THE AUDIENCE AND BUSINESS OF YOUTUBE AND ONLINE VIDEOS

EDITED BY LOUISA HA

The Audience and Business of YouTube and Online Videos

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LEXINGTON BOOKS
Lanham • Boulder • New York • London

Published by Lexington Books
An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706
www.rowman.com

Unit A, Whitacre Mews, 26-34 Stannary Street, London SE11 4AB

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Ha, Louisa, editor.
Title: The audience and business of YouTube and online videos / edited by Louisa Ha.
Description: Lanham : Lexington Books, 2018. | Series: Lexington studies in communication and storytelling | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018011445 (print) | LCCN 2018012170 (ebook) | ISBN 9781498576499 (Electronic) | ISBN 9781498576482 (cloth : alk. paper)
Subjects: LCSH: YouTube (Firm) | Mass media—Audiences. | Video recordings industry. | Internet videos—Economic aspects. | Internet users—Psychology.
Classification: LCC TK5105.8868.Y68 (ebook) | LCC TK5105.8868.Y68 A93 2018 (print) | DDC 384.3/3—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018011445

∞™ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Printed in the United States of America

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Preface

This YouTube book celebrates the 12th anniversary of my co-edited book, *Webcasting Worldwide: Business Models of an Emerging Global Medium*, published in 2006 with a copyright date of 2007 which probably is the first book on webcasting or online videos worldwide. The term “webcasting” did not get much traction since then. Now, “online video” is the term everyone uses. Webcasting, probably, has an implicit “live” streaming meaning which does not describe the on-demand nature of most online videos well. I looked back at the list of the top U.S. webcasters in 2004: 1) America Online, 2) Yahoo Launch, 3) RealNetworks, 4) MSN Videos, 5) ESPN, 6) StupidVideos, 7) MSNBC, 8) Windows Media, 9) iFilm, and 10) Atomfilm. Most of these names are so passé that some of our younger readers may not recognize them at all. YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, and even Facebook are the dominant players in online videos domain now in the United States and other countries worldwide. These online video services are businesses that follow the rule of business: those who make a profit and gain audience support will win the game and those who don’t will fade out from the stage.

When I wrote the webcasting book 12 years ago, nobody could imagine how online videos can become a fast-growing billion-dollar business threatening broadcast and cable TV. The broadband infrastructure back then was poor. But once U.S. cable companies upgraded their broadband infrastructure and businesses and institutions increased adoption of Wi-Fi broadband, along with the rapid development of mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones, the online video experience is much more enjoyable and on demand anywhere and anytime. Tech-savvy entrepreneurs such as YouTube’s co-founders Chad Hurley, Steven Chen, and Jawed Karim and Netflix’s founder Reed Hastings saw the weaknesses of the television and movie industry, seized the opportunity of online video streaming and created their giant online video empires. For YouTube, without the purchase by Google, was unlikely to become as successful as it is now. User-generated videos fueled the mass production of online videos while professional companies realized that they need to reach our digital native generation with online videos. Now both young and old can use the online platform to choose what they want to watch and watch the videos at their convenience.

I purposely chose a related but different approach to the topic of online videos in this book. This book is all about the audience while the webcasting book was about cross-national comparison of online video service providers. The audience is the basis for any media service. By examining our millennial users who set the tone for their generation and the younger ones with a mixed method of survey, in-depth interviews with observation, and content analysis, I hope this book will offer additional insights and an in-depth analysis of YouTube's audience and their use of different kinds of videos including its advertising that other books on YouTube were missing. I focus on YouTube as a global video service not only because of its market leadership but its potential far-reaching social effects on business, diversity, consumer empowerment, self and life-long learning.

The research on this book started from a service-learning project in my audience research class with the collaboration of graduate student members of my Emerging Media Research cluster. It ended with the conclusion of my media programming class to analyze the features of the most popular YouTube channels and our research team's experience as YouTube Red subscribers. I also tried a new way to complete my book—working with my graduate students who offer their millennial perspective to the project as the contributors of some of the book chapters. The book not only marks the completion of the project but should lead to more research on the online video business and its audience. If this book can empower the quiet audiences by getting their voice heard and show how they may shape the future of online videos, then this book will achieve its mission.

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Acknowledgments

This study is the result of research projects of two of my classes in Bowling Green State University—audience research and media programming. The participation of my Graduate Emerging Media Cluster group to make this work complete is indispensable. Hence first I would like to acknowledge my students in the audience research class of 2015 who collected the survey data and conducted some of the in-depth interviews: Jarrett Connelly, Carly Jo Crawford, Carlin Dixon, Trenice Foster, Chloe Jefferson, Cieara Little, Kelly McManamon, Mikala Mitchell, Matthew Novick, James Oddo, Christa Thomas, Jordan Swick, William Webb, and Enzie Xie.

Next I would like to thank my media programming class students in 2017 who helped in the coding of YouTube's most popular channels: Alicia Ashford, Lalynda Cobb, Amanda DeLong, Storm Fort, Theodora Hannan, Levi Heldman, Ashley Jackson, Jasmine Manns, Conner Messer-Kruse, Paul Moesher, Matthew Murray, Mitchell Nauertz, David Prephan, Maryah Schmitz, Brian Snouffer, Suzanna Thallman, Lori Wilt, and Noah Yingling.

YouTube is my research interest, but without the introduction of BGSU alumna Kristen Gillespie in Google and partnership with Sebastien Magoutier at YouTube, the project would not have started, to begin with, as a service-learning project for my audience research class. We added beyond what YouTube would like to know: our research interest on product review videos, audience's use of YouTube in general and other online video services, and the reason for their YouTube behavior.

Several of my graduate students contributed tremendously to the project. Liu Yang helped me design the questionnaire and organize the initial data. Lingfei Luan produced the video for the in-depth interview observation. Dhiman Chattopadhyay, Tao Zhang, and Chenjie Zhang interviewed the students, but were unable to contribute to the write-up of the book. Some of those remaining such as Nicky Chang Bi, Claire Joa, Kisun Kim, and Fiouna Ruonan Zhang are now contributors to the book with the addition of Mohammad Abuljadail, Alyssa Fisher, and Xiaoli Wen.

I also thank my teenage daughter, Cherice, who is a heavy and expert YouTube user but never posted a video there, for inspiring me to pay attention to YouTube as her generation's TV and how YouTube has many dedicated audiences who are not video creators, and to how those YouTube videos are impacting her generation and my generation as digital immigrants. I absolutely appreciate my family members' support and thank them for putting up with me while I was working on the book.

In addition, I would like to thank Nicolette Amstutz, the acquisition editor at Rowman & Littlefield, who was very supportive of this book project and helped in the timely publishing of this book.

Finally, I would like to thank all the participants of the study especially the 23 students that participated in the follow-up in-depth interviews and shared with us their experiences and the reasons for their YouTube behaviors.

To all YouTube and online video users, this book is for you and all those YouTube stakeholders who depend on your support. This book exclusively focuses on your interest with the hope that our readers will understand you more.

Chapter 1

YouTube as a Global Online Video Portal and an Alternative to TV

Louisa Ha

Where can I find a demo for the use of my smartphone? Where can I find a tutorial to learn how to do something? Where can I find someone to show me how to dress for the first day of work? Where can I find a funny video to laugh? Where can I post my own homemade videos? Your answer most certainly will be YouTube. YouTube, as the largest video-sharing site, is now synonymous to online videos. Its videos vary in lengths from one second (a cat video clip) to 571 hours (Moldy Toaster Media's attempt to set the YouTube record and test its compression capability). Its forms range from short video clips, single full episodes or a series. Its political videos range from the most right to the most left. Its product videos range from company-made commercials to independent consumer product review videos. It is free, open and available on demand any time we want. It utilizes its parent company Google's dominance in search to help users easily locate its video content. Its content is both professional and amateur. So it is no surprise that YouTube now has more than 1.5 billion users monthly (Jarvey 2017) and keeps growing around the world with 88 local versions (YouTube 2017).

This book is written because of this huge number of YouTube users worldwide. With this book, researchers and practitioners can understand how users watch YouTube videos in a complex media environment. There is a lack of quantitative analysis of online video audience behavior in book form. We examine the business side of YouTube in 360 degrees from an audience's perspective from skippable and unskippable online video advertising, to sponsored videos, company videos, and product review videos. We focus on the millennials, many of whom see YouTube as a site that they cannot live without (Cummings 2016).

Although this book is about YouTube, we also analyze it under the context of other online video services as they compete for audiences with YouTube.

But YouTube is unique in many ways. Its gigantic collection of diverse videos, estimated to be about four billion videos by the end of 2016 (Bartl 2018), makes it the largest video portal in the world. The videos can be in any language. Cunningham (2016) estimated that 80% of YouTube videos originate outside the United States. Its video producers are also diverse from professional media companies to an ordinary teenager next door to you. This mix of professional and user-generated content is what makes YouTube unique. Users go to YouTube with various motivations: to learn something, to get entertained, to share their knowledge and experience, to promote themselves or their companies and products, and so on (Ha, Leconte & Savidge 2012).

There is a big generational difference in media consumption. According to Nielsen's (2017) Total Audience Q2 report, millennials who were born between 1986 and 1996 are most likely to have computers and access to subscription on demand. They watch online videos the most via different devices. So how these different devices affect their choice of content and create different contexts in viewing videos is important in reaching audiences. We conceptualize YouTube audiences in this book not only as passive viewers, but also active users who share the videos with other people, leave comments on the videos, or create their own videos, those that watch everything including the pre-roll advertising on YouTube and those who skip the commercials and subscribe to YouTube Red. We don't see them as one homogeneous group, but a diverse set of people with different needs and interests and most important of all, different behaviors in their use of YouTube.

EVOLUTION OF YOUTUBE

YouTube is changing too. From its humble beginning in April 23, 2005, when YouTube's co-founder Jawed Karim uploaded the first video, "Me at the zoo," to now hosting more than one billion videos with 400 hours of videos being uploaded every minute to YouTube according to TubeFilter (Statista 2017), YouTube has transformed from an amateur video web site to a global video portal with a mix of professionally made content and user-generated content. You can find the official Disney network on YouTube and also a private posting on YouTube which limits access to people with permission. YouTube changed from no advertising at all to now being a leader in online video advertising with US$4 billion revenue in 2016 (Statista 2017) and pioneered the skippable (TrueView) ad format along with mandatory pre-roll video advertising format. It also now has mid-roll ads in longer videos as other video services. Following traditional online advertising, YouTube now also features large banner ads on its home page. Apart from regular videos, it also has virtual reality videos in its YouTube 360. YouTube commissioned its own video production in its studio in Los Angeles called YouTube Space. It also has its commercial free option YouTube Red. YouTube also now offers pay per view for latest movie releases and popular TV series in YouTube Movies and YouTube TV Shows respectively. Most recently, YouTube launched YouTube TV which essentially is an online cable TV service allowing subscribers to watch broadcast and cable network TV live online or on digital TV sets in 83 U.S. cities for $35 a month as of December 2017 (Crooks 2017). So YouTube is a global video portal providing users with both free and pay online videos.

