

15 Ways to Improve Your YouTube Channel

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Thank you for reading the disclaimer and terms. Now let’s get started! :)

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Introduction

Hi there! My name is Joe Thio, but some people know me better by my YouTube channel name, “ThioJoe”. I’m currently 22 years old and have been making YouTube videos for nearly 5 years. It has gone from a hobby into a primary source of income for me. I started out with absolutely zero experience making videos, but over time I’ve learned a tremendous amount from trial and error, experimentation, and other “YouTubers.” Lucky for you, I’m going to give you a jump-start! I should be the one to tell you that virtually anyone can use YouTube to their advantage; I strongly believe that video is the future, and if you can harness it right now you will be leagues ahead of everyone else.



A little bit about me and what I’ve accomplished and what types of content I make. (This is not to brag, but just to show you what even a young guy with no experience can achieve.) I run two main channels with different subjects. The first is an entertainment / comedy channel where I essentially upload whatever I want for the enjoyment of either myself or subscribers (hopefully both!). I like to focus on satire and absurd humor, because that’s simply what I enjoy myself. This channel is my most successful and has over 240,000 subscribers and 30 million views at the time of this writing. My second channel is a purely informational / educational channel where I like to talk mostly about technology topics as well as tech news and reviews. I just recently launched Vid Authority as a way to teach those also interested in building a YouTube channel. The important thing to realize is if you focus on topics you’re interested in, you’re going to be a lot better at it.

I don’t want to ramble, so why don’t we get started.

-Joe Thio

Preface

First of all, congratulations on joining the Vid Authority Newsletter! I am sure that you will find this information to be as useful as I did in becoming successful on YouTube. The information in this E-Book consists of everything I've learned about how to be successful on YouTube. This book is for everyone from absolute beginners to experienced creators, so some of this might be a review for you.

I didn't learn everything overnight, and I'm not going to fool you and say that becoming successful on YouTube doesn't take work. This book will give you all the tools you need to create your own original content that people want and will get you on your way! The most important thing to keep in mind is that you have to stick with this, be a little patient, and don't be afraid to go out of your comfort zone. Most people are afraid to put a little work into YouTube, but if you do, I can assure you that it will be worth it. This guide will basically give you a jump start using information that most people take years to learn. Curious how the big YouTubers make consistently popular videos? It's not just that they have a huge fan base. I will teach you what they know.

Now if you are wondering how making videos would be better than a website or blog (especially if you're promoting a product), prepare to have your mind blown. Recently, with all the updates to Google's algorithms, you need to work really hard to get a website to rank well. You need high quality backlinks which requires you to write articles, spin them, and submit them to other websites. Then you need even more high quality articles on your website itself, and by the end of the day you might have thousands of words you've contributed to this one website. Compare that to making a video where the only SEO you need to do is writing a good title, description, and tags, and making it interesting enough to keep viewers watching most of it. NO backlinking, NO articles, NO hosting, NO buying domains. Which would you rather do, spend an hour *total* doing some research on your product, recording a video, and uploading it? Or spend many hours doing the other things I listed? It should be a no brainer, but a lot of people don't know where to get started. That's really the whole point of this product.

It's not difficult at all once you know what to do. You just need to learn it once and you're good to go! For some of you this may be overkill, but even if a chapter is discussing something that you won't be doing yourself, read it anyway because you can certainly apply bits and pieces from each chapter to all the others.

Finally, I really want to stress that although I enjoy making entertainment videos and have found success in that, you should do what YOU are good at, and what YOU enjoy. In fact, it's definitely possible to surpass my stats by a mile with video types I would never be able to do.

Required Materials for YouTube:

- **Some method of recording**
 - ✓ Screen Recorder (Camtasia, Camstudio)
 - ✓ Camera (Camera Phone, video camera, webcam)
 - ✓ Someone else (Outsourced)
- **Video Editor**
 - ✓ Free Options: Windows Movie Maker, Lightworks, iMovie
 - ✓ Paid Options: Adobe Premiere, Sony Vegas, Final Cut Pro

Chapter 1: Ways People Make Money on Youtube

Before you start trying to become successful on YouTube, it's good to know how the top YouTubers actually get paid. Most professional YouTube entertainers generate revenue through ads, so that is what I will discuss first. However, you certainly do not have to place ads in front of your videos if you plan to market in other ways, such as creating videos just to promote a product, company, or offer (This will be discussed later). With making money with ads, it all comes down to the number of ad impressions that you get on your videos. The most important factor in how much money you make is how many views you're getting, since that translates to more ad impressions. However, there are other factors that determine how much money you'll get for a certain number of views.

Different types of ads pay more, but may be more annoying for the user. Standard instream ads are the pre-roll ads that cannot be skipped. They pay the most, sometimes even up to a dollar, but are the most annoying. TruView instream ads are pre-roll ads that are skip-able after 5 seconds, but you only get paid if the user watches the whole thing without skipping it. Overlay ads pay the least and pop up as text a few seconds into the video. In my personal experience, I have gotten around \$4.00 per thousand video views using all three ads together, and that is pretty typical for a YouTube partner. This statistic is called "RPM" and stands for "Revenue per Mille," and is the amount of money you average per thousand ad impressions.

Next, let's talk about ad relevance. I can almost guarantee that the people on YouTube who make the most RPM are those who make videos about products, whether they are doing product reviews or talking about the latest gadget news. This is because advertisers will be much more willing to pay more for an ad when they know that their product is being talked about in the video. Clearly, someone is more likely to check out a computer ad when the video is all about computers, whereas they would not click that same ad if the video was about cars. Ad relevance is a huge factor in how much you will make, but it doesn't mean you should change the type of videos you make; it's just something to think about.

Once you start getting a ton of views on your video (and a "ton" is totally subjective) you may even be able to get a product placement deal with a company. Websites like BrandFame.com can help you with this. Companies will pay big for a well-liked online personality to endorse their product in a video.

