3 Keys to Growing Sales and Views on YouTube

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One-third of internet users say they purchased a product because of YouTube.

You'd think brands would be YouTube experts. They're not. Kids are doing a better job.

Literally.

There are 8-year-olds generating billions (with a B) of views with no paid advertising. There isn't a single brand among the top 100 YouTube channels.

What is that brands are doing wrong? How can brands be successful on YouTube? There are three things to obsess over in order to grow a YouTube channel:

1. Focus on a single topic and content series
2. Optimize and refine your content
3. Ask people to subscribe

Focus: Try to appeal to everyone and you'll appeal to no one

Over 500 hours of content are uploaded to YouTube every single minute. With so much noise you need to find your niche and stick with it. Otherwise, people forget you. As a result,

you'll want to build your channel around what is called a 'hub' content series. This means you create episodic content with a consistent format, schedule, cast and topic.

The top creators all built their channels around hub content.

For example, Dude Perfect. The channel has over 50 million subscribers and 10.5 billion views. The content is entirely built around elaborate trick shots. Additionally, they upload, like clockwork, every other Monday.

Related: How to Create a YouTube Channel in 3 Simple Steps

The Try Guys consist of four friends documenting new experiences. The format is always the same. The foursome tries different things within each video, and experiences range from baking, to fire cupping, to nail extensions, and eating challenges. New videos are released on a set schedule. New videos go live every Wednesday and Saturday. As a result of their focused efforts, they've managed to grow to 7 million subscribers and over a billion views.

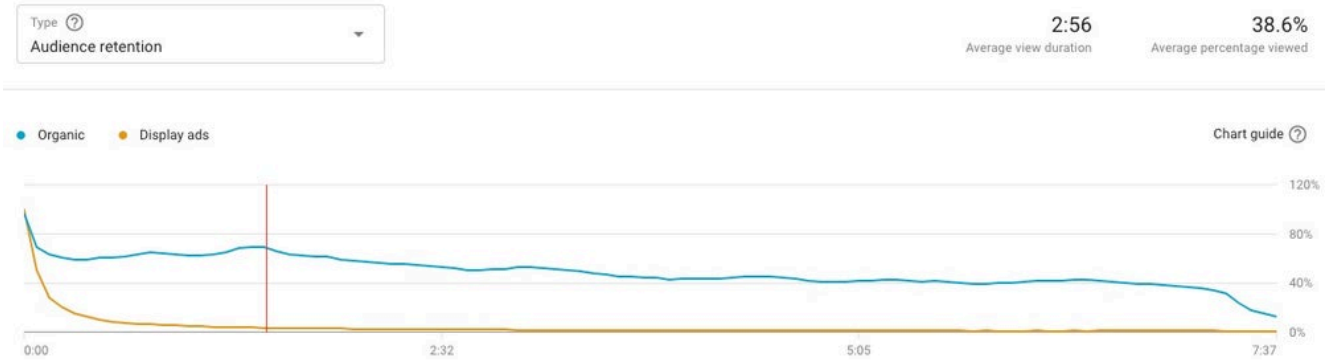
The commonality with these channels is a laser focus on a single topic, hub format, and upload schedule.

Optimize: YouTube prioritizes watch time over views

Internet sleuth's uncovered the ideal length and watch time for content. They found that YouTube's algorithm prioritizes, "10+ minute videos with 45%+ viewer retention per video." As a result, once you have a hub format you have to work to extend your watch time with each video. YouTube provides audience retention data to help with this.

Within YouTube analytics, you can see, on a second by second basis where the peaks and troughs are in a video. This enables you to know what aspects of a video causes people to lose

interest and where they're rewatching.



With each new video, you'll want to ditch the stuff that is losing viewers and do more of what people rewatch. The ultimate goal is to gradually make changes based on insights to increase watch time with each new video. The marginal gains will add up.

Imagine your first video has an average watch time of two minutes. Now let's say you apply learnings and can increase watch time 2%. If you can keep that up with each additional video, then after 100 videos you'll have watch time of well over 5 minutes. After 200 videos you'd have an average watch time of over 14 minutes.

In applying this methodology you can methodically increase watch time and create high ranking content.