Before YouTube, there were other early online video-sharing sites such as StupidVideos.com (Ha 2007). There are also other video-sharing sites such as Vimeo, MetaCafe, and DailyMotion. But none became as successful as YouTube. Its user-friendly features and the ease to search are what sets it apart from other sites. The promotion it received from Google in video search is undeniably a big factor. Its continuing dominance and popularity as the largest video portal means the unwavering support of the audience to the site.

In fact, Vonderau (2016) examined the historical documents of YouTube to show that YouTube was originally conceived with a profit motive, not a public service. The emergence of multichannel networks (MCNs) such as United Screen, which are intermediary companies that sell advertising, cross-promote affiliated YouTube channels and brand videos and YouTube personalities, further fuels the commercial success of YouTube in boosting viewership, facilitating professionalization of video production and increase in advertising revenue (Cunningham, Craig & Silver 2016). Critical scholars such as Van Dijck (2013) lambasted the increasing commercialization of YouTube in its effort to monetize its vast collection of videos and viewership as abandoning its "community-oriented social networking" mission and "a far cry from its original design." The formalization of YouTube content to more professional quality in talent management and production value fostered by the multichannel networks is seen by Lobato (2016) as the "cultural logic of digital intermediaries." But if YouTube is to sustain itself without the subsidy from Google, it must find a balance of profit and civic space as the video commons for Internet users worldwide. The key to developing such balance is to have a thorough understanding of what audiences or advertisers want and are willing to pay to support the site.

While there are many social benefits that YouTube can offer as a global video portal, how YouTube audiences actually use YouTube is a life-blood question for the Google company which owns YouTube and all those who depend on it. Yet the audience's responses to YouTube videos are still largely unknown because of the research focus on the producer. The large number of views or likes (the metrics commonly used in studies on YouTube) does not mean audiences are persuaded by the video. If anyone wants to know the impact of YouTube on the society, he/she needs to start with understanding the audience of YouTube: how frequently they use YouTube affects how much they are affected by it; how YouTube is part of the online video diet of the users, especially the millennials, who are our future and don't use traditional media anymore and rely on online content. It is a very important phenomenon to study and prepare for the future of our society.

The broadband industry should be thankful to YouTube and other online video services for the high demand for broadband connection due to the audience's high demand to watch online videos. Most of the Internet bandwidth consumption is spent on video watching. YouTube alone accounts for 17% of all broadband traffic (O'Malley 2016). But not all people have home broadband. Some people just rely on smartphones or public Wi-Fi to have their Internet access. This book includes a section examining how the type of broadband access affects the video-watching behavior of millennial college students.

Apart from broadband connection availability, the growth of online videos is also fueled by the rapid development of viewing devices. Shortly after the purchase of YouTube by Google in 2006, the iPhone was launched in 2007 which enabled video viewing on smartphones; tablets such as iPads launched in 2010 made mobile video viewing much more comfortable with the larger screen. The sharp drop in prices of laptops also popularized the use of laptops to view videos. Then the digital TV set and video game consoles such as Xbox and Nintendo Wii bring the online videos to the large screen at home for a lean-back viewing experience. The enlargement of screens in smartphones such as the iPhone 7 Plus and Galaxy Note 8 also make online video viewing much more pleasurable. As YouTube users can choose the various devices to watch their videos in different settings (on the go, at home and at work), the frequency of their online video viewing can be greatly increased from a short video to kill time on the wait to watching a full 60 minute documentary on the TV at home.

YOUTUBE AS ALTERNATIVE TV

Difference between YouTube and Other Online Subscription Video Services

YouTube is very different from other over-the-top (OTT) online subscription video services such as Netflix, Hulu, or Amazon Videos. Netflix and other online subscription video services only select popular TV programs and movies and produce a few original shows. They are just TV on steroids and on demand that facilitate binge watching and a cheaper alternative than cable and satellite TV subscription. YouTube is truly an alternative to traditional television. You can virtually find any type of content you can imagine on YouTube. The quality can vary from very poorly made home videos to highly professional content made by big movie studios and TV networks. This explains the appeal of YouTube to our millennial generation. The traditional TV does not reflect their views and appeal to the general mass audience with "dumb programming" (Brown & Cavazos 2005). The complicated and highly risk-averse studio production process created many hurdles for new and innovative programs to come out (Eastman & Ferguson 2013). With the freedom to upload any content on YouTube, anyone with access to a digital video camera and basic editing skills can try their creativity as producers. The prevalence of smartphones with high quality video cameras and other lightweight professional digital quality video cameras enable more people to record videos on their own. As Chen's (2014) study of YouTubers revealed, they enjoyed the identity they constructed for themselves via the videos and the parasocial relationships they developed with their viewers. So YouTube is a paradise for people who want to become a star and get attention from around the world.

YouTube audiences can choose whatever genre they like at whatever time they want. They can follow YouTubers, the online celebrity vloggers who chronicle their daily lives and share their personal views on different topics, many of those views are similar to those of the millennials. PewDiePie, the 27-year-old Swede gamer YouTuber, continues to have the highest subscribers with 54.1 million around the world. Fine Brothers' React franchise has a large following (8.3 million subscribers) because it reflects the opinions of children, teens, adults, and elders on different issues and because of its subformat on gaming. The authenticity of the content and personalities in the videos are what made them popular. These are unscripted programs that viewers appreciate because they show genuine response from vloggers like them.

YouTube's success is not just limited to edgy talks or opinionated vlogs. International entertainment companies also realize the value of creating their presence on YouTube. YouTube helped Korean popular music companies promote their music through music videos and shows about the band members to the international audience. The most viewed Korean YouTube music video is Gangnam style with two billion views. Hence YouTube plays an important role in creating the Hallyu wave, the global interest in Korean popular music.

YouTube appeals to young male audiences even more because they can explore what they want to watch on YouTube. In fact, males were found spending 44% more time on YouTube than females based on Openslate's study (Blattberg 2015). Typically online videos are watched in the privacy of one's smartphones or computers. Male audiences are leaving TV for video games and other activities (Sood 2011). So YouTube retains these young male audiences by offering content that they want to watch.

YouTube also appeals to minority audiences whose voices did not get heard in mainstream TV. The highly popular Asian YouTuber channels such as Ryan Higa's Nigahiga channel (19.6 million subscribers), Lilly Singh's Superwoman channel (11.5 million subscribers), and Michelle Phan (8.8 million subscribers) are examples that Asian minorities find their personalities featured as the main characters or show hosts on YouTube (Mediakix 2017), unlike the nerdy or timid roles that Asian characters are on American TV. Native Americans, another minority group almost invisible in television, also benefit from YouTube presence. Kopacz and Lawton's (2013) study on the effects of viewer comments posted under the Native American YouTube videos shows that users could be influenced with much wider acceptance of the variety of portrayals of Native Americans and also respond favorably to Native depictions in contemporary, mainstream contexts. The videos motivate the viewers to talk about racial discrimination. Some other works document how other minorities such as the transgender individuals use YouTube as a platform to speak out for their community (Raun 2016).

YouTube does have one restriction on content: the prohibition and removal of pornography, graphic violent, and fetish content. It also sets age restrictions for explicit sexual content in educational, documentary, scientific, or artistic contexts. With such "clean" content policy, YouTube gains legitimacy and receives support from different communities.

Indeed what is popular on YouTube is what television cannot provide to the audience. It is truly the alternative to television and poised to take over TV in the United States (Solomon 2017). However as Cha (2014) noted, the time displacement effect of online videos on television depends on whether the audience watches branded online videos similar to the content on TV or the unique genres they could only find online. When people watch similar content online and offline, then online video usage does not reduce the time spent watching television. Only those who watch different types of content abandon their regular TV.

THE DIVERSE ECOLOGY OF YOUTUBE

Many scholars celebrate the online participatory culture in the past studies of YouTube (e.g., Burgess & Green 2009). Four features on YouTube are commonly attributed to this participatory culture: (1) video recommendations through related videos; (2) video links to facilitate the sharing of YouTube videos; (3) comments and other social networking functionalities; and (4) embedded video players. While YouTube facilitates audience participation such as sharing and commenting on the videos, we would argue that the diversity of audience and content on YouTube is what made YouTube thrive with so many viewers. Research on the digital divide and prosumption behavior of audiences creating and consuming media content by Ha and Yun (2014) shows that online audiences are mostly passive users, rather than active participants. One reason is the divide in video production skills and resources between people. Most people do not engage in either producing or sharing the content with others. Our empirical data in this study shows that most people are not "participating" in their use of online videos. They just watch the videos without doing anything with it. The small group of enthusiasts or prosumers who both produce and consume heavily online videos act as change agents and opinion leaders in the online world. Hence, we conceptualize the YouTube audience range from active prosumers who both produce and watch videos, loyal passive viewers who only watch the channels they subscribed to, to ad hoc viewers who just watch what they need at the time and never subscribe to any YouTube channels. It is the combination of all these audience types that creates the ecology and success of YouTube: the prosumers who provide the truly diverse user-generated content on YouTube, the active commentators who express their views on the videos they watch and influence others' perceptions of the video, the sharers who help spread the videos, the passive viewers who support the YouTubers with their regular viewership and the ad hoc viewers who boost the viewership of certain videos to a new height and help those niche videos to get viewership. Added to this ecosystem are the professional media companies and marketers that also utilize the platform to reach more audiences. In the subsequent chapters, we demonstrate the diversity of the viewers and explore what they do and watch on YouTube and their demographic characteristics.

Although only a handful of YouTube videos captured the eyeballs of the majority of viewers as research has shown that 95% of YouTube views came from 5% of the content (Brouwer 2017) and Bartl's (2018) 10-year analysis of YouTube from 2006 to 2016 shows that on average, the top 3% YouTube channels uploaded 28% of all content on YouTube and captured 85% of the views, the diversity of content including all sorts of niche content is what makes YouTube significant. Have you imagined if one day YouTube was closed, where would all these billions of videos posted online go? In fact, as the largest depository of videos, YouTube is the go-to place and the portal for online videos. Many educators are now dependent on YouTube as video resources for classroom. Individuals use YouTube as their video encyclopedia or go-to source for video materials. Many people use YouTube for advice and demonstration in beauty, fashion, health, and all sorts of topics. The social significance of YouTube is larger than ever. YouTube is the *global video depository* for both nonprofit organizations and for-profit companies as well as individuals. It is the *video commons* for everyone online.

