

User's Guide

Growing Your Brand with YouTube

With over two billion monthly logged-in users, YouTube presents an immense opportunity for brands looking to expand their reach and engage with new audiences. video content. Whether you are a small business, startup, or established brand, having a presence on YouTube can help boost awareness, traffic, leads, and sales.

Consider these compelling statistics:

- 70% of YouTube viewers report they purchased a product they saw featured in a YouTube video.
- Videos on branded YouTube channels receive 3x more views than those posted on other social channels.
- YouTube boasts the highest ad recall of any digital ad platform.

It's clear that YouTube provides a highly targeted, receptive audience for brands. Video allows you to demonstrate your product in action, deliver your brand message creatively, and forge emotional connections with viewers.

This guide will show you how to tap into the immense power of YouTube to grow your brand. It covers channel setup, content creation, community engagement, performance analytics, partnerships, promotion, monetization and more.

By the end of this guide, you will have the information needed to establish an impactful presence on YouTube and use it as a powerful brand-building tool. With the right strategy, YouTube has immense potential to help take your brand to the next level. Let's get started!

Follow these tips to build an impactful presence on YouTube and convert video viewers into loyal brand advocates. Let's dive in!

Setting up Your YouTube Channel

We'll start by guiding you through the crucial first steps - setting up your branded YouTube channel presence. Much like laying the foundation for a house, properly establishing your YouTube channel creates a solid base upon which your brand content and community can flourish.

The first step in growing your brand on YouTube is properly setting up your branded channel. Here are some tips:

- Choose a channel name that reflects your brand identity and is easy to remember. For example, Nike's channel is simply "Nike."

- The channel description is valuable real estate for keywords. Make sure to include relevant keywords that potential viewers would search for.
- Create eye-catching channel art using your brand colors and assets. You can use Canva's templates to easily create banner art.
- Your profile photo also appears all over YouTube. Use your brand logo or a creative visual that represents your brand.
- Set up playlists to organize your content into categories or shows. This helps viewers quickly find your content.
- Enable your channel trailer video to capture visitors' attention. Include your best branding and content.
- Optimize your channel settings for discoverability. Fill out sections like keywords, links, and contact info.
- Check for any verification badges you are eligible for, like the official artist channel badge. This lends credibility.
- Link your other social media accounts and websites so viewers can better follow your brand.

Taking the time to thoughtfully optimize each element of your channel will give you a professional home base on YouTube that promotes your brand every time a viewer engages.

Creating Compelling Video Content

When creating content for YouTube, it is crucial to develop captivating video ideas and produce high-quality video that engages your audience. In this chapter, we will explore creative ideation, storytelling techniques, and professional production tips.

Ideation

Creating compelling video content starts with developing strong, unique ideas that will resonate with your audience. Some tips for ideation:

1. Conduct market research to identify topics and formats that resonate with your target audience. Surveys, interviews, and analytics insights can reveal content interests.
2. Conduct online surveys, social media polls, and 1-on-1 customer interviews to get direct input on the types of content your audience wants to see. This primary market research is invaluable.
3. Thoroughly analyze videos from competitors and industry leaders to spot trends, gaps in content, and opportunities to take existing approaches in new creative directions.

4. Stay on top of current and emerging trends in your industry as well as viral topics by monitoring relevant hashtags, search terms, influencers, and news sites. Ride trends quickly but thoughtfully.
5. Audit the full range of your existing brand assets and intellectual property, including product demos, user footage, brand events, behind-the-scenes content, user testimonials, expert interviews, brand history, leadership insights, and any data or technical specifications you can showcase. Explore ways to repurpose these assets into fresh video formats.