Chapter 2: Decide Your Target Audience

Before you even start making your videos (even if you have been for a while), you have to have a target audience in mind. For example, if you want to have a younger audience, don't be making videos about antiques or classical music. Before every video you make, think about who might be interested in your video, and who might misunderstand it. If you are making rap videos, don't expect really old people to understand it (but if they aren't your target audience it doesn't matter). The most important thing is that your target audience will be able to relate to and understand your videos.

The importance of keeping your target audience in mind is that when someone subscribes to your channel, it is because they have an expectation to see more videos that they enjoy (pretty common sense). Let's say you start out doing product reviews and get pretty popular, and then suddenly switch to making videos about computer games. You completely switched target audiences, and your previous audience that was interested in product reviews will stop watching you. Now if you have multiple target audiences, you might be able to juggle between them by making several types of videos. The key though is to keep all of your viewers entertained.

So how do you pick your target audience? Well you probably already have an expectation on who will be watching your videos in mind, so pick that audience! If you're young, young people will *probably* be more likely to watch your videos, but this is definitely not set in stone. If you make comedy videos, your target audience could be something as wide as "people who like to laugh" or "easy going people." There are also people who go for more specific audiences such as "gamers who like playing co-op games." Decide on your audience, and once you get to a point you are happy with, you can think about expanding that audience.

ACTION STEP: PICK AN AUDIENCE

Who do you want watching your videos?
Think age, career, gender, tech-savviness, etc.

Chapter 3: Choosing Your Brand

When you are trying to market yourself anywhere, especially on YouTube, you have to think about how you are going to present yourself and your “product” (your videos). This ties back into your target audience. You are marketing yourself, so you have to be who your target audience will want to watch. Your brand can be anything, but try to keep it consistent because it will help you retain viewers.

Part of your brand will be how you portray your “character” in your videos. For example, a younger audience seeking entertainment will probably require a more energetic host. If you are naturally charismatic, fun, and energetic, I can bet that you will be much more successful in the beginning than most people. But if you aren’t, don’t worry! After making a few videos, you *will* get more comfortable making videos and will find yourself being more charismatic on camera, even if you have to force it. Depending on the content you’re making, you don’t have to go crazy with energy, and simply speaking with confidence is the biggest factor anyway. Just make sure you are not boring during your videos; I’ll talk more about this later.

Also part of your brand are things as basic as your username on YouTube. If you have a username such as “supercoolgamer923498349349” I highly recommend getting a custom URL for your channel that is very simple and memorable ([Here’s the YouTube support page on how to do this](#)). Also, I recommend having your real first name somewhere in your username. This is because people will always refer to you as your username, and it will be much more personable if they can call you something like “Dave” or “Chris” instead of “gamemaster99999.” Just look at the some of the top YouTubers such as [DaveDays](#), [JennaMarbles](#), or [freddiew](#). In their comments section, people will always refer to them as “Dave,” “Jenna,” and “Freddie.” Fans will really feel like they are talking to you instead of an anonymous user on the internet, and this will help them stay connected to your channel.

ACTION STEP: PICK A NAME

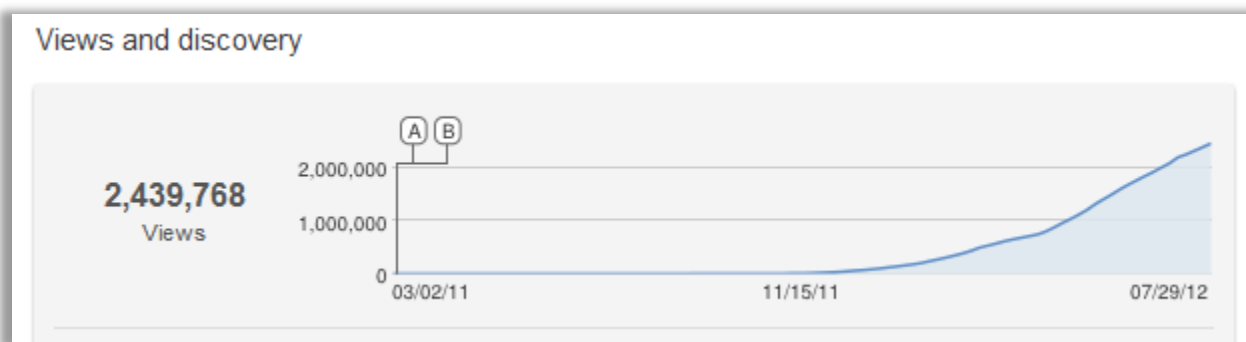
What are you going to call your channel?

Chapter 4: Anatomy of a Successful Channel

All successful users on YouTube have a few things in common that are essential to running a good channel. These characteristics are that they **upload videos regularly, are able to stay motivated, and know what types of videos people will watch**. I will describe the first two in this chapter, but the third is covered in the chapter *“Making Videos Worth Talking About.”*

The first characteristic, uploading regularly, is most critical as a new channel but is also important even for the biggest YouTubers. People will be much more likely to subscribe if they know that you upload often, because they know that by subscribing they can expect something. If someone sees that you only upload a video every few months, they will decide that subscribing to your channel is not worth it. Be sure you make your viewers aware of your upload schedule. For example, I put an annotation somewhere on all of my videos that says “New Videos Every Week!” and my channel banner also says this. It’s important to tell the viewer up front what they can expect, because it will give them a reason to subscribe when they may not have thought about subscribing before.