Among the many types of videos YouTube offers, we give specific attention to product review videos in this book because of its unique independence from commercials and ability to demonstrate a product use with a person talking about their product use experience, unlike other textual online product reviews. The vividness of these videos enables viewers to empathize with the YouTube producers/vloggers and demonstrate the use of the product. This kind of electronic word of mouth is most closely related to how we ask our friends in person. But in the online world, strangers tell us what is good or bad and they are the "users" we can find any time.

In a pioneering work on business models of webcasting, Ha and Ganahl (2007) proposed an Access-Content-Revenue (ACR) framework in analyzing webcasting service. YouTube provides high accessibility with a highly searchable database and content variety which leads to an advertising-supported model. It cannot charge for downloads because, unlike iTunes and podcasts, YouTube videos are streamed and only those that specifically have a download option can be downloaded. There is no ownership of content by the audience. Audiences can watch the video at their convenience with a device they prefer. But the sole reliance of advertising then favors the most viewed and popular videos which become the bread and butter of YouTube. When YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki, who advocated the purchase of YouTube to Google back in 2006, took over YouTube in 2014, her first challenge was how successful she could keep these popular YouTubers (LaPorte 2014).

YouTube is a high-cost operation. According to Statistics Brain (2017), the yearly cost of running and maintaining YouTube is US$6.35 billion and YouTube shares 55% of its revenue to YouTube video producers (Bilton 2017). Currently, YouTube has a multiple revenue model with advertising, premium subscription (YouTube Red), pay per view on popular movies, TV shows, and sponsorship revenue sharing with its video creators. It seems to be doing better now financially. But still it is in the red because the revenue is only estimated to be four billion dollars in 2016. There are more than three million ad-supported YouTube channels (Openslate 2017). So the future of YouTube depends on how well it can keep the audience from competitors while continuing its expansion in the world.

The audience we study in this book is only within the United States. It is because YouTube is a U.S.-based company despite its global reach. Many experiments or features offered on YouTube started in the United States first before expanding to other countries. In addition, the United States is still the largest advertising market and leader in Internet technology, so the United States is still the trendsetter for commercial online videos for other countries' reference. U.S. audiences have more choices than audiences in any other countries in the world because of free speech and a mature and highly competitive media industry. By studying a single market, we can clarify the audience's behavior without confounding ourselves with factors pertaining to other countries and cultures. There are indeed many YouTube counterparts in other parts of the world that do not allow access to YouTube. Researchers can compare the results in other countries with our book.

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The primary data of this book were collected in the November of 2015 by my undergraduate and graduate students who interviewed college students in my university, Bowling Green State University. It is located in Northwest Ohio in the United States. The project is part of a service learning course—audience research. The study employed a mixed method consisting of (1) an anonymous self-administered online survey collected from a diverse sample of students with equal gender quota as every third student intercepted in the student union; (2) an online anonymous survey of all full-time students by email invitations; and (3) 23 follow-up in-depth interviews of students in our online survey, in which we also observed their actual video and online advertising viewing behaviors. Fieldwork began after we received the approval from our university's institutional research review board. The survey sample was not simply a convenient sample because Bowling Green State University is a mid-size public university with 20,000 students. The students came from both low-income and high-income families. Northwest Ohio where the university is located is a swing region within this famous swing state, and reflects a mix of liberals, independents, and conservatives, so the student sample reflects the college-educated millennial generation in the overall United States well. There were a total of 647 respondents with complete responses to the survey including 294 respondents in the interviewer-recruited online survey and 353 respondents in the email online survey. Of these respondents, 82% (n = 531) are YouTube users, 9.6% (n = 52) are online video users but not YouTube users, 9.9% (n = 64) are nonusers of online videos. The final sample consisted of 74% Caucasians, 10% African Americans, 4% Asians, 3% Hispanics, 2% other races, and 7% who did not want to disclose their race. The average age of respondents was 22. There were more female than male respondents in the email survey. So, the total sample has higher representation of females with 62% females, 36% males, and 2% who did not disclose their gender.

The in-depth interviews lasted around 30 minutes to one hour with questions on their opinion of YouTube and reasons for watching YouTube. The interviewees were chosen from among those YouTube users who agreed to a follow-up interview in the online survey. They were contacted by the student interviewers and asked to bring their favorite device to view YouTube at a mutually agreed upon quiet location with Internet connection such as the library or the student union. The interviewer recorded the device the interviewee brought and asked them to show their favorite video to the interviewer for five minutes including any advertisements in them. If their favorite video contained skippable (TrueView) advertising, the interviewer would show them a prepared short video with a non-skippable advertisement and observed their response to the advertising, including their advertising avoidance behavior. Reversely, if that favorite video contained non-skippable ads, the interviewer would show a video with a skippable ad. The video we prepared was a funny video about an MTV News clip *Decoded* with Franchesca Ramsey. One version has a five-second skippable QuickBook commercial and one version plays the QuickBook commercial in full.

The interviewer also observed if the interviewee looked at any comments about the video and asked for permission to see their viewing history and record it.

In addition, we also employed a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the latest most popular YouTube channels and YouTube Red in 2017. The result is a rich set of data using a mixed-method approach combining the strengths of quantitative and qualitative approaches to dissect millennials' YouTube video-watching behavior.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book consists of 12 chapters. After this introduction of YouTube and explanation of its significance to the online users around the world, in chapter 2, we analyze the characteristics of the nonusers and users of YouTube and compare YouTube audiences' use of other online video services such as Amazon Video and Hulu, and how YouTube users and nonusers differ in their social media video use. We found that YouTube users watch more diverse video genres and more online video services than other non-YouTube online video users. Then we examine what type of videos the millennials as digital natives watch on YouTube and the diversity of video genres they watch. We analyze the profile of the heavy YouTube viewers and distinguish the characteristics of the YouTube Channel subscribers and ad hoc viewers using the survey data and an analysis of viewing history of our interviewees in chapter 3. We found that music videos, movies and TV programs aired previously are the most viewed genres but heavy users and light users have different viewing preferences.

Because people access the Internet via different devices at different locations, we analyze whether their form of Internet access (smartphone or home and campus broadband) affects their online video viewership. We compare the different devices they use to watch YouTube videos and how they impact the viewership of YouTube videos. We observe and report how people watch their favorite videos with their favorite devices in chapter 4. We found a digital divide effect among those who rely on smartphones for Internet access on online video viewership and a divide between whites and minorities, as well as a gender divide, in Internet access and device ownership. We found higher effect on video creation, video watching, and video sharing by the viewing setting than the device used to watch videos. In addition, on the go viewing setting affects diversity of viewing genres and home viewing increases total viewership. YouTube viewing is characterized by private, repeated, and varied completion rates.

Product reviews are one unique type of YouTube videos which are testimonials of the YouTube celebrities and other less-known ordinary users. In chapter 5, we reveal how YouTube viewers perceive the product videos, who they trust more, and whether the positive and negative valence of the videos affect viewers' attitudes and behavioral intention to buy the product. As one form of electronic word of mouth, we investigated the relationships between YouTube and other product review platforms. We found that the most frequently watched YouTube videos include those on technological products and food and diet. Although people have more purchase intention while watching positive product reviews, they will still buy the products when they see negative reviews. YouTube is the second frequently used eWOM source, while Amazon ranks the first.

Who are the people that write comments in the videos? We found most people did not write comments and rate the videos they watched. There are four times more people who read than write comments and the majority did not read or write comments. Few read those comments and the importance of comments is low in selecting product review videos to watch. We also found that people read comments after watching the videos to find people with similar opinions and paid attention to comments in controversial videos. In chapter 6, we learn why people don't write comments.

YouTube itself is also considered a social media platform because of the ease of sharing content. But YouTube also makes it easy for audiences to share YouTube videos on other social media platforms. In chapter 7, we show which social media platforms are the favorite of audiences in sharing YouTube videos and the features of the videos most shared by the audiences. We compare the characteristics of people who are most likely to share YouTube videos (heavy sharers), low sharers, and non-sharers of YouTube videos.

Apart from user-generated videos, many YouTube videos are produced by companies trying to sell their products or to demonstrate how the product should be used through customer support service or promotional videos. In chapter 8, we give an overview of how companies create their channels and videos, and audiences' responses to those videos. We analyze several successful cases of branded video channels on YouTube to show how content marketing is practiced on YouTube as another form of advertising.

Do people care about whether the videos are sponsored or not? Who are the people who care about the sponsorship? Sponsored videos are a unique form used by the highly popular YouTube channels with more than one million subscribers which can include product placement, brand ID on screen, and paid testimonials by the YouTubers. It used to be a direct deal between an advertiser and YouTube video creators or their multichannel network representative. Now YouTube requires all sponsorship to go through Google Advertising. In chapter 9, we assess the persuasion knowledge level, trust, and attitudes toward sponsored and non-sponsored YouTube videos. We found that persuasion knowledge, or paying attention to the sponsor of the video, does not affect the trust in the product review videos on YouTube. It is the usefulness of the information presented in the video that matters. While sponsorship is a subtle way in which marketers influence the content or host of the online videos, online video advertising is the explicit promotion of products controlled by advertisers. Chapter 10 specifically examines the amount of advertising YouTube audiences watch and explain the factors that influence the viewership of online video advertising and YouTube audiences' advertising avoidance behavior. We found that even though participants said they are least likely to watch the mandatory full-length pre-roll ads and think they are a waste of time and are very intrusive, our observation of respondents watching ads on YouTube found that they avoid both the skippable and non-skippable mandatory ads through various ways and not just by skipping the ads, making the viewership data problematic. Only when the ads are entertaining or relevant to the users will the millennials watch the video ads. Despite the high avoidance, they still report some influence from the video ads they watch and talk with their friends about those advertised brands.

YouTube packages the most viewed YouTube channels together for Internet users to view them on YouTube's homepage to capture the largest audiences. In chapter 11, we examine YouTube's latest programming strategies to make those channels as popular as possible similar to broadcast and cable TV and the attributes of the most viewed content on YouTube. We identify the characteristics of the 20 most viewed channels worldwide and in the United States and 20 most subscribed YouTube channels and the top five channels in each of ten different content genres in 2017. Based on the most viewed videos, we found human interest and celebrities attract most eyeballs. For entertainment-oriented legacy media channels, star power and high product quality of their video selection are key to their success on

YouTube. For the native YouTube channels, edgy content, sarcasm and fun are important elements for comedy and entertainment content while the genuine and friendly personality of the vlogger is important for the education and how-to videos. Use of English language subtitles and descriptions are common in the most popular non-English YouTube channels. Nonetheless, not all most viewed videos have ads. We also discuss the importance of studying YouTube audiences outside the most popular channels.

