Does Google Traffic Affect YouTube Recommendations? What To Know via @sejournal, @MattGSouthern

In a recent social media discussion, Rene Ritchie, YouTube's Creator Liaison, addressed questions about how Google traffic affects YouTube recommendations.

The conversation centered on whether brief view durations from Google Search referrals could negatively impact a channel's performance.

There is concern that if viewers only watch a video for a short time, this behavior might lead YouTube to recommend the video less frequently.

The question comes from the account @AdventureCrews on X, who write:

> *"if a channel gets massive external views from Google Search and the viewer only watches for < 2min, does this negatively impact the video or can YouTube decipher this? The content is adventure travel."*

YouTube's Response

Ritchie explained that viewership data is important, but the effect of traffic mainly comes from where it originates.

This means the algorithm looks at watch time differently depending on how users find the content.

For example, videos clicked from the YouTube homepage are assessed differently than those accessed through external sources like Google Search.

He states:

> *"Traffic sources primarily affect the same traffic source. So the recommendation system (Browse > Home Page), for example, will look at watch time for the video when it's clicked on from the Home Page, not from external sources, Sub feed, etc."*

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>
> *— YouTube Liaison (@YouTubeInsider) February 19, 2025*

What This Means

This clarification offers reassurance to creators.

Even if a video gets many views from outside searches, having a shorter watch time from that traffic doesn't decrease its chances of being recommended by YouTube.

The platform mainly uses engagement metrics; like watch time from within YouTube, to decide what to recommend.

For more about how YouTube's recommendation system works, see:

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