Next, it is important to stay motivated. Most people get temporary motivation when starting a channel but give up after a few weeks. They want thousands of dollars within a month or else they quit. If you keep to a regular upload schedule and put out quality content, you *will* gain more viewers. Just think about it: the more videos you upload, the more likely someone is to stumble across it. Then if they like it they will subscribe, tell their friends about it, or more. As you make more and more videos, the rate at which this happens will be exponential. Keep reading and I’ll tell you exactly what I mean by “quality content.” Just remember not to give up just because people don’t watch one of your videos, because the next might be a hit. Just look at this screenshot of one of my videos. It took over 6 months before it started getting any views at all, and then the results speaks for themselves.



Chapter 5: Making Videos Worth Talking About

Do you want to know the *one* thing that *all* successful videos on YouTube have in common? Here it is: **Every successful video on YouTube was talked about a lot.** I was originally going to name this chapter “Making Videos Worth Watching,” but I knew that if you really want to get successful, you have to make videos that people will not just watch but talk about. It’s the only way to gain a bigger audience! Think about this: if you had 100 subscribers, and no one talked about that video, how can you expect more than 100 viewers? (That of course is ignoring traffic from related videos and searches, which is another approach I’ll talk about in a later chapter.) If you look at the top YouTubers’ most popular videos, you will notice they got many more views than they have subscribers. Those can’t be all from related video referrals, can they? Probably not, since everyone else gets related video referrals, but never so many that quickly. The difference is that the top viewers have a large viewer base that also *talks about the videos.*

I think you get the point, so let us really get into what makes a video worth talking about. There are several ways to make a video successful (more ways than I know, or could even think of), but I’ll go over the ways I know of. When making a video you should first ask yourself, “will my audience like this video so much that they will tell their friend about it?” You probably notice that most successful videos are original. If you write an original funny song, it will probably get more views than a cover song (of course depending on how good it is). If you do something that has never been seen before, or something that is rare, more people will be interested and will share it.

Another way to make something “new” without necessarily being original is to significantly improve on something someone else has already done. As an anecdotal example, freddiew once described the time he went to make a live action Halo (the video game) video. He saw that there were already several similar videos – but Freddie made a version that was much better than the others, so people watched his. So keep in mind that if you can make your video better than everything else, it doesn’t necessarily have to be original.

Here are a few questions you can ask yourself to figure out if your video is worth talking about:

- **Have I seen a video similar to this before?**
- **Has my audience seen videos like this before?**
- **Am I just replicating someone else's video, and if so, does it improve on it?**
- **Is this something I would be *eager* to tell my friends about?** (You must be realistic with this one. Think about the last video that you really wanted to show your friends; it was probably extra-ordinary. Be extraordinary!)

As I said before, you definitely can get a lot of views from search results and suggested video views alone, just not as much as word of mouth, in my experience. Later, the chapter "How YouTube Ranks Videos" will give you everything you need to know about ranking your videos best for search results.

In every case, it's important to keep your videos engaging, and keep your viewers watching. There are a few simple tips that you need to follow. The first is don't make the video any longer than it has to be; really it should be as short as possible. On YouTube, people have really short attention spans, so if you don't catch their attention in the first 30 seconds, they might stop watching altogether. Don't talk slowly, or else people will get bored. If you are making a tutorial, get to the point, or else your viewer will look for another video that does. Finally, act really interested in what you're talking about in the video. If you sound extremely bored in the video, your viewer will feel the same and click away. But if you sound *very* interested, your viewer will absorb some of that attitude.

ACTION STEP: PLAN A VIDEO

1. Considering your audience, what videos / products would they be interested in?
2. Search for and watch similar videos
3. Decide how to improve on currently existing videos (Improve: Quality of Information? Quality of video itself?)

Chapter 6: How to Film Your Video

This chapter won't get into the physical details of setting up your shoot (that's Chapter 6.5), but instead how you should act during the video. There are four major points I'm going to go over to make your video better than most of the stuff people put up on YouTube.

First, your video should have *no dead air*. This means avoid filler words like "ums" and "uhs," and don't sit there thinking about what to say. You might not even realize you are saying these words until afterwards. If you do, it's OK as long as you are able to edit it out without making it look bad. Sometimes, though, you cannot edit out an "um" since it's right in the middle of a sentence, or you combine it with a word. Now like I said, if you mess up one phrase it doesn't matter, since you can just say it again and only use the good footage during editing. In a single video I might have ten minutes of footage and only three of those minutes are used.

Second, just *get to the point*. Don't do a really long introduction about what you are going to talk about, since people on YouTube have extremely short attention spans. If you have an intro graphic, it should not be much longer than five seconds or so and *definitely* not longer than ten. Just like the previous point, where I said don't use filler words, don't fill up your video with useless sentences and intros that don't contribute to the main idea of the video.

Third, *speak with confidence*. This one will take practice if you are not used to recording yourself, with either video or just audio. Trust me, it does get easier, and eventually there is a point where you do not even notice the camera, and you are just talking to yourself; it becomes second nature. In almost all cases, you should smile (unless you don't want to for a specific purpose, such as comedic effect), since it makes people more comfortable, and they will enjoy the video more. No one wants to watch a bump on a log. I can guarantee you that no matter what type of video you're making, people will be more receptive if you have a confident attitude.

Fourth and finally, *have a plan*. You can't expect to just hit the record button and expect a great video to come out. Think of a video that your audience would want to watch (and talk about). This will vary depending on your audience. Once

ACTION STEP: DECIDE HOW TO RECORD

Will you record using a video camera?
Will you record using screen recorder? (Ex: Camtasia)

you do, write down some talking points on paper so you won't have to think about what to say when filming. This will leave you with less dead air to edit out later! Another benefit of writing down ideas is that you will not forget them later.

Chapter 6.5: Getting the Most from Your Equipment

This is just a half-chapter where I'll just go over the basics of actually setting up your shoot to maximize the quality of the videos themselves. These tips are about how to improve your videos using the equipment you already have, so you do not have to go out and buy more.