To conclude the audience's experience on YouTube, we review the premium subscription service of YouTube, YouTube Red, which is supposedly free from advertiser influence. Is this the ultimate optimal commercial free online video experience? We asked the millennials to find out who are most interested in subscribing to YouTube Red. We compare the difference between YouTube Red and the regular YouTube. The future of online video service and YouTube's role in cultivating a promotional and entrepreneurial culture are also discussed. We conclude the book with future directions for online video audience research and the need to examine the role of YouTube in building the global village and fostering diversity as well as the necessity of audience empowerment by providing input to the algorithm of YouTube's video recommendation system.

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Chapter 2

Users and Nonusers of YouTube and Online Video Services

Mohammad Abuljadail

Online videos are becoming an important medium that we use in our lives. The number of online video viewers is projected to increase from 221.8 million viewers in 2017 to 232 million viewers in the United States by 2019 and online videos accounted for 74% of all online traffic in 2017 (Insivia 2017). Digital video advertising spending is expected to grow from US$13.23 billion in 2017 to US$22.18 billion in 2021 (Statista 2018). Accessing movies and TV shows online through OTT services such as Netflix and Hulu is growing and becoming a more popular way of watching TV shows than watching on traditional TV among young adults (Pew Research Center 2016). Up to 67% of American young adults reported not being able to live for a week without YouTube (Cummings 2016). Online videos are different than traditional videos in that they can be accessed on multiple platforms, such as computers, digital TV, tablets, and smartphones. People can watch online videos on the go, at work, at class, or at home.

Besides just watching, consumers now are empowered and they play an important role in the consumption, interaction, and generation of online video content. They are able to produce their own content and respond to content of others. They have the power to increase the popularity of a content as well as damage the identity of a producer of a certain content. For example, when United Airlines baggage handlers destroyed a traveler's guitar, he posted a video "United Breaks Guitars" on YouTube. The video of the unsatisfied traveler went viral around the world (Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins & Wiertz 2013). The traveler's voice would not reach this far without the dissemination of his video online and viewers' interactions (Holt 2003). The unsatisfied traveler's story caused severe damages to United Airlines' reputation and business loss valued at US$180 million (McCarthy 2009).

When talking about watching videos online, the first thing that comes to people's mind is YouTube. Although YouTube is still the largest online video service provider, there are many other services that are becoming popular and starting to directly or indirectly compete with YouTube. For example, one of the most popular and successful online video streaming services in recent years is Netflix. Its revenue in 2016 reached US$8.83 billion (Statista 2016). Popular online streaming video services similar to Netflix such as Amazon Prime, and Hulu are becoming popular in the United States. Therefore, understanding online video watching behaviors and what users like not only helps advertisers reach audiences more effectively online but also helps the operators of those different online video services by meeting their consumers' needs.

This chapter focuses on examining the results of our study of millennials in the United States and how they use the most popular online video services such as Netflix, videos on Facebook, videos on Twitter, Hulu, videos on TV network websites, Amazon Prime, Vimeo, and iTunes in addition to YouTube. In the first section of this chapter, we divide the college student participants into three groups (YouTube users, non-YouTube online video users, and nonusers of online videos) and compare their demographic characteristics.

Our survey found that an overwhelming majority (90%) of our millennial respondents are online video users. Only 10% did not use any online videos. As shown in Table 2.1, we found that the ages of the nonusers of online videos are the oldest, the non-YouTube online video users are in the middle, and the youngest are the YouTube users. The class standing also shows similar results showing that seniors and graduate students are more likely to be nonusers of online videos.

Some demographic variables play a role in identifying differences among the three groups (see Table 2.1). In regard to gender, a much higher proportion of females (87.3%) indicated that they use YouTube than males (77.1%). In contrast, there is a higher proportion of male than female users in non-YouTube online video services (10% vs. 5%) and non-online video service users (12.9% vs. 7.7%). The difference is statistically significant (chi-square = 10.09, df = 2, $p < 0.01$). Yet this difference is in the choice of video service, not intensity of use of each service.

Students' major is another significant variable that differentiated the three groups. The highest proportion of YouTube users are science major students (20.3%), while the highest proportion of online video services non-YouTube users are business administration major students (23.7%). Lastly, nonusers of online videos are more likely to be communication related majors (19.7%). Probably, videos of YouTube that are more informative and offer a good

Table 2.1 Demographic Profile of YouTube Users, Non-YouTube Online Video Users, and Nonusers

Variable	*YouTube Users (n = 531)*	*Non-YouTube Online Video Users (n = 52)*	*Nonusers of Online Videos (n = 64)*
Gender**			
Within males (n = 210)	77.1%	10%	12.9%
Within females (n = 361)	87.3%	5%	7.7%
Age	M = 20.83	M = 21.03	M = 21.85
Class standing			
Freshman	24.1%	23.1%	27.9%
Sophomore	17.3%	23.1%	11.5%
Junior	17.3%	28.2%	13.1%
Senior	24.3%	17.9%	29.5%
Graduate	15.3%	7.7%	18.0%
Major*			
Communication related	12.0%	13.2%	19.7%
Sciences	20.3%	13.2%	11.5%
Art, humanities, and social sciences	14.5%	10.5%	9.8%
Business admin	10.8%	23.7%	6.6%
Technology, architecture, and applied engineering	3.3%	7.9%	1.6%
Education and human development	17.2%	15.8%	16.4%
Musical arts	3.9%	5.3%	4.9%
Health and human services	11.8%	2.6%	13.1%
Undecided major with no college affiliation	4.3%	2.6%	14.8%
Honors college	1.9%	5.3%	1.6%
Race*			
White	77.1%	66.7%	54.1%
Black or African American	8.9%	10.3%	16.4%
Asian	4.3%	2.6%	4.9%
Hispanic	2.3%	5.1%	9.8%
Others	1.4%	2.6%	1.6%
I prefer not to disclose	6.0%	12.8%	13.1%
Personal monthly income**			
Under $500	35.3%	18.4%	18.3%
$500–1,000	22.9%	18.4%	16.7%
$1,000–1,500	9.5%	23.7%	11.7%
$1,500–2,000	4.5%	5.3%	15.0%
$2,000–3,000	.8%	2.6%	5.0%
Over $3,000	3.5%	2.6%	5.0%
I prefer not to disclose	23.5%	28.9%	28.3%

*difference statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.
**difference statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.

learning attract more science majors, and some communication students are attached to traditional media such as TV and film.

Personal monthly income also shows differences among the three groups. The majority of YouTube users have the lowest income, 35.3% make under US$500 a month. In regard to those who are non-YouTube online video users, the majority (23.7%) make between US$1,000 and US$1,500, and one quarter of nonusers of online video services make over US$1,500 a month. The difference is statistically significant. Hence we can see YouTube is an important entertainment and video service option for lower-income students, while other higher-income students may stay with traditional TV service such as cable and satellite TV subscription or other pay online video service option such as Netflix.

USE OF INFORMATION REVIEWS ABOUT PRODUCTS AND THE USERS AND NONUSERS OF ONLINE VIDEO SERVICES

We examined how non-online video users prefer to get information reviews about products compared to online video users. The majority (more than 30%) of both online video users and nonusers never use online forums and professional product review sites. In the same vein, the majority of both groups have similar patterns in preferring to get information about product reviews from friends, families, and colleagues, and e-commerce websites. However, the main difference in how the two groups prefer to get information about product reviews is in using social media as an information source. A larger proportion (36%) of non-online video users reported that they never use social media as a preferred source in getting information reviews about products. On the other hand, a larger proportion (35.5%) of online video users reported that they sometimes use social media as a preferred source of getting information about product reviews. This shows that non-online video users are probably lighter social media users compared to online video users (see Table 2.2).

YouTube and Other Online Video Services Users

To further examine online video users, we divided online video users into two groups: YouTube users and non-YouTube online video users. As shown in Figure 2.1, although YouTube is the most frequently used online video service, it is not the only online video service Millennials used. Watching videos on Netflix (69.8%) and Facebook (58.4%) are also high.

Table 2.2 Differences in Preferred Source to Get Information on Reviews about Products between Users and Nonusers of Online Video Services

Source of Product Reviews	*Online Video Users (n = 583)*	*Non-Online Video Users (n = 64)*
Friends, family, or colleagues		
always	26.1%	**42.0%**
most of the times	**45.1%**	28.0%
sometimes	19.8%	10.0%
rarely	4.0%	2.0%
never	**5.0%**	**18.0%**
E-commerce sites (e.g., Amazon and eBay)		
always	8.6%	10.0%
most of the times	30.7%	**34.0%**
sometimes	**31.2%**	20.0%
rarely	15.5%	8.0%
never	14.0%	28.0%
Social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter)		
always	8.8%	8.0%
most of the times	19.0%	14.0%
sometimes	**35.5%**	16.0%
rarely	20.5%	26.0%
never	16.1%	**36.0%**
Online forums		
always	3.6%	4.0%
most of the times	13.8%	14.0%
sometimes	28.2%	30.0%
rarely	22.6%	20.0%
never	**31.7%**	**32.0%**
Professional product review sites such as CNET and Consumer Search		
always	6.9%	12.0%
most of the times	13.8%	22.0%
sometimes	22.9%	24.0%
rarely	25.2%	12.0%
never	**31.2%**	**30.0%**

YouTube, Netflix, and Facebook offer different types of video services. As discussed in chapter 1, YouTube is the online video service that one goes to to watch tutorials, funny videos, and almost anything that comes to mind for free, Netflix is an online video streaming service that is not free and it gives its members access to movies and TV shows through a monthly subscription. Facebook is a social networking site that has many functions, and online video is just one of its many functions. While YouTube does offer paid services such as YouTube Red where viewers can gain access

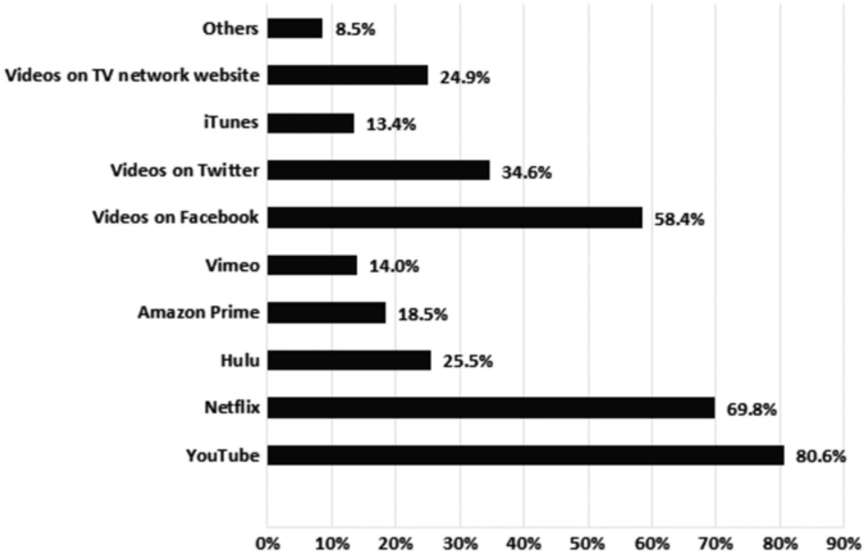

Figure 2.1 Online Video Service Use of YouTube Users.

to additional features, for the purposes of this chapter we are focusing on YouTube's free service which is available to anyone with an internet connection especially during our time of study, YouTube Red had just been launched and all other pay services of YouTube were unavailable at the time of study.