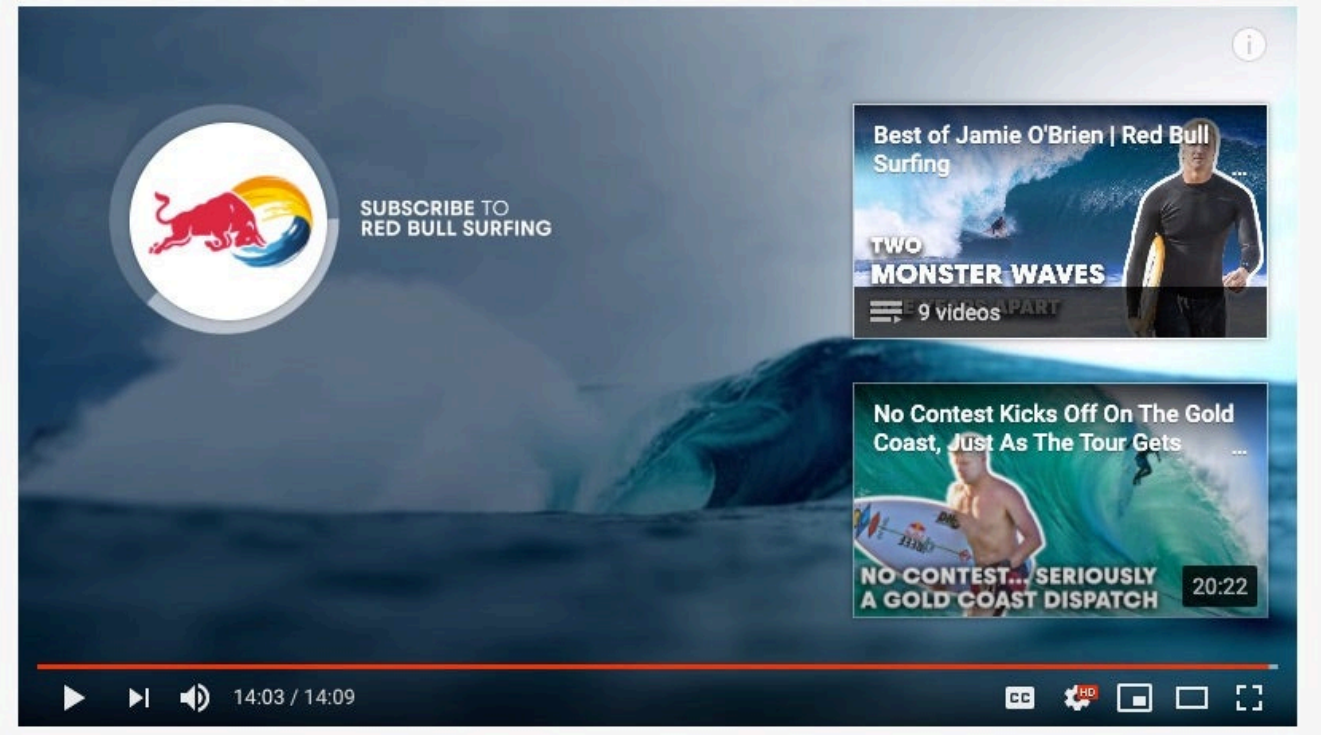
Ask: There's no harm in asking for subscribers

Brands often make the assumption that if their content is great people will subscribe. The reality is you have to ask people to subscribe. Ask, early, often and make it incredibly simple.

YouTube provides numerous levers for channels to convert viewers to subscribers. If you look at successful YouTube creators, they use all of them.