- Use Lights – Most cameras compensate for low light situations, but this results in a very grainy and ugly picture. You can fix this by simply turning on more lights in the room, or getting an extra lamp to put nearby. You can also film outside, but make sure the sun isn't making any ugly shadows on your face.
- Eliminate ambient noise – This shouldn't be a problem indoors if you are in a quiet room. If you are outside, avoid roads or other noisy areas. If there is wind, use something to block it. Many cameras have a port where you can plug in headphones and test the audio. This is highly recommended, since it will let you hear things you hadn't noticed before but show up loud in the video. Also, to reduce echo, you can film in a small room with lots of furniture.
- Use a tripod – A shaky video is no good, but you probably knew that already. If you have to move around, you can get a stabilizer such as a shoulder rig, but it will cost money (you can probably get a cheap one for under \$100)
- User an External Microphone – This one is optional, since you will have to spend money on it. Most cameras have bad in-built microphones, so if yours sounds bad, you can consider getting an external microphone that sits on top of your camera. They can cost anywhere from \$30 to \$250 or more.

ACTION STEP: RECORDING PRACTICE

1. Create a script or video outline
2. Record the video using techniques above
3. Watch the video, re-record if necessary
4. Upload when you remove all filler-words (uh, um)

Chapter 7: Common Problems

(And How to Deal with Them)

You will come across some problems on YouTube, so I will cover the most common ones and how to fix them. These problems are Copyright, Click Bombing, and “Haters”.

The first and most common problem has to do with copyright. If you upload copyrighted material and get a claim made against you, it will be a serious problem for your account. A copyright strike against your account typically means that you cannot join a partner network (which I will discuss in another chapter), and if you get too many strikes, your account will be closed! Basically the rule of thumb is *if you don't own it, don't upload it*. It is really simple but most people still violate copyrights. I am not a lawyer so I cannot offer legal advice, but if you have to ask whether a video is OK to upload, it probably is not. If you are making video game videos, it is a tricky subject. However, never monetize a video game video until you join a partner network (again, another chapter), because you don't have the licenses to monetize that type of content.

If you get what's called a Content ID match, it means YouTube's automatic content detection system found content in your videos that matched their database. To remove this you can either try disputing it (which you should only try if you truly own all the content) or simply delete it. Deleting it is the simplest solution. Content ID matches are not such a big deal, but you should address them because the content owner could decide to file a copyright strike.

NOTE: If your video gets Content ID matched and gets a [Worldwide block](#), your features will be limited similar to a full copyright strike, and removing the video in this case will NOT remove the restrictions. In the case of a Worldwide block, I would actually recommend NOT deleting the video (since then the claim can never be removed), and instead contacting the copyright owner directly and try to get them to agree to release the claim if you delete the video.

If you get an actual copyright *strike*, where the video is removed altogether (which may or may not be preceded by a content ID match), this means that the copyright owner filed a [DMCA takedown](#) against your video. This is a serious matter, since copyright strikes cannot be removed; you must wait 6 months before they go away, and in that time you cannot get any more strikes. If you get 3 strikes, your account will be closed. If you get a copyright strike, you have three options. First, you can wait for it to go away after 6 months. Second, if you are *certain you own everything in the video completely*, you can

file a [counter-DMCA notice](#), and the video will be restored. Beware though, after a counter-DMCA, the only option the supposed content owner has left to remove the video is to sue you, so you should only file a counter DMCA notice if you are TOTALLY certain it was false. Third, which I think is the best option, is you can contact the copyright owner that gave you the strike (you will receive an email with the details of who filed the DMCA notice, as well as contact info most likely), and ask them to [retract the strike](#). You should explain to them that a copyright strike causes huge problems for you, and that you would be happy to remove the video anyway if they retract the strike. This way, everyone wins, but you will probably have to do some convincing and be very professional.

The second issue is something that a lot of people have not even heard of – it’s called Click Bombing. This is basically when someone doesn’t like you, and they click your ads over and over again, so that your AdSense account is flagged for invalid activity. If you don’t report the unusual activity and take down the ads, your AdSense account will get *banned*. AdSense bans are a life sentence and appeals almost never work. This also means that you cannot ever monetize a video on that account again, and to make money on YouTube, you have to make a new channel and join a partner network to get ads. Now if you are with a “partner network,” you will not have to worry about click bombs. Click bombs don’t happen often, but it’s something to watch out for. If you have any reason to believe you are being clickbombed, you MUST: Stop all ads from showing on your videos or website, and report the possible invalid clicks using [this form](#).

Finally, you will certainly encounter some “haters” and “troll” on YouTube. Everybody knows about haters but I figured I would still discuss them. Simply, you should ignore them outright. I receive hundreds of hate comments *every day* and never engage them, because I know that these people have no actual negative effect on my channel (really, more comments improves my channel and video SEO). The worst thing they can do is tell their friends how “dumb and stupid” I am, but in doing that, I get more views, and therefore more ad impressions. Some haters even watch several of my videos, complaining how dumb each one is in the comments, yet they watch the whole thing. All that does is make my videos show up more often in the “suggested videos” section. Sure, they can dislike a video, but likes and dislikes have no effect on how much you get paid or how often videos show up in related videos. Have you ever heard of the saying, “there is no such thing as bad publicity”? In this case it’s true.

Chapter 8: Should you Join a Partner Network?

First of all, what is a partner? The features of being a YouTube partner have changed a lot since YouTube first coined the term. Right now, if you connect your adsense account to your YouTube account and monetize your videos, you are considered a “YouTube Partner.”

What is a partner network? Basically, YouTube gives certain organizations and companies the ability to partner other channels, and when they do, that channel becomes part of the “network” of that organization. Instead of being paid through Adsense, you will be paid by the partner network. When you join a partner network, the revenue from ads goes to the partner network organization first instead of you, where they take a cut for their service and pass the rest on to you. This is good news for people who have no adsense account, since most networks do not require you to have an adsense account to get paid through them.