As there is overlap among the users of these different online video services, and due to the focus of this book on YouTube, we compare YouTube users versus other online video service users who are not YouTube users. We are interested in knowing the characteristics of these two groups, such as program genre preference differences, why YouTube users prefer YouTube, and what services were used by non-YouTube users.

Table 2.3 shows the most popular genres and video services used by the two groups of users of online video services. Overall YouTube users are heavier users of all genres of videos except travel videos than non-YouTube online video users. The majority of YouTube users (86.2%) are interested in watching music videos; however, the majority of non-YouTube online video users (67.5%) are interested in watching movies and much fewer of them watch music (47.5%). Many YouTube users also watch movies and TV programs. The average number of video genres YouTube users watch (mean = 7.8) is significantly higher than the nonusers (mean = 7.0). Hence YouTube users have more diverse genre viewing than other online video users. In addition, the majority of non-YouTube online video users (50%) are Netflix users; therefore, those who don't use

Table 2.3 Comparison of Program Genre Viewing (At Least Once a Month) between YouTube Users and Non-YouTube Online Video Users

	YouTube Users (n = 531)	*Non-YouTube Online Video Users (n = 52)*
Type of online videos watched		
Music*	86.2%	47.5%
TV programs (have been aired on TV)*	83.7%	**55%**
Movies*	83.5%	**67.5%**
News*	69.9%	47.5%
Do it yourself*	55.9%	22.5%
Pets and children*	49.8%	25%
Documentary *	49.1%	35%
Product demos and reviews*	36.9%	20%
Travel	30.7%	30%
Other online video sources used		
Netflix	**78.9%**	**50%**
Videos on Facebook	66%	26.9%
Videos on Twitter	39.1%	28.8%
Hulu	28.8%	17.3%
Videos on TV networks websites	28.1%	15.4%
Amazon Prime	20.9%	13.5%
Vimeo	15.8%	9.6%
iTunes	15.1%	5.8%
Others	9.6%	3.8%
Number of video types watched**	7.8	7.0
Median number of video services used**	4	1

Bold face indicates highest occurrence of use for the platform.
*statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$.
**statistically significant difference at $p < 0.01$.

YouTube but still use online video services are mostly using it to watch movies.

YouTube users use many more different video services than non-YouTube online video users. Our median YouTube user respondents used four online video services, but the median non-YouTube online video users use only one online video service. Because YouTube is typically one of the many video services of YouTube users, it has to compete for attention and time with the other services. It also indicates, probably, that YouTube users are more experienced and proficient online video users that select different online video services to serve their entertainment, information, and social needs.

Since YouTube is the elephant in the room and we want to know more about why its users are using it and what its users like and do not like about YouTube, we conducted interviews and we asked those who indicated that they are YouTube users to tell more about what they like and do not like about YouTube. One participant stated: "The most attractive are the variety of things you can watch from TV shows like old shows and syndicated programming. The least attractive features are that sometimes I am asked to pay for some of the shows I want to watch."

This participant states simply that the variety of videos was their favorite thing about YouTube but not surprisingly mentions the fact that sometimes viewers are requested to pay to watch certain things. Since YouTube is primarily a free service, being asked to pay for something is a feature that many viewers would likely agree is unattractive. Other participants mentioned the ease of access to entertainment. As one stated:

> I don't have cable so I use YouTube as my main source of entertainment. Also, a lot of people tape the half time shows and post them to YouTube and I enjoy watching them because I am a fan of marching bands. I enjoy reading the comments posted also. I don't always comment myself, unless it's a school or band that I feel very strongly about. To see what other people's opinions are and to see how they feel about the show or if their opinion is the same as mine.

This viewer mentions not only the entertainment aspect but also the interactivity of YouTube. Being able to read other viewers' comments and/or comment yourself brings the service to life. Viewers can participate and, as this person said, compare their opinions about the video with others who have watched it. The other side to this feature is the ability of unfiltered comments that can lead to negativity. As another viewer stated,

> The most attractive feature is the video suggestion box on the side of the screen that allows you to find similar videos of interest. The least attractive feature is that everybody is allowed to post comments and there is no option to delete or flag the mean comments (No comment control). [Now YouTube allows the channel creator to disable comments, but not other users.]

Another attractive feature for many participants of YouTube is the ease of access and variety of videos available to watch. Viewers can usually find anything they are looking for just by searching for it. As these viewers said, it is a very attractive feature of the service.

> The most attractive feature is the availability of YouTube video, I can always find what I want. The least attractive feature is that sometimes I just can't skip the ads.

> There is a lot to access, so you can basically find whatever you want. I mean there's everything from music videos to do it yourself project kind of things. But it's also the advertisements; they have to obviously keep the site running. So that's not very fun.

> The most attractive I would have to say is … the ability to watch pretty much whatever you want [on] the site; the least attractive is the commercials I would have to say.

> The most attractive feature is that you can follow different channels and not have to search every single time I want to watch something. The least attractive feature is the ads which are really annoying and also the buffering is really annoying.

Here the complaint is that there are advertisements to contend with. Being that YouTube is a free service, the ads are meant to sustain it but this comes as an irritation to viewers. The offset though is being able to watch anything you want and ease of access. The ability to subscribe to channels and follow channels also makes up for some of the downfall of ads.

Some viewers commented on the autoplay feature of YouTube where related videos will continue to play without the viewer needing to search for additional videos which means the viewer can just search for and play one video and can leave it playing.

Some viewers appreciated this feature while others found it to be an irritation. As one respondent stated:

> I like the autoplay thing that they started doing because I can sit there let it play things for me and I don't have to really do anything. I find it annoying that it has changed to be tailored to what I watch. I used to be just the popular videos on YouTube but now it suggest things for you which is annoying because I can't stumble on funny videos.

Another respondent who hated auto-play the most on YouTube commented:

> I hate the auto-play. I hate it so much…. Um, and I know a lot of my classmates in my film class share that opinion. What do I like the most? Um, I like when I can get videos in good quality from fans, and I like that there are so many fan compilations of songs from shows I like. Oh, and I wish there was a "delete comment" option. There's a "remove comment," but, like, I wish it could be not sent to the viewer.

Some participants commented on the design of the app and website and how it is organized. They appreciate the layout and also the related videos section where YouTube will list similar videos to what you are searching for.

The design is easy to use, making it very simple to find what you're looking for.

> The most attractive feature is the fact that YouTube has related videos to the video you're currently watching on the right hand column. The least attractive feature is that they have advertisement before videos.
>
> I would say, recommendation mechanicalness, that is when I'm watching a kind of videos and automatically they will be lot of related videos that recommended to me by YouTube, so that I can navigate it very easily.
>
> The most attractive feature is having so much access to so many media outlets. The least attractive would be the advertisements.

Another viewer stated:

> I think the least attractive feature is that you can't turn off your screen and still listen to the videos. You need to stay on the app. It is the worst feature, but I like [that] they have so many different videos. Not just one type of video. You can search anything. They have movies, music, funny videos, tutorials.

This viewer's complaint would be addressed by other services, such as YouTube Red which does allow viewers to keep their videos on play in the background versus having to stay in the app to watch the video. YouTube Red however is a paid service, so this feature is not available to everyone. Those looking for free entertainment still appreciate the variety of videos available.

The most attractive is a variety of media stuff in there.

> YouTube, um, this is attractive because you can find everything. Video clips from several countries, from conflict countries, um, you can discover a lot of things, there are some tutorial, piano, make-up, and YouTube allows you to know how to do certain things. YouTube allows you to discover new music, new movies, which came out. So this is very important, this is why I [watch] YouTube every day. The least attractive? The advertising, um, I am fed up with advertising, I am fed up with that, really. I just want to watch my videos, I don't want any advertising. And I hope YouTube really hear what I say. I hate advertising. Just delete it, we don't care.

Again, this viewer's main complaint is advertisements in YouTube, while still commenting positively on the selection of videos provided.

> I like there's a variety of things. It's easy to navigate from one area to another. The programing was great, so you can find people that are similar to the ones you watch. I used to find a lot of people that way.
>
> YouTube has a clean look content and is very easy to use. The least attractive feature is sometimes YouTube can't show the feed of YouTubers I subscribe. It can only show like four days of feed. I can't see feeds over it.

> The most attractive is their app. I use this app on my phone, frequently. So, just involving to search something? And then search suggestion. That's nice. Unattractive is any advertising. I don't like ads. I try to skip that as much as possible. So that is unattractive.

Nearly all participants valued the access to such a wide variety of content for free, save for those who were bothered by the advertisements. Undoubtedly there is a consensus that there is a good variety of videos and anything searched for will likely yield a positive result with many related videos. As our survey shows, YouTube users not just watch different types of content on YouTube, they also use other different online video services to fulfill their needs. YouTube and other online video services are playing an increasingly important role in the media diet of millennials and the population at large.

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Chapter 3

What Do Digital Natives Watch on YouTube?

