the rights and title to the sales video, but you're paying someone to do the work of creating the video. When the video is complete and you're satisfied with the product, then you pay the outsourced person.

Some contractual agreements will request that the person or company that made the video will not only deliver the finished product to you, but they'll also upload it and embed it into your preconfigured webpage.

For price ranges to accomplish this task, you could search for comparable jobs that have been requested and completed at outsource companies such as:

- 1. www.guru.coom
- 2. www.freelancer.com
- 3. www.fiverr.com
- 4. www.getacoder.com

- 5. www.gigbucks.com
- 6. <u>www.dealerr.com</u>
- 7. www.ffiver.com

Alternative Video Creation Sources

Finally, if you don't want to create your own video, if you don't want to pay a big company to do everything for you, and outsourcing through online websites isn't something that appeals to you, then you might wish to consider hiring someone local.

The following three resources are totally under-utilized. Maybe you'll be the first business owner in your hometown to take advantage of these nuggets?

Search through your local listings (online search, craigslist, flyers, ad packs, newspaper listings, phone directories, etc.) for these professional people who can be very willing to help you with your project. Fees are negotiated between you and the professional.

- Local TV production schools, teachers, and students
- Local portrait, wedding, and event photographers
- Local production personnel at TV stations and cable networks

Video Hosting Companies

If you're only going to create one video sales letter, you can easily place it on your website, and your web hosting company will be the video hosting resource.

If, however, your video's size is quite large, or if you're anticipating a large product launch where thousands of customers will access your video all at once, it could shut your server down and no one would be able to see your video, let alone buy your product.

If that scenario describes you, then you would most definitely want to consider paying a dedicated web hosting company to host your video files.

Those types of companies allow for hundreds and even thousands of instantaneous visitors to access your website and video at the same time, and your site won't go offline due to such a high level of activity.

Here's a small sampling of companies you can pay to host your videos, busy websites, and large media files:

Amazon Web hosting services - http://aws.amazon.com/

Voxel - http://www.voxel.net/

Fliqz - http://www.fliqz.com/

Hosting For Less

-http://www.hosting4less.com/highvolumewebhosting.html

GoGrid Cloud Hosting Services - http://www.gogrid.com/

ThinkHost -

http://www.thinkhost.com/options/packages/dedicated-hosting.shtml

Video Sales Letter Specs

Above anything else, make sure that your video is Internet friendly. One thing to remember is that when you're making your video, converting it for the web, and displaying it on your website that you don't want to sacrifice the quality of your video.

Let's face it, if your video is blurry and lacks quality, then once it is uploaded to your site or distributed to video submission sites, you will not get customers clicking through to your website.

That translates to not selling products and not getting any sales or people's email addresses to build your list. To minimize your video's degradation, keep the following guidelines close at hand.

When you're creating standard definition (SD) videos, these are the rules:

• Format: H.264, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4

Resolution: 640 x 480

• Frame rate should remain the same as the original video

• Audio sampling rate: 44.1KHz for MP3/AAC

When creating high definition (HD) videos, these are the minimums:

- Format: H.264, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4
- Resolution: 1280 x 720
- Frame rate should remain the same as the original video
- Audio sampling rate: 44.1KHz Stereo MP3/AAC
- Maximum 1GB file size and 10 minute duration

How to Create a Video Sales Letter for Less than \$25

Now that you have all this information, let's talk about how you can create a video sales letter for less than \$25.00.

These are the tools you'll need:

- Free 30-day trial of <u>Camtasia</u> for Windows or Mac OS X
- Free presentation software from **OpenOffice Impress**
- A microphone (built into your laptop or available at your local computer or tech vendor store for a very low price)
- Free video hosting through any number of online companies such as youtube.com

This is the process:

1. Set up an account on **BlogTV.com**

- 2. Set your camera or web cam to "Record."
- 3. Using your **prewritten script**, speak into the camera and sell your product in a conversational style; not like a pushy sales person. Remember to give **three call-to-action** invitations for your viewers to click the button to buy your product.
- 4. **Stop** the video when your message has been delivered.
- 5. **Upload** your video to your computer for editing.
- 6. **Edit** your video, and then add music and text to your desired frames.
- Using <u>WordPress</u> or your website editing software (such as <u>Kompozer</u>), click **the insert media button** to place the video into your page at the desired location.
- 8. **Save** the page and preview it in your favorite browser.
- 9. If **changes** are needed, use your free video editing software program that was mentioned earlier in this report.
- 10. **Re-upload** your video and then admire your work.

How To Keep Them Engaged

It's been said many times before that you can't please everybody, and that's so true when it comes to website and blog layouts and calls to action.

Some customers may love text.

Some customers may love cool graphics and navigation buttons

Some customers may love flashy buttons and arrows that draw their attention

Some customers may love video sales letters

However, one thing is for sure...you can't please all the people, all the time. The solution? Some of you might frown on this suggestion, but it's similar to what happened in the webby world several years ago.