Partner networks offer a number of services, and in exchange, they take a percentage of your profits. With most large networks, you also get the ability to monetize video game videos (YouTube doesn’t allow some gameplay videos to be monetized, but networks are more lenient). Bigger partner networks also offer technical support and many offer you advice to help develop your channel. Another important thing is that when you are with a partner network, you do not have to worry about click bombs (people clicking your ads to give you invalid clicks). The network’s account has so much volume that a click bomb will not affect them. However, if you go around clicking your own ads, you *will* get kicked out, so definitely do not do that.

The amount of money each network takes varies. Some networks pay a flat rate (for example \$2.50 per thousand views), but this is typically a bad deal, since you almost never get the full worth of your ads. Other networks offer a percentage based pay, which I believe is better since your revenue scales with ad performance.

One thing you must do when you decide to join a partner network is to **read the contract**. Most have a minimum time-frame in which you must stay with the network. Others state that you cannot join another network while you are with them, *even with other channels you start*. If you do not follow the contract, you risk getting kicked out! Two more things to consider are that if you have a copyright strike, you will have a hard time getting a partner network to accept you, and you cannot get partnered through

a network if your monetization feature has been disabled on your channel (either by an AdSense account ban or otherwise).

So is it worth it to join a network? It's up to you. Even if they take a portion of your profit, many partner networks have high-paying ads that will balance it out. To give you an idea, I would stick with networks that give you at *least* a 70% cut (preferably 80-90%), and a 1 year contract. If your network offers you a contract for 2 years, tell them you can only sign a 1 year contract (that renews of course). It might be intimidating to demand better terms, but remember, **they need you and you can walk away**. If you decide to, you can apply by visiting the websites of the networks.

Here are just a few examples in no particular order:

- [Fullscreen](#)
- [Maker Studios](#)
- [BigFrame](#)
- [Collective Digital Studio](#)
- [Curse](#)

NOTE: Do your own research on any networks you consider, and do not think that I am recommending any of those just because I linked to them. I am just giving examples, and do not attest to the quality of any of them.

Chapter 9: Leveraging Social Media

This is a quick but important chapter about the use of social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and any others you can think of. Social media is becoming a bigger part of advertising every day, and it's important that you use it.

As soon as you make your channel, you should make social media sites, especially Facebook and Twitter. I lost out on countless fans because I started my Facebook and Twitter pages months after my channel started getting a decent number of viewers. Whenever someone likes you on Facebook or follows you on Twitter, he/she is another person that you can notify when you upload a video. It also helps you engage your audience to ask or answer questions, and it makes your fans feel more at home. It also opens you up to a larger audience, since every time someone likes you on Facebook or follows you on Twitter, their friends can see that.

Just like you should upload videos regularly, you should be somewhat active on your social media sites. No one is going to follow you on Twitter, for example, if you never tweet about anything. And they will never post on your Facebook wall if they don't think you ever look at it. So be active!

In addition to social media sites, you should also probably set up some sort of website or blog. You can make a free WordPress blog through Wordpress.com. Even if you only post your videos and a short description on this blog, it still adds to your credibility. Also, domain names are cheap, costing only about \$10 a year! You can buy one and direct it towards your WordPress blog, and you won't even need to buy hosting. Then you can say you have your own personal domain, and this adds tremendously to your credibility.

ACTION STEP: CREATING SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

1. Set up accounts on Twitter + Facebook
2. Optional: Create website for your brand
3. Update regularly, not just to advertise videos!

Chapter 10: Maximizing Profits

There are a few things which you should be doing to maximize the amount of money you can make on YouTube. Even if you are not actually monetizing any videos yet, it is important to prepare now for when you do.

First, learn to write proper tags. For example, if you are making a call of duty video, do not just use the tags:

- Call of duty gameplay

You should be using both specific and non-specific keywords, and you should put some of the specific ones in quotes. Here are some examples for the same video:

- "Call of duty" "video game" "computer games" PC "pc gaming" gameplay "cod gameplay"

Notice how I put certain phrases in quotes? That means when someone searches for that whole phrase, your video is more likely to be higher on the results list than someone who just put the words as separate tags. Also, when you use more specific tags, you will get better targeted ads, which means people will be more likely to click on them. Ads are selected based on tags and titles, so make sure they are relevant to your video if you want to get higher paying ads, since advertisers are going to pay more for an ad on a relevant video. Keep in mind though, adding too many tags (more than 15 or so) can actually hurt your search rankings in some cases! So only use relevant tags.

Another way to make the most money is to enable all ad types on your videos. As I mentioned before, you can select overlay ads, TruView Instream ads, and Standard Instream ads. Not every video will have an ad on it, so having more ad types enabled will increase the number of ads.

Finally, if you can make a video about products, these videos will generally make more per view count than most other videos. You should still keep your audience in mind, and make a video about a product you think they would be interested in. Just as an example, you could make a video camera buying guide. Which video do you think an advertiser will pay more for their ads to be placed on? A cat video, or a video specifically about their product category? I think you get the idea. But still, remember to use tags, because that's how the ads are selected. If you are looking to make money from a product through an affiliate program, not through ads, I'll discuss that in the next chapter.

Chapter 11: Promoting Products on YouTube

If you are an affiliate (or any other marketer) and you are not using YouTube to promote, you are really missing out. YouTube, just like Google, is a search engine. But since most people *think* that making a video is tougher than making a web page, they avoid using it for marketing. However, consider the fact that every month, we watch over *four billion hours* of video on YouTube; if you make a pretty decent video, it's not hard to get a piece of that pie. The best part is that a lot of the things that work for making an affiliate website work for making affiliate videos.