Alyssa Fisher and Louisa Ha

For digital natives, YouTube is the go-to site for quick entertainment and learning. College students can be seen watching short videos throughout the day on the bus to campus, or in between classes as a way to pass time when just a few minutes are available. When they get home for the day, YouTube provides the music they need to focus on their homework, before they watch some old television shows on YouTube in their room before bed. This sketch is based upon survey and in-depth interviews conducted with college students. In the previous chapter, you learned about people who use or don't use YouTube. Now we turn our attention to those that are daily users of YouTube and those that are more casual users of YouTube, and the specific types of content that they watch when using YouTube. In this chapter, we examine the program genre viewership of YouTube, highlight the differences between heavy and light viewers and between YouTube channel subscribers and non-subscribers in their video viewing preference and frequency, and how likely they are to share videos or purchase a product based on viewing a video. We also analyze gender differences in video genre choices and relationships among the viewing of different types of video genres. At the end of the chapter, we discuss the ways that audiences use their digital literacy in watching YouTube.

"Digital native" is a term that is widely used to describe a category of users of digital technology that never knew a world where Internet wasn't a part of their lives or routines (Serazio 2015). Originally used to describe those from the millennial generation, "digital native" also now includes anyone born after the time it was first applied. For the purposes of our study, our respondents are considered digital natives and are, more specifically, undergraduate and graduate students, between 18 and 35 years old as of 2015 (or born in or before 1997). On average, our respondents were 20 years old.

Profiling these students allowed us the ability to gather data from what is currently the middle of two generations of digital natives—millennials are somewhat included in the graduate student population, but the beginning of Generation Z, or those born starting in the late 1990s, are profiled here in our undergraduate population. Our research participants grew up with social media in high school. YouTube itself, founded in 2005, has been around for most of their life. Profiling this important transition in generations allows us to see how YouTube can be a part of daily life for digital natives in many different ways.

YOUTUBE VIEWERSHIP BY CONTENT GENRES

In the interviews, respondents were able to answer with all kinds of videos that they watched and describe each type. In both situations, one aspect of use regarding YouTube stands out: YouTube is a site of diverse use, or one site being used for many different purposes. One interviewee, a freshman in college who is a female, described this as the most attractive feature of YouTube, saying “there’s everything from music videos to do it yourself project kind of things.” From virtual tutors to entertainment, the many different types of content on YouTube allow digital natives to treat the website as a one-stop site for anything they want to learn, hear, or watch.

When the interviewees were asked to describe their viewing history, the top five types of videos described were: old TV shows, music or music videos, class-related content, how-to videos, and so-called “funny” videos. We also asked participants to share with us a typical video that they would watch and/or had recently watched. These examples included sports highlight clips, music videos, a marching band video, comedic situational videos, and TV show clips. Often, respondents stated that they had watched the example video dozens of times, whether to study the video, share it with friends, or just because they like it. For many, YouTube is a repository of favorite things to watch, much like a collection of DVDs, CDs, tapes, and so on have been in the past few decades. Social media functions like saving to a playlist, subscribing to a channel, liking, and commenting all allow digital natives to interact with the media in ways they are used to, and recall favorite videos quickly via playlists and history queues. Of the top five categories named in our interviews, old TV shows and music or music videos are content that could be found in other traditional media. However, it is the ability to find all five categories in one place on demand that makes YouTube a part of the heavy viewer’s daily routine.

We also asked students for their overall reason for watching YouTube. Entertainment was stated as the primary reason for watching videos, often in place of broadcast television, as one male interviewee stated, “I don’t have cable so I use YouTube as my main source of entertainment.” A second reason for watching videos was education, usually exemplified by the “how-to” genre of videos, several interviewees said similar statements to this one from a female freshman in college: “Like I don’t know how to set this up so, I need to know to hook my TV up or something.” Often, though, students would state more than one reason for using YouTube, emphasizing that YouTube contains any kind of video they might need, as one 22-year-old female participant said, “I would say for me personally is for mostly entertainment purposes unless I need to learn how to do something like fixing my phone or something like that.”

When it comes to what digital natives watch on YouTube, in-depth interviews showed that old television shows and music were the top reasons for watching YouTube. A male student participant said, “I watch a lot of reality shows on YouTube. It is also my main source of entertainment. ... The last show I watched was *Being Mary Jane*, a TV show on BET.” Other top reasons included watching videos about content covered in classes, music videos, how-to videos, and funny videos. They also watch shows related to their work. A 21-year-old female participant who is a senior in college said, “I usually watch a lot of music-related videos because I have a radio show so I try to keep up with the latest music and the most recent video watched were music videos of various artists.”

The most popular categories of YouTube videos are professional content. In our survey, 83.7% of respondents stated that they watch previously aired television shows at least several times a week. And in the interviews, types of shows that were mentioned included shows that are currently running such as clips from the talk show *Ellen*, as well as shows that are no longer on cable, such as old clips from MTV. This is backed up by executives at YouTube, who state that “the consumption of TV content continues to grow on our platform as more networks upload clips from their shows ... it’s not just late-night hosts who are finding new audiences on YouTube; daytime stars such as Ellen DeGeneres and Wendy Williams do the same, as do reality competitions such as *The Voice* and *America’s Got Talent*. You can even watch daily segments of SportsCenter on YouTube” (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017, 243). Information on the most viewed YouTube channels is included in chapter 11.

Television viewing is a market that YouTube is now participating in, with the limited but continually expanding offering of YouTube TV, which provides local and basic cable channels streaming live on the channel. Kyncl and Peyvan (2017) also state that “it’s not that people weren’t interested in the shows on broadcast and cable; it’s that they couldn’t view them the way they’d grown accustomed to watching everything else: on demand and on their phones. By working with networks to offer their content in an app that works as well on their phones as YouTube does, we believe we can give the so-called cord-cutters and cord-nevers—Millennials who either have cut their cable or never subscribed in the first place—an experience they'd be willing to pay for" (p. 244). This acknowledgment that digital natives may have never had cable in their own right and don't view it as the best, only, or easiest way to consume television content explains why television shows may be the most popular category among digital natives on YouTube. However, it should be noted that during the survey period, YouTube TV was not yet available.

While previously aired TV programs occupy the second most popular spot from the survey, when the interviewees were asked during in-depth interviews about their watching habits, music and music videos were easily the most popular answer when it comes to what digital natives are watching on YouTube. YouTube is such a popular method for consuming music that YouTube plays are now incorporated into the Billboard music chart calculations, YouTube pays out over a billion dollars a year to artists, and a Nielsen poll also found that most teenagers use YouTube to discover new music (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017). This is probably the reason why YouTube Red, the premium subscription service of YouTube, offers the ability to continue to play videos when the app is in the background of your phone as a feature (for more on YouTube Red, see chapter 12).

Cayari (2011) discusses the ways that YouTube creates a unique use case for listening to music. Using a case study of emerging YouTube personality and musician Wade Johnson, Cayari discusses the unique and sometimes flexible ways in which audiences are found to use YouTube, and how that might be influencing experiences of music in what is called a "postperformance world" (p. 4). "Postperformance" refers to the continued proliferation of the use of technology to listen to music as compared to the amount of time spent listening to music during a live performance. YouTube continues this trend as users listen to music in different ways on YouTube and adds in the manipulability of music. A viewer searching for a specific song by title might end up listening to several different cover versions of the desired song formatted as a live recording at a concert, a performance done for YouTube in someone's home, an imageless mashup track, or a medley of songs including the one song the user was attempting to find. Interviewees acknowledged that even when using YouTube for listening to music, they are conscious that they are still technically watching a video and offered that music and music videos are often watched in the background. One undergraduate female participant stated, "Actually usually I'm not 'watching' them, I like music when I'm working, so I just play them as the background." In this sense, YouTube's video-only platform is subverted as it is not just for watching videos but also listening to music.

HEAVY VIEWERS VERSUS LIGHT VIEWERS

Our research study categorized YouTube audiences into two groups based on their viewing frequency from those that identified that they use YouTube (n = 525): heavy viewers and light viewers. Seven intervals of frequency of watching were given, including daily (1), several times a week, several times a month, about once a month, less than once a year, and never (7). A heavy viewer of YouTube is one who uses the site to watch videos daily. A light viewer is one who does not watch YouTube videos daily but on an ad hoc basis. Based on the frequency of viewing on YouTube, we found that 47% of our YouTube audience respondents were heavy viewers who watched YouTube daily, and 53% were light or ad hoc viewers who did not watch it daily.

As shown in Table 3.1, heavy YouTube viewers are characterized by their high viewership of music videos, movies, and news. They also view certain genres, such as DIY videos, documentaries, product demonstration, and travel videos, more frequently than light viewers. Viewing categories where there was not much of a difference between heavy and light viewers included recordings of broadcast television shows and home videos.

Among all genres, music video viewing frequency differs most sharply between heavy viewers and light viewers of YouTube. Hence we can see the importance of music videos to YouTube not just in terms of popularity among overall YouTube users, but also a distinguishing program genre cultivating loyalty to YouTube. The genre of product demonstration videos has the second largest difference between heavy and light YouTube viewers. So music videos and product demonstrations are key to YouTube core users.

Table 3.1 Comparison of Heavy and Light Viewers' Most Watched of Online Video Genres

Types of Video	*Heavy Viewer*	*Std. Deviation*	*Light Viewer*	*Std. Deviation*
1. Music Video*	2.43	1.512	3.11	1.463
2. Previously Aired TV Shows	2.65	1.762	2.81	1.633
3. Movies*	2.85	1.623	3.25	1.566
4. News*	3.43	1.969	3.77	1.857
5. DIY Videos*	4.00	1.919	4.35	1.677
6. Documentaries*	4.31	1.756	4.66	1.645
7. Home Videos Featuring Pets/Children	4.43	2.144	4.42	2.016
8. Product Demonstration*	4.76	1.898	5.31	1.677
9. Travel	5.12	1.786	5.46	1.627

(1 = Daily, 4 = About Once a Month, 7 = Never).
*difference statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

While we use heavy and light viewers to categorize users on YouTube, gender is also often studied, whether from a creator's perspective or how gender influences interaction. Molyneaux et al. (2008) studied gender differences on the site with regard to both YouTube creators and audience members, while Szostak (2014) focused on discussions of the need for increased female representation in YouTube videos, and potential implications of that. Both of these articles discuss that a more equal use of YouTube is required to create a more open public discussion forum within YouTube. Our survey, as related to gendered use of YouTube, found that a significantly higher percentage of males (62%) are heavy viewers than females (41%). This correlates to Molyneaux et al.'s (2008) earlier findings that women are less likely to visit YouTube daily, or post comments on videos, although they still remain a part of the YouTube community. But our study results show that women's use of YouTube is much higher than Molyneaux et al.'s study 10 years ago, showing that women have increased their interest in YouTube.