Storytelling Techniques for Engaging Videos

Once you have promising video ideas, the next step is honing your storytelling skills to craft narratives that emotionally engage your audience and keep them watching. Some impactful storytelling techniques include:

- Developing one or more relatable characters that viewers will care about and want to follow along their journey. These personalities can be collaborators, employees, user personas, or even animated brand mascots.
- Employing conversational, down-to-earth narrative style instead of overly formal scripts. This builds rapport with audiences.
- Structuring your storyline purposefully with rising action, climax, and resolution like a Hollywood plot. Leave them wanting more in the end.
- Weaving in your brand origin story, mission, values, and purpose where authentic. This builds trust and connection.
- Outlining video scripts to organize story flow but retaining natural delivery by avoiding overly stiff dialogue.
- Utilizing viewer-reaction shots, testimonials, user-generated content, and polls to make audiences part of the story.
- Experimenting with video formats like vlogs, documentaries, mockumentaries, and miniseries if helpful for storytelling.

For producing high-quality video, some best practices include:

- Using proper lighting makes subjects and environments pop while avoiding harsh shadows.
- Capturing professional grade audio using lavalier microphones. Eliminate echo and ambient noise.
- Filming in high definition with stabilization equipment to avoid shaky footage.
- Employing multiple camera angles and shot types to boost engagement.

- Utilizing tight, purposeful video editing to create polished videos with excellent pacing.

Now that you know how to develop compelling video ideas and produce engaging content, you have all the building blocks to start creating a video content library for your YouTube channel.

In the next section, we'll explore how to optimize your channel itself to organize your videos and capture as many interested viewers as possible. Proper channel optimization lays the groundwork for viewers to easily discover your excellent content. Let's continue the journey!

Optimizing Your YouTube Channel

Optimizing your YouTube channel is critical for organizing your content and helping viewers discover your videos in search and suggested feeds.

One important optimization is selecting the right keywords for your channel. Conduct research to determine what keywords your target audience uses when searching for content related to your niche. Then, work these relevant keywords into your channel name, description, tags, and video titles and descriptions. This will increase the likelihood of your videos appearing in search results and suggestions when viewers type in terms related to your content.

Your channel trailer also presents a prime opportunity to make a strong first impression. Use your trailer to highlight your best content, showcase your branding and company, and give viewers a compelling overview. You only have the first 5 seconds to hook them before they can skip, so make it count with bold graphics, music, editing, and your value proposition. Study trailers from top brands like Microsoft to get inspired.

Playlists are also a powerful channel optimization tool. Curate playlists around video topics, formats, or series to help organize your content for viewers. Group your basics, latest uploads, and popular videos. Enable auto-play between videos within playlists to keep viewers engaged. Update your playlists regularly as you add new content.

Finally, leverage channel features like cards and end screens. Use cards to help viewers take action, like clicking to go to your website or elsewhere. End screens keep viewers watching by looping them into more videos or playlists when they finish watching. Don't forget to include subscribe prompts and links throughout your channel.

In the next section we'll look at strategies for engaging your audience.

Engaging Your Audience

Now that you know how to set up your YouTube channel and begin building content, you need to know how to engage your audience. Building an engaged community of returning viewers is critical for YouTube success. Here are some tips:

Actively Interact in the Comments

Actively interacting with your audience in the comments shows you care about your viewers and their feedback. This helps build a loyal community that keeps coming back. Some key reasons:

1. Replying to questions helps clarify any confusion and provides more value to viewers seeking information. This also positions you as an expert.
2. Thoughtful replies beyond just "thanks!" make viewers feel heard and appreciated. Asking follow-up questions can spark deeper discussion.
3. Engaging in two-way discussion strengthens your relationship with the audience. This fosters brand loyalty and advocacy.
4. Seeking out and responding to negative feedback shows you are listening and committed to improving. Handled well, this can turn detractors into supporters.
5. Driving further comments increases overall engagement metrics on your videos, which signals to the YouTube algorithm that your content is resonating. This can boost future discoverability.
6. Pinning helpful user comments makes community members feel valued as their guidance gets highlighted.
7. Responding with humor when appropriate for your brand personality makes you more relatable.

Handle Negative Feedback Constructively

Another way to engage your audience is to handle negative feedback in a way that is constructive and helpful. This can include:

- Remain calm and professional in your replies.
- Address issues professionally, but don't be afraid to inject some brand personality. Humor can help diffuse tense situations.

- Consider publicly apologizing via video if warranted. Be specific on how you'll improve based on feedback.
- Disable comments temporarily as a last resort. Focus on improving content quality before re-enabling.