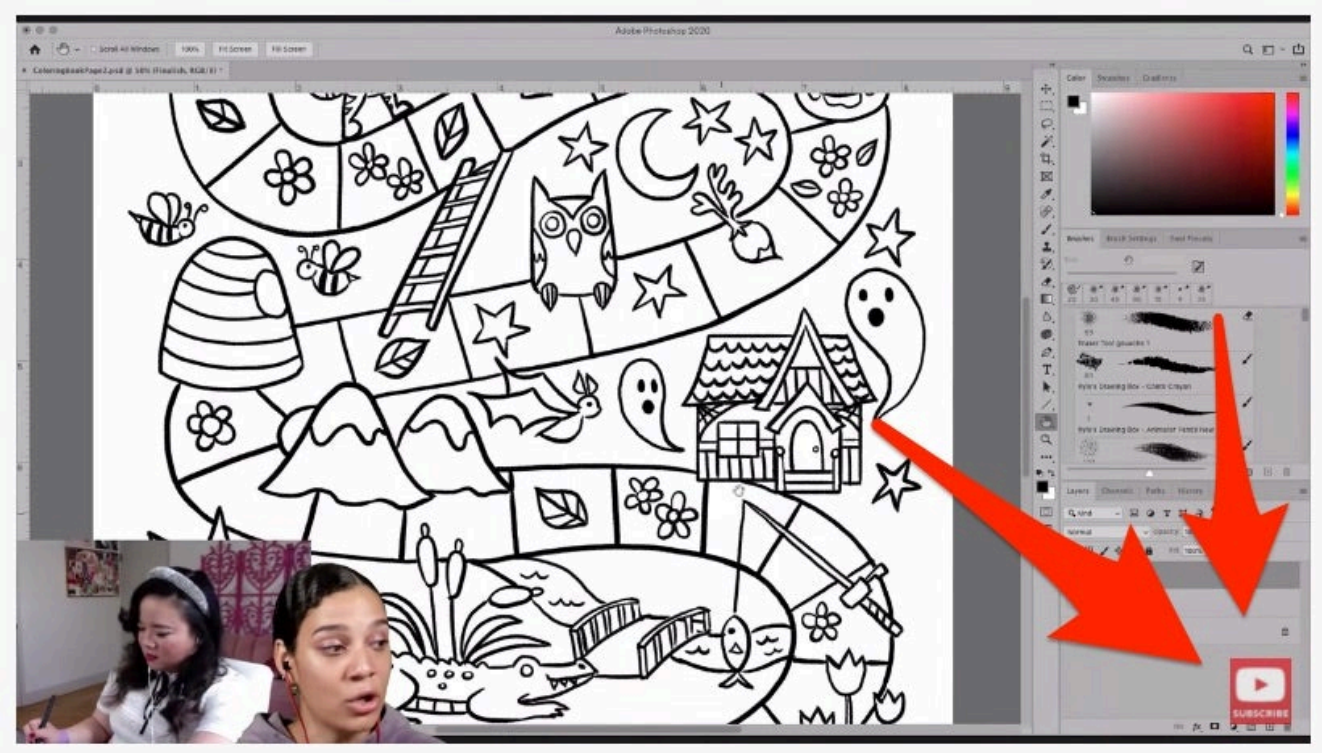
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End screens, a tool that allows you to add clickable overlays at the end of a video, is a great way to convert a viewer to a subscriber. If someone made it to the end of your video, they likely enjoyed the content. As a result, they'd be predisposed to hearing more from you. Verbally ask viewers to subscribe and point to the placement of the subscribe button. Remind the viewer it's a great way to get more videos like the one they just watched.



There are a number of additional tactics.

YouTube allows you to add a 'watermark' in the right-hand corner of videos. Watermarks are 'click to subscribe' buttons. Brands often use their logo as the watermark. A logo doesn't communicate the desired action. When you upload an image that says 'subscribe', the rate of clicks to subscribe (with that functionality) double on average.



Additionally, don’t be shy about promoting your channel. If you have an email list or large social following cross-promote those audiences. Create a one-click to subscribe feature. You can create a subscribe link for your channel by adding the channel name to this url: https://www.youtube.com/subscription_center?add_user=CHANNELNAME.

YouTube is well worth the investment in time and resources for virtually every brand. It can’t be ignored. It drives one-third of internet users to make a purchase and is the second largest search engine.

Related: How LaurDIY Went From Dorm Room Blogger to YouTube Star With Over 8 Million Followers

While YouTube is a difficult platform to grow an audience, it doesn’t need to be complicated. Focus on growing your overall channel’s watch time. Accomplish this by staying focused on your hub format. Use YouTube’s watch time analytics to inform small adjustments with each upcoming video. Encourage viewers to subscribe.

It may take time, but you will grow an audience.

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