The participants in our survey found significant differences in video consumption and preference between males and females, similar to the gender preference in legacy media, hence reaffirming results of a previous national study of college students on video preference by Ha et al. (2012). In most popular genre categories such as music videos, TV programs previously aired, or movies, as well as videos recommended by YouTube, there is no significant difference between males and females. However, in other specific genres, the gender difference is significant. For example, on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is never, 3 is once in several months, and 7 is daily, female respondents have significantly higher viewership of do-it-yourself/how-to videos (mean = 3.86) than male respondents (mean = 3.39). They also have significantly higher viewership of home videos about pets and children (mean = 3.86) than male participants (mean = 2.83). In contrast, males have significantly higher viewership of product demonstration videos (mean = 3.10) than females (mean = 2.77). They also have higher average viewership of news (mean = 4.73 vs. 4.14) and documentaries (mean = 3.76 vs. 3.30) than female respondents.

The use of selection cues by users was previously discussed by Yue (2008), as it relates to activities performed while searching on YouTube. These so-called pre-viewing activities ranged from using a search engine like Google to find videos, to asking friends for video recommendations, or using the YouTube homepage as a recommendation generator. These activities were found to be correlated to a search for information, specific content that is not available elsewhere, social interaction, or companionship on YouTube. Table 3.2 shows selection cues and the importance for each type of viewer from our survey. For heavy viewers, recommendations by YouTube were ranked most highly, while that was the lowest ranking for light viewers.

Table 3.2 Comparison of Heavy and Light Viewers' Selection of a YouTube Video with a Featured Product

Selection Cues	*Heavy Viewer*	*Std. Deviation*	*Light Viewer*	*Std. Deviation*
1. Recommended by YouTube*	2.70	1.909	3.93	1.912
2. Familiarity with the YouTuber*	2.74	1.289	3.27	1.199
3. Recency of the Video*	2.75	1.228	3.29	1.140
4. Number of Views*	3.12	1.325	3.41	1.214
5. Number of Likes*	3.25	1.359	3.61	1.212
6. User Comments	3.55	1.351	3.81	1.218
7. Number of Subscribers*	3.62	1.247	3.25	1.359

(Scale: 1 = Extremely Important, 3 = Neither Important or Unimportant, 5 = Not Important at All).
*significant difference at $p < 0.01$.

They are also more likely to pay attention to cues such as number of views, likes, comments, or recognition of the content creator than light viewers. The most important cues when selecting a product review video to watch from among other featured or product-related videos are familiarity with the YouTuber and recency of the video. This is also true for light viewers, but across the board, importance in information cues was low for light viewers. This indicates that the more that viewers watch YouTube, the more they create a type of literacy in finding and selecting videos to watch, utilizing both mechanisms that YouTube has created, such as recommendations based on viewing history, as well as cues that they favor using social-media-like indicators available such as likes and comments. Heavy viewers also mentioned in our in-depth interviews that the recommended feature was one of the most attractive aspects of YouTube. One female graduate student said, "When I am watching a kind of videos and automatically there will be a lot of related videos that recommend to me by YouTube, so that I can navigate it very easily."

PREFERENCE OF GENRES AND RELATIONSHIP OF GENRES

Lastly, we explore the correlation between different genres for audiences to find out which genres are likely to be watched among the same users. Movies and previously aired television shows were highly correlated ($r = .52$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore those who watch movies on YouTube are also likely to watch TV shows on YouTube. There were moderate correlations between product review videos and do-it-yourself videos ($r = .428$, $p < 0.01$), documentaries and news videos (r = .486, p < 0.01), and documentaries and travel videos (r = .430, p < 0.01). This indicates that among genre choices, those that watch previously aired television shows are also likely to watch movies on YouTube, and vice-versa, and the same holds true for those that use YouTube for DIY videos: they are more likely to watch product review videos. These correlations can indicate the different gratifications sought by audiences on YouTube: watching both movies and television shows indicates a use of YouTube for entertainment functions either for first time watching or repeated watching, and align with more traditional legacy media such as TV and movies because they are spending time on YouTube for content that can be found elsewhere previously or initially. Linking documentary videos with news and/or travel videos may be a closer genre style as well: documentaries often center around current events or show exotic locations. So those people who watch documentary, news, and travel videos are using YouTube more for information and environment surveillance. A strong correlation between DIY and product review videos may be evidence of a user who tries to use YouTube for learning and comparison function. The user may be tech savvy or budget conscious, and one who carefully evaluates, purchases, or attempts to judge whether they can create something themselves before purchasing. Or, perhaps, these audiences merely enjoy watching people put things together. For more information on how YouTube users use product review videos, please read chapter 5.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL SUBSCRIBERS VERSUS NON-SUBSCRIBERS

Among all YouTube users, only 69% subscribe to any YouTube channel. That means 31% of users do not subscribe to any channels and select channels to watch as needed or follow other algorithms such as YouTube's recommended videos. A larger majority of channel subscribers (35%) subscribe to only 1 to 5 channels, followed by 6 to 10 channels (20%), 11 to 20 (16%), 29% subscribes to more than 25 channels.

Heavy viewers subscribe to more YouTube channels (6 to 10 channels on average) than light viewers (1 to 5 channels). Heavy viewers are more open to recommendations by YouTube (as shown in Table 3.3). We also found that subscribers' diversity viewing score calculated as the type of videos watched multiplied by the viewing frequency of each type (mean = 39) is higher than non-subscribers (mean = 32.9). This indicates a watching pattern of moving from video to video during a YouTube viewing session, rather than moving through videos in more of a timeline fashion and only watching new videos from creators that they subscribe to. This also reveals that a daily user of the

Table 3.3 Genre Differences between YouTube Channel Subscribers and Non-Subscribers

Types of Video	*Non-Subscriber*	*SD*	*Subscriber*	*SD*
1. Music Video	5.05	1.66	5.27	1.46
2. Previously Aired TV Shows	5.02	1.78	5.34	1.65
3. Movies*	4.72	1.68	5.01	1.57
4. News	4.07	1.98	4.52	1.87
5. DIY Videos	3.43	1.81	3.97	1.78
6. Documentaries*	3.26	1.88	3.60	1.61
7. Home Videos Featuring Pets/ Children	3.43	2.09	3.63	2.08
8. Product Demonstration	2.38	1.66	3.20	1.8
9. Travel	2.55	1.70	2.76	1.73
10. Videos/Channels Recommended by YouTube*	3.76	2.13	5.05	1.81

(Scale: 7 = Daily, 4 = About Once a Month, 1 = Never).
*significant difference at $p < 0.05$.

site, where YouTube is integrated into their daily routines, is more likely to visit the site in search of something to watch, rather than being directed there from a specific source that they are subscribed to.

While the two types of YouTubers subscribe to a similar number of channels, the percentage of users within each category that use the subscription feature is significant. As many as 78.6% of heavy viewers subscribe to YouTube channels, while 60.7% of light viewers subscribe to YouTube channels. So, heavy YouTube users are more likely to subscribe to channels than light users. Because channel subscription is an important part in gaining popularity for videos on YouTube, as well as a sign of loyalty and community participation, we examine more the difference in viewing habits between subscribers and non-subscribers. Susarla, Oh, and Tan (2012) explored subscribers as part of a three-part diffusion network for videos which include networks of friends, connections within the genre group, and subscribers to the channel. Subscribers see new videos from their subscribed channels on their homepage and may receive notifications via email or push notifications from the YouTube app that a new video has been uploaded. Through an analysis of the three types of networks, subscribers were found to be essential to the initial popularity of the video as they are typically the first to view, comment, like, and potentially set the video up to be highlighted in search results or trending lists as they interact with the video.

Echoing Susarla et al. (2012) and their claim that subscribers are important to the genre group and initial popularity of a video, our survey found that overall subscribers stated they watched each genre in general more than non-subscribers, as can be seen in Table 3.3. Three categories held significant difference between these two types of users including movies, documentaries, and videos recommended by YouTube. In all three genres, subscribers were more likely to frequently watch these categories when compared to the same genre among non-subscribers. The largest difference was found when it came to watching videos or channels that were recommended by YouTube, where subscribers stated on average that they watch within that genre several times a month (mean = 5.05) while non-subscribers averaged about once a month (mean = 3.76). For the most part, subscribers and non-subscribers watch most genres similarly as often, especially music videos and previously aired TV shows. YouTube channel subscribers watch movies and documentaries significantly more often than non-channel subscribers.

HOW DIGITAL NATIVES USE THEIR DIGITAL LITERACY ON YOUTUBE

Previous books about YouTube users, such as Patricia Lange's (2014) *Kids on YouTube* and Michael Strangelove's (2010) *Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos by Ordinary People* focus on young creators on the website. Targeting the ways in which young people learn the tools for contributing videos to YouTube through an ethnographic study, Lange applies concepts of literacy and cultural opportunity when distinguishing how certain kids are able and interested in becoming creators. Although the participants in Lange's study largely identified as self-taught, many had embedded levels of support to begin creating videos, such as the ability to use self-directed tutorials and other resources, often found online. These online resources require a certain level of digital literacy to begin using, and the children also often received cultural and interpersonal encouragement and validation in their environments with regard to learning the skills required to create a YouTube channel and the content to populate it. Emotional and technological support gave the subjects of Lange's ethnography a barrier-free ability to become creators on YouTube, the freedom of which was often discounted or ignored as being helpful to the interviewees themselves.

Strangelove (2010) also focuses on the ways in which young creators develop their production skills and argues that the amateur nature of the YouTuber helps distinguish and endear them to audiences. The challenge of YouTube and its amateur video content bring new meaning to what it is to be a content creator, and "amateur video production may also bring in its wake new ways of thinking about the political implications of mass creativity that have not been wholly incorporated into market institutions" (Strangelove 2010, p. 176).

These digital literacies are also used when digital natives watch YouTube. As Lange discusses that creators find the tools to learn video creation online, so do digital natives turn to YouTube for quick tutorials on any topic, whether it's brushing up on a concept from class or learning how to do projects around their apartments. Lange states that learning in this way as "a process is ongoing and ever changing, and requires concentrated attentiveness on the part of all media makers and viewers to ensure sensitivity to mediated participants and creators. The phenomenology of the mediated moment may assume different tones; a playful moment of video creation could reveal subsequent problems that are revealed in the mediated moments of viewership. ... Digital literacies are negotiated in an ongoing way between creators and viewers, whose opinions may change over time" (Lange 2014, 230). In this way, digital literacy is continually determined by both creator and audience as content and views are negotiated. This literacy extends beyond using YouTube as a learning tool and also applies to entertainment views, as the choice of viewing is navigated through cues such as likes, comments on the quality of video production and streaming, length of the video, and already accrued views.