Promote Videos on Social Media

To get more engagement on your videos, promote them on social media.

1. Share clips and images tailored for different platforms - square videos for Instagram, landscape for Twitter, etc.
2. Promote new uploads early and consistently through the first 1-2 days to build momentum.
3. Tag influencers/press to get on their radar for potential collaborations or coverage.
4. Make creative memes, GIFs and carousels linking to YouTube videos to grab attention in feeds.

Run Lead Generation Offers

Give your viewers a reason to watch and engage with your videos. This could include:

- Offer coupons, free trials, consultations, etc. for viewers.
- Direct interested leads to your website.
- Offer webinars, eBooks, templates related to your expertise that viewers can access by submitting their email.
- Keep giveaways and contests relevant to your niche to attract qualified leads.
- Promote offers prominently with CTAs in first minute of video, description, pinned comments, and end screens.

Send Traffic to Playlists and Popular Videos

Use traffic generation methods to send traffic to your videos and play.

- Call out the most popular or most helpful playlists for beginners to check out.
- Recommend bingeing full series or playlists for dedicated fans wanting more.
- Share underrated gems that haven't gotten enough love yet to give them a boost.

Leverage YouTube Community Tab

- Post exclusive extras, polls, surveys, and more.
- Give sneak peeks into upcoming videos.
- Give exclusive sneak peeks at work-in-progress videos to excite fans.
- Crowdsource video ideas by having fans vote on topics or submit questions.
- Share photos/videos from shoots to make fans feel special with VIP access.

Taking the time to actively listen, provide thoughtful responses, ask questions, highlight insights, and inject humor when suitable makes your audience feel heard, appreciated, and more deeply connected to you. Fostering an engaged, returning audience helps maximize the impact of your high-quality content. Consistent interaction both on and off YouTube is key.

Next, we're digging into analytics.

Tracking Performance with Analytics

Consistently monitoring your YouTube channel analytics provides invaluable data to understand your audience and finetune your content and promotion strategy for better results.

Start by tracking key metrics like views, watch time, traffic sources, geography, and demographics. Views indicate content reach but focus on watch time to see how engaged viewers are. Analyze traffic sources to see what platforms and features (search, suggested, playlists, etc.) drive the most traffic to help optimize your presence. Use location and age/gender demographics to gain insights into your audience.

Go beyond top-level metrics to details like audience retention, which visualizes when viewers drop off. Look for dips to identify areas you may need to tighten up editing or pacing for. Also track sentiment with metrics on likes, dislikes, and comments. A high dislike percentage may signal an issue with a specific video.

Compare metrics over time to identify trends and opportunities. Try an A/B testing thumbnails and titles to determine what attracts more clicks. See if recency influences performance by comparing metrics on new vs older content. See what topics, formats, and types of videos garner the best response.

Use insights gained from the analytics to directly inform your YouTube strategy. Double down on content types that perform well. Optimize areas you identify as bottlenecks causing drop offs. Target underperforming videos for promotion to boost viewership. Refine your thumbnail and titles based on key findings.

Consistently analyzing your performance data ensures every new video you produce and promote builds upon lessons learned. This data-driven approach helps set realistic goals and maximize the impact of your YouTube presence.

Knowing your analytic data helps you grow but another way to grow is through partnerships and collaborations. Let's dig into those next.

Leveraging Partnerships and Collaborations

Seeking out collaborations with other creators, influencers, or brands can be a powerful way to expand your audience on YouTube. Some key benefits include:

- Gaining access to an existing engaged audience. Collaborators promote your content to their built-in fans.
- Increased credibility and endorsements from trusted voices their audience already follows.
- Production value enhancements from collaborating on videos.
- Cross-promotion opportunities to each partner's channels and social platforms.

When approaching potential collaborations, start by identifying creators in your niche who produce content complementary to yours and that have an audience demographic that aligns. Reach out respectfully explaining who you are, your channel focus, and proposing video ideas you could collaborate on together.