A classic is to make an instructional video, tutorial, or review about the product you're promoting. If you are promoting backup software for example, make a video called something like "Best Backup Software" (you'd have to work on that title), and talk about using it. Better yet, do a "Top 5" software review, and have affiliate links for all of them in the description! Another example could be a tutorial on how to do some complicated process on the computer, but tell the viewer about a program that will let you do the same thing in half the time. Even if you are promoting a real product that you don't own, you can apply the same ideas using pictures and a slide show. The possibilities are endless.

You don't have to show yourself in these types of videos, but it will probably help with the credibility you portray, as well as the overall quality of the video. Keep in mind that you want to use the ideas I gave you about making a good looking video if you use a video camera. Making a poor looking video will certainly be worse than only using a screen recorder. Don't worry though! It doesn't have to be perfect; just using proper lighting will get you 90% of the way.

There is one way you can promote a product through YouTube without making a video at all. One option you have is to search out someone who has a video that is already successful and asking them to put your link in their video description for some incentive. Presumably this would cost you money so this might not be for you. If you need to tell how many views a video is getting, you can look at how active the comments section is (more comments = more views). You can also write down the number of views one day, then come back a few days later and see how many views it got (best to wait a few days, since views aren't updated that often). Two great websites for analyzing someone's channel activity are SocialBlade.com and VidstatsX.com. They both allow you to track a channel's views and subscribers, which is helpful in determining how popular someone's channel is.

Chapter 12: How YouTube Ranks Videos

Just like there are search algorithms for Google, there are search algorithms for YouTube. These days there is a lot more to the YouTube ranking algorithm that you might think, but it will all make sense when I lay it out in front of you. Obviously the exact algorithm is closely guarded, but there are general guidelines that YouTube itself has described, as well as what people have discovered through experience.

The three major meta-data components to a video in relation to SEO are Title, Description, and tags. Title is hugely important for obvious reasons, as are the tags. For description, only the beginning will be significant. This is because the description can be *much* longer than the title and tags section (descriptions can be around 5000 characters). So if you have a really long description, keep in mind that the first hundred characters or so will almost definitely carry more weight than the last hundred. **NOTE: Only put tags in the designated tag box, NEVER in the description. YouTube has been really cracking down on this and they will delete your whole video if you do it.**

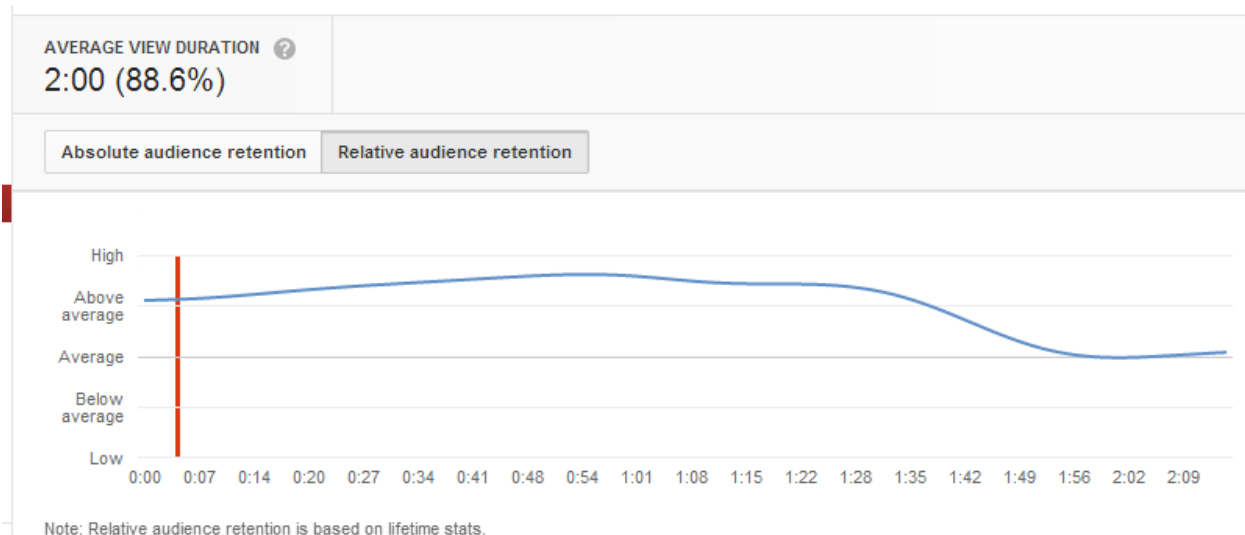
There is one new component to video ranking that is relatively new, but is hugely important; that is audience retention. I have not seen a lot of “SEO Gurus” talking about this when they talk about YouTube, because it is so unique to YouTube, and people don’t realize its importance. YouTube allows creators to see the total number of minutes their videos are being watched in analytics. It has a whole separate section, in addition to views (this is a huge flag that YouTube considers this important). So YouTube doesn’t just care about your tags, but also how *engaging* your videos are. You could have a video that has the greatest description, tags, and title, but if users click to it then immediately stop watching, it will probably rank lower than a less relevant video that keeps viewers watching the whole time. A higher audience retention will not only get you higher paying ads, but better search results, thus getting more views. So you multiply your ad revenue twice! Here’s what I’m talking about in YouTube’s analytics with Audience Retention (in terms of minutes viewed):

Last 30 days (Apr 15, 2013 – May 14, 2013)

Performance



Here is the audience retention statistics for a single video:



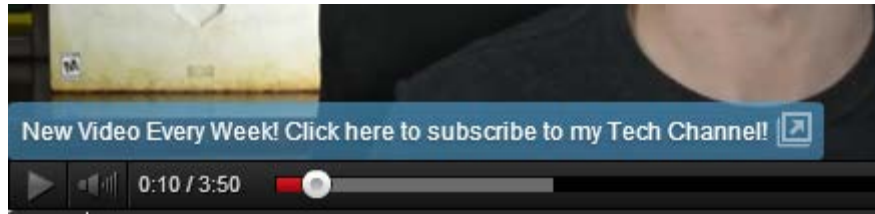
There are *still* a couple more things that will increase the SEO quality of a video. The first is users commenting on a video, as well as how you respond to them. Comments show that your video is engaging, so you should encourage your viewers to leave a comment, and you should respond to some of them. The same goes for likes / dislikes, but comments are believed to be more important. Comments and ratings do contribute to how your video will do, but they are really overshadowed by audience retention. It should come as no surprise that on a video sharing site, the video itself is the biggest factor. In the last paragraph of “Making Videos Worth Talking About,” I went into specifics of how to make a video engaging.

