Lesson: Reach beyond YouTube

Reach beyond your channel to foster relationships on social media. Be innovative as you recruit new audiences.

- Where to begin
With all these choices, where do you invest your time and energy? First, find out where people are currently watching your videos aside from YouTube, and then prioritize which blogs or platforms to target. You can find this information in YouTube Analytics by checking the traffic sources and playback locations reports.

In the traffic sources report, you can learn how much of your video traffic comes from the embedded player and external websites like blogs and social media. Pay attention to “average view duration,” as well as, “view counts” to better understand which sources drive the longest engagement.

In the playback locations report, click “embedded player on other websites” to determine which websites are frequently promoting your videos. The results should help inform your community and outreach efforts.

Don’t forget to track mentions of your brand to identify where people are talking about you. You can set Google Alerts and use social media monitoring dashboards to track public mentions of your channel name, show names, talent, or other keywords specific to your brand.

See it in action
Senate spectators voice disgust with ruling

The Texas Tribune's live stream of an 11-hour filibuster during a legislative session went viral as a result of social media sharing and blog embeds. (Video in English)

Get the word out
Websites and blogs – not to mention the average Joe – are always looking for great videos to highlight. Keep track of the blogs and websites that often feature your work and drive the most views. Create a blog roll – a list of sites, blogs, online influencers and niche communities – that you would consider sharing your videos with first. Be sure to pitch the right videos to them, and let them know they’re getting an inside scoop. Keep in mind that topical or trending content is usually most valuable to these sites. If you have a few videos, create a playlist about a relevant trending topic that would appeal to blogs.

If you aren’t getting noticed enough, think about whether you’re targeting the right people. Build relationships with editors and only share videos that you honestly think they’d want to put in front of their audience. Learn more about their core demographics and familiarize yourself with their most popular content. This strategy will also come in handy when you need to promote super-specific content to niche sites.

- Video travels
While YouTube is an incredible platform to reach a large audience, the power of other social media platforms cannot be underestimated. 500 years’ worth of YouTube videos are watched on Facebook every day; on Twitter, 700 YouTube videos are shared per minute. “Gen C” describes the mindset of YouTube’s core audience – an audience defined by connection, creation, community, and curation. Nearly 40% of this audience shares videos on an additional social network after watching on YouTube. That activity is multiplied out to their groups of friends – in fact, more than half are connected to 100 or more people on social networks. Here are some ways to tap into this valuable group:

Get social

- Consider setting up accounts on various social media sites, and focus on those that are most relevant to you and your audience.
- Don’t spread yourself too thin. Less is more if it means commitment and consistency.
- Be sure your branding is also consistent across each of the media outlets you engage with.
- Try promoting your YouTube channel on social media profiles and vice versa.
- You can automatically post and share videos to different social media sites during the upload process.

Get shareable

- Tailor your video posts for each platform, and include prompts or questions to encourage audience interactions like comments, shares, and reposts. You can moderate comments on the go from the YouTube Studio app.
- Experiment with eye-catching titles and thumbnails to frame your video in a compelling way. Hint: consider how viewers would look to their friends if they were to share the video (e.g. smart, hip, informed, socially conscious).
- Quote or spotlight the most intriguing moment from the video to pique curiosity.
- Create build-up, but don’t trick or mislead people to click on your post. Always deliver on the promise.

To summarize, harness the portability of YouTube’s embedded player so that your best work can travel to other audiences on social media, blogs, mobile apps, and other websites. Extend your reach off the YouTube platform to give viewers the freedom to watch your video anytime, anywhere.
See it in action

Social media sprung Convos with my 2-Year-Old into the public eye

The channel, Convos With My 2-Year-Old, catapulted to popularity through the social network Reddit, even making its front page several times during the channel's debut. (Video in English)

Try it

Make a list of influential sites and blogs where people watch your content or similar types of content off of YouTube. If you’d like input from the community, share your list along with a description of your channel and ask the community if there are other blogs or sites they think you should consider.

Choose two of these platforms that you don't already have a relationship with and establish a profile or reach out to the publishers.

Experiment with three different posts to promote one of your videos. Check to see which ones are the most effective and determine why. Share your most popular post with the community and explain why you think this one worked best.
Check your knowledge

How can you find out where people are watching your videos off of YouTube?

- Ask your top fans where they share your videos.
- Make a list of top blogs and email the publishers.
- Search Google to see where your content appears.
- Use the traffic sources and playback location reports in YouTube Analytics.

You want to make a video about a current event to pitch to an edgy news outlet. What should you do before approaching the publishers to see if they’re interested?

- Sign up for their monthly newsletter.
- See what other types of videos they feature on current events and stylize your video in a similar fashion.
- Email the publishers directly to tell them about your great idea.
- Subscribe to their blog.

Which one of these posts would encourage the most sharing of your videos among teenagers who love pop music?

- Brian Williams raps to Gin and Juice!
- Watch someone rap a song!
- Watch out Snoop! Brian Williams nails Gin and Juice!
- News anchor sings song about bad habits!