Successfully executed examples of collaborations include Samsung partnering with popular creators to feature their tech products in original sketch videos. Nonprofit Charity: Water raised awareness by collaborating with influencers to document building freshwater wells. Cross-channel collaborations like Bon Appetit appearing on BuzzFeed's Tasty channel also expand mutual reach.

The right partnerships allow both participants to organically tap into new audiences and grow their brand. Do your research to find ideal collaborators, propose ideas that excite both partners, and consistently add value.

Next, you want to begin promoting your brand outside of YouTube.

Promoting Beyond YouTube

While growing your YouTube channel itself is critical, you also want to ensure your video content gets maximum visibility by promoting it across platforms.

Cross-platform promotion tactics include sharing video links, clips, and custom graphics on social channels like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Tailor content for each platform while maintaining brand consistency. Promote videos natively in Stories and Reels as well.

Repurposing video content for other formats allows for further distribution. Turn clips into written social posts, infographics, and blog content with embedded video. Repackage how-to segments into free downloadable guides. Promote video releases in email newsletters and integrate videos into landing pages.

Most importantly, align YouTube initiatives into your broader content strategy and marketing efforts. Use YouTube ads to target and retarget video viewers as part of your campaigns. Feature YouTube videos prominently on your website. Collaborate across departments to maximize video ROI.

With a strategic cross-channel approach, the content, creativity, and effort invested into your YouTube channel can benefit your entire marketing ecosystem for amplified results.

As your YouTube begins to grow you need to build more ways to monetize for continued growth. Let's dig into this next.

Continued Monetization and Growth

We looked at monetizing our YouTube channel earlier when you first opened your channel. But as your channel establishes itself, you'll want to explore more options for monetization to generate revenue. These might include:

1. YouTube Partner Program - Allows you to earn a share of ad revenue by displaying ads on your videos once you meet eligibility requirements.
2. Channel Memberships - Offer exclusive rewards like badges, emojis, and extra content to fans who pay a monthly fee to join your channel.
3. Merchandising - Design custom branded merchandise like apparel, mugs, phone cases to promote in your videos and descriptions.
4. Affiliate Marketing - Earn commissions promoting relevant products/services and sharing affiliate links.
5. Sponsorships - Get paid by brands to integrate or mention their products in certain videos. Disclose sponsorships transparently.

Continuing to grow your subscribers and views involves staying consistent, optimizing based on data, reinventing content, and employing best practices as the space evolves. Focus on high-quality over quantity of content.

Remember though that maintaining authenticity and staying true to your brand purpose should take priority over monetization or growth goals. Trust and loyalty are most important.

Templates and Tools

We've included some helpful templates and tools to get you started growing your brand with YouTube. Here is a draft concluding section on next steps after reading the YouTube marketing guide:

1. YouTube Brand Growth: Tips & Mistakes to Avoid Tip Sheet. These best practices and mistakes to avoid will help you stay on track.
2. YouTube Analytics Resources Sheet to help you keep track of your growth and other numbers.
3. YouTube Channel Setup Template. Use this template to guide you through setting up and customizing your own branded YouTube channel.
4. Video Editing Tools and Resources Sheet. Use this template to find a video editing tool that works for your needs.
5. Collaboration Outreach Email Template that you can use as a starting point for reaching out to potential collaborators or influencers.

What to Do Next

After reviewing the strategies in this guide, you now have the knowledge to establish a strong branded presence on YouTube and begin reaching and engaging with new audiences through video.

The next step is to put these best practices into action for your brand. Set up your polished YouTube channel, optimize for discoverability, and begin populating it with excellent content on a consistent basis. Make engaging with your growing community a regular priority.

Analyze your performance data to continuously adapt and improve. Explore collaborations, promotions, and monetization once you have momentum. Most importantly, keep providing value to your viewers.

As the space evolves, stay on top of platform updates and trends by reading YouTube creator blogs, attending events, and networking with peers. Continue testing and expanding your content formats and topics.

YouTube presents immense potential for fueling brand growth. With the right application of time, creativity, and strategy, you can build a thriving channel that converts viewers into customers and brand advocates.

Now get your brand on YouTube!