ACTION STEP: LEARN FROM THE PROS

1. Watch vlogs (video blogs) from some top YouTubers ([JennaMarbles](#), [VlogBrothers](#), [charlieissocoollike](#))
2. Observe how they use personality to make even simple topics interesting and engaging

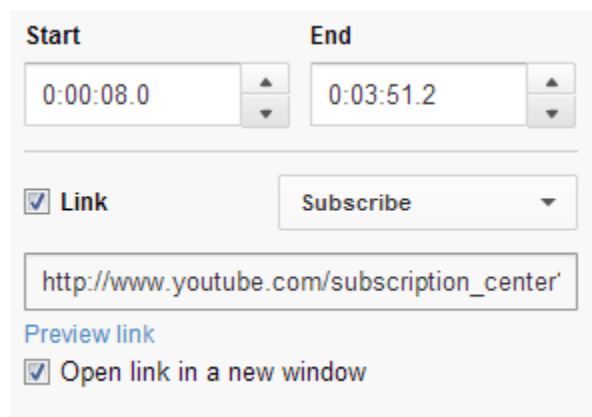
Chapter 13: Annotations are your best friend

Annotations are possibly the most important features to use when making a video. If you don't know what I'm talking about, it's these little pop ups you can make to appear over your video:

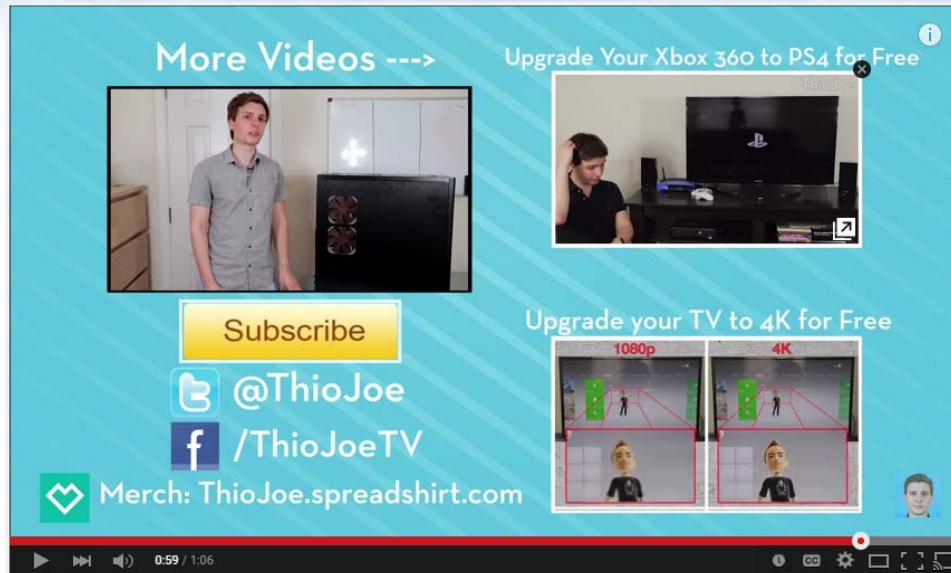


They're extremely useful because they can be links. Above, I have a link to subscribe to my channel, which almost doubled the amount of subscriptions I got from that video. A lot of times, people don't think to subscribe when they see a video, so reminding them using an annotation is important.

The first use of an annotation is what I already touched on. Make a small annotation on your video (not intrusive) that asks the viewers to subscribe. If you make videos often, tell viewers that, because they are more likely to subscribe if you give them a reason (You can see I did that above). The annotation itself can be a link to subscribe, and all that is in the annotation settings.

A screenshot of the YouTube annotation settings interface. It features two input fields for "Start" and "End" times, with "0:00:08.0" and "0:03:51.2" respectively. Below these is a "Link" checkbox which is checked, and a dropdown menu currently set to "Subscribe". A text input field contains the URL "http://www.youtube.com/subscription_center". There is a "Preview link" label and another "Open link in a new window" checkbox which is also checked.

You also can and should make annotations that link to your other videos, especially at the end of each video. That way, when a viewer finishes watching your video, they will watch another of your videos as opposed to someone else's. This can be done with what's called an endroll, or you can just say in the video, "here are links to other videos I've made" and have the annotations appear. Here is an example of an endroll of mine:



The lighter boxes around the pictures are actually “spotlight” type annotations that are transparent links. So when someone clicks on them, they’re taken to the videos. I also have one to subscribe. You also add your videos to playlists and link to the video within the playlist using your annotation. This is because when a user clicks it, it takes them to the video and shows other videos in your playlist next to it, and also auto-plays your next video in the playlist when they finish. This increases audience retention and “session time”, which will significantly improve your search rankings.

Annotations can only have links within YouTube, or a single external website you have verified in your YouTube settings. But if for example you have a link to an offer in the description, you can remind a user that it’s there using an annotation. Something as simple as “Link in the description” would work better than expecting a user to read the description with no prompt. If you do not mention the description in the video at all, chances are people are not even going to look at it. So don’t forget these types of calls to action.

One last thing: Mobile users cannot see annotations at this time. Therefore, you should also use the newer [“cards” feature](#), which is similar to annotations but can be seen on mobile and desktop.