Web visitors were, at that time, given a choice to either view the flash presentation or to skip it and move directly to the interior of the website. Do you remember those days?

The same is true today, although many businesses and website owners may deny it.

What we're referring to here is that you can create a video sales letter page where you're using all the latest technology and search engine recommendations to get indexed and on page one of major search engines.

But...it really doesn't matter what YOU think! It matters what your CUSTOMERS think!

Let's look at a few examples of why some customers don't like or even HATE video sales letters.

As with everything else you learn, these are observations and truths revealed after surveying hundreds of web customers. These findings may or may not pertain to your business because of the products and services you sell, but it's important that you're aware of these "flaws" as customers called them.

What's even more important is that of those surveyed, the ones who didn't like the video presentations, (or complained about specific things) strongly made their opinions known that they didn't buy the product or service advertised, based on the facts you're about to learn.

- Customers didn't like visiting a video sales letter site that utilized a video player that had no stop, pause, and replay or fast-forward button options.
- 2. Customers didn't like it when they **couldn't see a timer** that indicated the length of time it would take to watch the entire video.
- 3. Customers didn't like spending **more than 5 minutes** before hearing about the bonus, the call to action, what the product could do for them, or any number of reasons why it was taking so long to deliver the message. "Shorter is better" was the resounding vote.
- 4. If the person speaking in the video didn't **convey the purpose in less than 2 minutes**, then customers left the site, never to return.
- 5. Customers complained that when there was **only a voiceover**, combined with text, and **no human** was in the video, it wasn't much better than reading text, and it didn't hold their attention, so they left the site.

- 6. If the speaker's voice has an **annoying pitch** to it, or if it's difficult to understand the speaker's accent, customers left the site.
- 7. If the speaker's voice sounded like a **computerized robot** that was reading a script, customers left the site.

At the end of the day, consumers who spend money wanted a 30-45 second sound byte, and then they wanted a simple and easy checkout process to buy the product.

What Sales Method Satisfies Customers the Most?

If you're not going to perform any split-testing (sending some customers to one sales page and other customers to another sales page), then include an easy-to-find link underneath your video sales letter that allows your customers to **choose** to get the information **without viewing the entire video**.

Several text link examples that you could put underneath your video:

To skip this video...

Click here for a list of product specifications

Want to buy it now? Click here for the order page

No time right now? We'll send you the report. Click here...

Advanced Tactics for Converting Clicks into Sales

After polling thousands of satisfied customers and achieving record numbers of sales, these tactics were the ones that proved the most successful.

- 1. Using a powerful **visual and musical-driven introduction** piques a customer's interest, but limit it to 5 seconds.
- Seeing a live person (male or female) appear in the video who talks
 to the customer within the first 15 seconds instantly engages the
 customer. They didn't leave the site and waited for the next part of the
 video.
- 3. Displaying a video for **less than 2 minutes** kept the customer patient and attentive to hearing the presentation.
- 4. When customers learned that they had to **give up their email address** before being shown the product or fully understanding what it was they were buying, more than 65% of new visitors left the site

immediately.

- 5. When the **video loaded quickly**, mobile phone/device users were apt to buy the product AND recommend the site to their mobile/texting friends.
- 6. Along those same lines, **mobile access** grows stronger every month. To stay competitive, make sure your site and your video presents well for customers who aren't accessing your message and product through the Internet.
- 7. In addition to PPC, article marketing, classified ad sites, and backlinking, the truly successful video sales letter sites reported that their analytical log files reflected the fact that more than 38% of their buying customers came from **video sharing websites**.

Driving Huge Volumes Of Traffic

Since your goal is to create passive revenue streams from all the work that you've done to set up your site and create your video, you'll need traffic. How about free traffic?

When you submit your video to video sharing websites, you'll receive approximately 38% more customers than if you skip this step. To get you started and to save you time doing the research yourself, the following lists should prove most beneficial to your traffic generation efforts.

The first list contains video sharing websites, and the second list gives you resources for search engines that specialize in retrieving results for video sites.

Video Sharing Websites

This list is not all-inclusive. There are literally hundreds of video sharing websites on the Internet. But this list should get you started. If for any reason the link is broken or the site no longer exists, then just proceed to the next site in the list.