ACTION STEP: ADD ANNOTATIONS

1. Add call to action annotations to your videos
(Not Intrusive)
2. Optional: Add endrolls to future videos

Chapter 14: Sub4Sub, Box4Box, and Collaborations

This chapter just goes over a few common things that some people do in order to gain viewers and subscribers. I'm going to talk about Sub4Sub, Box4Box, and Collaborations. One of these things is **bad**, one is **sometimes good**, and one is **good**.

Starting with sub4sub - you may or may not know what it is. Basically sub4sub is when you and someone else agree to subscribe to each other. There are entire websites and YouTube videos that people go to in order to find others to "sub4sub" with, and basically they end up with a lot of subscribers, and a lot of subscriptions to other users. However, sub4sub is useless and here is why. Everyone who does sub4sub only subscribes to other people so that they subscribe back. They have no interest in watching the other people's videos. So even though you may get 1000 subscribers, you will not get any views from any of those subscribers since they have so many subscriptions and don't want to watch your videos anyway. Subscribers are only useful if you gained them legitimately; otherwise they don't mean anything.

Next, Box4Box is slightly different and can sometimes be useful. Basically, this is when two people agree to put each other in their channel "box," which is a little section on a partner's channel page for recommended channels. The idea is that people who visit one person's channel will go and subscribe to the other as well. Box4box can be good if you do it with someone who has similar quality content to yours, since then both peoples' viewers will be interested in each other. Some people dislike box4box, but I think it is fine if done right.

Finally, collaborations are when you and another channel make a video together, and basically promote each other. You will appear in his/her video, and vice-versa. This way, each party's viewers will be exposed to the other, opening the door for new viewers and subscribers. Collaborations have always been a great way to expand your audience and if you can find a YouTube user who is willing to do one with you, it is highly recommended. You should look for someone who makes content similar to yours, and has around the same viewer base as you, since they will probably be more likely to make a collaboration with you. Though, if you can get someone with a much bigger audience to help you, then obviously that would be better, but you might have trouble finding someone that will.

Chapter 15: On Buying Views

There is something I just have to talk to you about. Some of you think that buying views, subs, comments, etc is a great way to get a jumpstart for your channel. This is wrong. All bulk views, subs, and comments are fake no matter what way you look at it. Even if *technically* there is someone physically making a comment, they had to have been incentivized to do it, so how is that different than a bot?

Next we have bought views. Remember the chapter on YouTube SEO, and how important audience retention and interaction was? If you bot views there are compounding problems you'll cause for yourself. First of all, YouTube audits views on videos, removing views that they consider fake. YouTube has not revealed what they consider a "view", but as an example, if someone looks at your video then immediately clicks away, chances are that view won't be counted. Just look at what happened to the record labels when they did it:

YouTube cancels billions of music industry video views after finding they were fake or 'dead'

- **Major record labels stripped of more than two billion video views**
- **Biggest hit taken by Universal, which alone lost more than one billion**
- **'This was an enforcement of our viewcount policy,' says YouTube**

By DAMIEN GAYLE

PUBLISHED: 07:58 EST, 28 December 2012 | UPDATED: 03:17 EST, 31 December 2012

 [Comments \(183\)](#) |  [Share](#)  [+1](#)  207

Let's say that YouTube doesn't take away your views, at least right away. Botted views definitely aren't going to be watching your whole video, so that will destroy your audience retention. Also, if YouTube sees that you get a ton of views but no comments or likes, the algorithm decides that your video is not very engaging, therefore it will rank poorly.

Hopefully you can see all the problems that are involved with buying fake activity. I will however address a few services that allow you to pay for ad campaigns to get your videos more views, which is

completely different. For example, Google Adwords is Google's advertising system, and you can pay to have an ad that promotes your video. Another service called "Virool" is similar, where you pay and your video is basically used as an advertisement, and people are not forced to watch it. Keep in mind though, these services are very expensive, and are probably only good for people who are selling products and services. The money you spend on an ad campaign will likely be much more expensive than any adsense revenue you get back.

ACTION STEP: DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY

1. Don't buy views
2. Optional: Run a Google Adwords campaign if you legitimately want to "pay" for views, such as for a product you're selling

Conclusion

At this point you should have a solid idea of how the YouTube world works, and you might even have a plan for your channel. After you start making videos for a while, you'll start to notice which ones perform well. This is really the end-game of YouTube – figuring out what works and what doesn't for your brand, audience, channel, and YOU. That is something you can only figure out by making a bunch of videos. Think of it as a long experiment. Just keep at it and don't think you have to get thousands of views on every video. And don't forget to have fun!

Action Plan

1. **Decide who your target audience will be (such as)**
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender
 - c. Professions
2. **Choose a username (if not already) that reflects your desired brand**
 - a. If you are your brand, try to include your name in the username
 - b. Should somehow describe what the channel is about
3. **Add an avatar and channel banner**
 - a. Avatar should catch the eye of the viewer, and be viewable when very small
4. **The Video**
 - a. Pick a topic your audience wants to know about or will enjoy watching
 - b. Write an script outline for the video
 - c. Until you are good at improvising, you should write a full script. But don't read straight from it
 - d. Decide how you will record. Screen recorder? Video Camera?
 - e. Practice recording until you like what you see
5. **Create Social Accounts**
 - a. Create Facebook and Twitter accounts for your channel
 - b. Other options: Google+, instagram, tumblr, etc
6. **Learn by Example**
 - a. Watch videos by top vloggers (or any other genre) to see how they use their personality alone to make videos interesting. Find one you like and try to emulate what they do (not just for vlogs)
 - b. Examples: [VlogBrothers](#), [Charlieissocoollike](#), [JennaMarbles](#)
7. **"Trick Out" your videos**
 - a. Add annotations with calls to action
 - b. Inform viewers about your channel like how often you upload videos