4Shared - http://www.4shared.com

Blip TV - http://blip.tv

Break - http://www.break.com

Buzz Net - http://www.buzznet.com

Cnet TV - http://www.cnettv.cnet.com

Dada - http://us.dada.net/video

Daily Motion - http://www.dailymotion.com

E Snips - http://www.esnips.com

Ebaums World - http://www.ebaumsworld.com

Flickr - http://www.flickr.com

Flurl - http://www.flurl.com

Hulu - http://www.hulu.com

Imeem - http://www.imeem.com

Justin TV - http://www.justin.tv

KU6 - http://www.ku6.com

Libero - http://video.libero.it

Live Leak - http://www.liveleak.com

Live Video - http://www.livevideo.com

Lycos - http://mix.lycos.com

Metacafe - http://www.metacafe.com

Ning - http://www.ning.com

Pandora TV - http://www.pandora.tv

Photobucket - http://photobucket.com/recent/videos

Rediff - http://is.rediff.com

Revver - http://www.revver.com

RuTube - http://rutube.ru

Sevenload - http://www.sevenload.com

Stage 6 - http://stage6.divx.com

TinyPic - http://www.tinypic.com

Truveo - http://www.truveo.com

Tu TV - http://www.tu.tv

Tudou - http://www.tudou.com

Ustream - http://www.ustream.tv

Uume - http://uume.com

Vbox 7 - http://wbox7.com

Veoh - http://www.veoh.com

Video.qq - http://video.qq.com

Vimeo - http://www.vimeo.com

Vision.Ameba.jp - http://vision.ameba.jp

Vod Pod - http://vodpod.com

Vuze - http://www.vuze.com

WebShots - http://www.webshots.com

Yahoo Video - http://video.yahoo.com

You.video.sina.cn - http://v.sina.com.cn

Youku - http://www.youku.com

Your File Host - http://www.yourfilehost.com

Youtube - http://www.youtube.com

Video Search Engines

This list is not all-inclusive. There are a variety of video search engines available on the Internet. But this list should get you started

AOL Video - http://video.aol.com

Blinkx - http://blinkx.com

Clip Shack - http://www.clipshack.com

Clipta - http://www.clipta.com

Expert Village - http://www.expertvillage.com

FFWD - http://ffwd.com

Google Video - http://video.google.com

MeFeedia - http://www.mefeedia.com

Mega Video - http://www.megavideo.com

MSN Video - http://video.msn.com

OV Guide - http://ovguide.com

Panjea - http://www.panjea.com

Sproose - http://sproose.com

Stickam - http://www.stickam.com

SuTree - http://www.sutree.com

Trooker - http://www.trooker.com

uVouch - http://www.uvouch.com

Veoh - http://www.veoh.com

Video Surf - http://www.videosurf.com

Windows Live Video - http://search.live.com/video

Yahoo Video - http://video.yahoo.com

YouTube - http://youtube.com

Posting a Video to a Video Sharing Website

When you register at a video sharing website, especially if the video is for your business, you'll need to select the option that allows public access to your videos. Don't choose the private access option, otherwise your videos won't be seen. This point is mentioned first because it is often overlooked in the process.

Most video sharing sites let you upload your video clips at no charge.

The downside to free sites is that you're restricted by the size of the files that you can upload. The good part about submitting your videos is that many sites pay you a small monetary sum when web visitors view your videos and click through to your website.

You'll have to read the video sharing guidelines if you wish to make money through those types of sites. However, that small amount of effort should be worth it to bring in a few extra bucks without having to worry about updating the videos. Set it and forget it!

To upload your videos you must create an account at each video sharing site. Once registered then be sure to upload your files according to their size

and format specifications. Get this wrong, and your video files won't get accepted.

The good part about this is that once you resize and reformat your videos, you'll soon discover that many other sites have the exact same requirements.

So it's not like you're going to have to resize and reformat your videos differently for each site. Once you create a standardized version, you can use it over and over again for your video sharing website submissions.

Several video sharing sites require a verification process which can take from a few minutes to a few days. Google, for example, requires verification and their process takes awhile, but it's worth it to get your videos listed there.

When you're required to resize and reformat your videos, if you don't already own the software to accomplish that task, then you might want to try a product like the one that's offered at www.jumpcut.com.

All you want to do, really, is to edit the video. After you've done it one time, you'll realize how simple the process is.

The next step involves uploading your video clip to the video sharing site.

Just follow the site's instructions. It's as simple as clicking a button on their site, browsing to the file on your computer, and then clicking the upload button.

Sometimes the upload takes a while before your video gets published and is visible on the site.

Just make a note of the sites where you submitted your videos, and then either check your email for notification, or return to the site in a few days to locate your video's listing. When you can view your video on the site, that's all you need to do.

Over time you'll discover that those video sharing sites that pay a monetary fee are not required to share their generated revenue totals with you.

However, they are required to pay you when all the requirements have been met. Remember to review your account settings to make sure that you have given full instructions or provided the required information to receive your payments.

They probably aren't going to hunt you down by waving a green flag that says, "Hey, we want to send you some money. Tell us how to do that." But then again, maybe some will. ©

With companies such as Google putting people, money and time into the video and TV projects, you know that video sharing has a great future and this is just the beginning.

Final Thoughts

Hopefully after reading and applying the knowledge inside this guide you have a much clearer understanding of selling your products and your business using video sales letters.

Video selling has been around for a while but, at the very least, is just as popular now as it ever was. Armed with this new information you should feel confident and equipped to create your own video sales letters. The list of video submission sites in this guide alone should ensure your video receives massive exposure.

So what are you waiting for? Cue the tape and.... ACTION! $\ensuremath{\odot}$