The success of YouTube as a media consumption platform also means that celebrities are created on YouTube. Global surveys point to digital natives ranking content creators on YouTube alongside movie and music stars such as Leonardo DiCaprio and Taylor Swift in popularity (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017). YouTube's development as a source of fame has led to brands seeking to attract digital natives to create online content, including the NBA and NFL, who post archival footage online, and stimulate professional TV networks and studios that post episodes or clips on the platform, such as talk shows like *Ellen* or *Jimmy Fallon*, and variety shows like *Saturday Night Live* (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017). The importance of discovering what types of content are most important and popular with digital natives, the way that they choose their content, and viewing and reviewing habits, as we have discussed here, sheds light on the ways that content creators and digital natives negotiate their digital literacies and the future of YouTube content. These literacies continue to shape each other in a cyclical way as feedback loops encourage channels to produce more content that remains popular.

In this chapter, we revealed that heavy viewers use the site daily and develop their digital literacies through the importance they place on using selection cues, while light users find selection cues to be less important. Heavy users and YouTube channel subscribers are more responsive to videos recommended by YouTube. These cues and overall selection criteria indicate a language and process of digital literacy for the user that matches the digital literacy utilized by creators as previously outlined by Patricia Lange.

Light users, on the other hand, range from using YouTube rarely to several times a week, and are overall less likely to enjoy exploring videos on YouTube. This could be because they only come to YouTube to watch videos linked to them via social media or a notification from YouTube from a subscription, or potentially because these users spend less time on the site and are less familiar with the digital literacy practiced by heavy users. They may not know the diverse content that YouTube offers and lack the literacy needed to fully hunt the treasure on YouTube. Some people still think YouTube only has pet videos or amateur content. In the next chapter, we explain how digital natives watch their YouTube videos in various settings and viewing devices. Throughout the rest of the book, we will focus on ways that digital natives respond to specific content types of YouTube, including product review videos (chapter 5), commenting habits (chapter 6), brand videos of marketers (chapter 8), sponsored videos (chapter 9), and advertising (chapter 10).

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Chapter 4

How Digital Natives Watch Online Videos

Digital Divide and Media Devices

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DIGITAL DIVIDE AND ONLINE VIDEO CONSUMPTION

Online video consumption relies on the availability of broadband Internet service. However, even in an affluent country such as the United States, home broadband access is not ubiquitous. According to Pew Research Center's national study on U.S. households, the digital lives of low- and high-income Americans remain highly divided: 30% of adults with household incomes below $30,000 a year don't own a smartphone, and about half of them also don't have home broadband services or a traditional computer. Tablet ownership is low among lower-income Americans. But among those earning $100,000 a year, almost everyone owns all these devices. Two-thirds of adults living in high-earning households have home broadband services, a smartphone, a desktop, or laptop computer *and* a tablet, compared with 17% of those living in low-income households. With multiple Internet device ownership and almost ubiquitous broadband access, higher-income Americans can go online any time. So rich Americans can choose which device they want to watch online videos and access the Internet on. But poor Americans have to rely on Wi-Fi provided in other places and use expensive cellular data plans on their phones. Indeed, in 2016, 20% of adults living in households earning less than $30,000 a year were "smartphone-only" Internet users—meaning they owned a smartphone but did not have broadband Internet at home. This represents an increase from 12% in 2013 (Anderson 2017).

The college student millennials in our study, although benefitting from the almost ubiquitous Wi-Fi Internet access on campus, when left to their homes or apartments outside campus, those who don't have home broadband are as handicapped as the other Americans in the general population. Hence in studying their online video consumption, we need to understand their Internet access availability outside of campus, their mobile and digital device ownership, and the settings and times in which they watch YouTube videos in order to understand the role YouTube play in their daily lives. This chapter will present the results of the online survey of students which contains specific questions on their Internet access. We need to warn readers that this is a better case scenario as all respondents were able to answer the survey online, which means their Internet access is not in the worst group. In our in-depth interviews, we will show a few examples of how students who don't own multiple devices, who belong to the "smartphone-Internet only" group, use online videos.

Research on digital divide between the rich and the poor has been carried out for decades and has led to many government initiatives to provide low cost Internet access (see Norris 2001; Massimo & Muschert 2013). Income disparity between the rich and the poor has only been accelerated over the years and such disparity translates to Internet access disparity. People are separated into the "haves" and the "have nots": the first level of digital divide is about Internet access; the second level of digital divide is the gap in the proficiency in using Internet technology, causing a participation divide (Hargittai & Walejko 2008; Van Deursen & Van Dijk 2011). As Lange's (2014) study of 40 young YouTube creators including children and young adults in California showed, not all young people are technology savvy. There are many inequities in their production and Internet skills. Many learned technologies, especially online video production and editing, by themselves. Ha and Yun (2014) noted the difference in both content and production resources in producing user-generated content on YouTube and other social media. These two types of resources influence the frequency of producing content. Interestingly, they also found that those who actively produce do not consume more time than those who are passive.

Hence the first step we seek to examine is how much digital divide exists among the students in our sample and how such divide influenced their online video consumption behavior. As income is a factor on device ownership and home broadband access, we first examine our student sample's monthly income, including allowance, stipend, scholarship, and salary range from under \$500 (42.9%), \$500 to \$1,000 (29%), \$1,000 to \$1,500 (14.1%), \$1,500 to \$2,000 (7.5%) \$2,000 to \$3,000 (1.8%), and over \$3,000 (4.8%). Most of them belong to the low-income group under \$1,000 (72%). We then examined their YouTube device ownership. We identified six common types of video viewing devices: smartphones, tablets, laptops/notebook computers, videogame consoles such as Xbox or Wii, SmartTV, and digital TV using over-the-top (OTT) boxes such as Apple TV and Roku. As shown in Figure 4.1, smartphone is the device every respondent owned, and almost everyone owned a laptop. Tablets and video game consoles are owned by slightly more than half of the respondents. About 40% owned either smart TV or digital TVs respectively. As we can see later, such ownership affects how they watch YouTube.

An analysis of the sample shows most students have a low personal monthly income including allowance, stipend, scholarship, salary, and from other sources. We did not ask their household income because many students do not know their family finances. Despite the low monthly income, smartphones and laptops are almost equally commonly owned by respondents as they are essential communication and working tools for college students. Other than these two devices, video game consoles and tablets ownership varies. Hence some people are limited by what they have to use to watch YouTube. Despite the respondents all reporting that they have a smartphone, as our in-depth interview reveals, one female student said "(My Samsung 15" laptop) is the only device I have. I don't have a smartphone or iPad."

Only our e-mail online survey specifically addressed the Internet access issue with questions on respondents' Internet access. The sample size is smaller: 316 respondents instead of the full sample size of 647. We understand the result might overestimate their Internet availability because those who really have limited and no Internet access are unlikely to answer the survey online.

Even with this Internet-favored sample, it still shows the digital divide in terms of Internet access: 16% only or primarily use smartphone for Internet access, 28% only or primarily use laptops for Internet access, and 56% equal

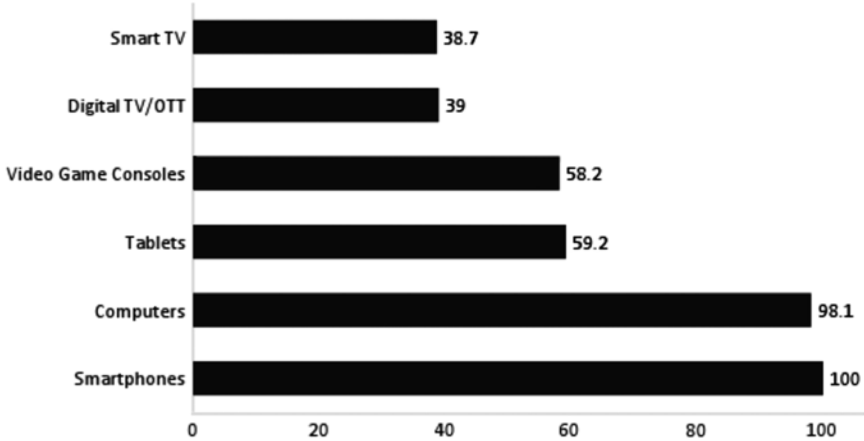

Figure 4.1 Online Video Viewing Device Ownership (% of Respondents).

use of smartphones and laptops for Internet access. About a quarter of them have limited access to Internet other than cell phones—the access by smartphone only, which is higher than national average reported by Pew. Only 24% have unlimited data plan. So using phone data to view videos will be costly to most of the students unless they watch the videos on campus using campus Wi-Fi. In our in-depth interview, a white female Ph.D. student in American culture studies said, “I watch it when I am on the (school) bus, when I am in a waiting line at food places, or when I am between classes. Usually where have Wi-Fi because I don’t have Wi-Fi at home.” In addition, we also see high dependency on their phones as 57% often use cell phone for school-related works.

Gender, Race, and Income Disparity in Internet Access

We compared the gender, race, and income disparity in Internet access. These three factors did influence the Internet access. Despite almost equal ownership of computers and smartphones, females are more likely to only have smartphone for Internet access (18% female vs. 14% male). Males are more likely to use laptops for Internet access (36% males vs. 22% females). Hispanics are most likely to *only* use smartphone for Internet access (20%) while blacks are much more likely to use *primarily* smartphone for Internet access (20%). Hence these two races are more disadvantaged in Internet access. Asians are much more likely to use computers only (64%) or equally use computer and smartphones for Internet access (36%). Whites are more likely to use computer and smartphone equally for Internet access (57%). These differences are all statistically significant.

Our study evidently shows that income affects Internet access options: low-income students are much likely to depend on smartphone for Internet access. As many as 45% of respondents with monthly income less than $500 selected the statement: “Other than my cell phone, I have a limited number of ways to get online,” which best described their Internet access. In contrast, only 3% to 4% of respondents whose income over $1,500 state so. Hence even in a university setting, the digital divide still exists and may explain why some students do not use online videos that often.

Next, we examine the impact of Internet access divide on online video usage. We found a statistically significant difference between those with only smartphone Internet access ($n = 77$) and those who have no limitations ($n = 229$) ($t = 1.92$, $p = 0.05$), Those who do not solely rely on smartphone Internet watch YouTube videos more frequently (mean = 6.42) than those who have smartphone Internet only (mean = 6.19). However, we can see still high interest and frequency in watching YouTube videos for both groups.

Number of Devices Used and YouTube Video Production and Consumption

As Ha and Yun's (2014) study of people's prosumption behavior reveals the importance of resources in affecting production proclivity, we also examine the number of devices used by different types of online video audiences in our survey. Indeed, those who create videos on YouTube use more devices (mean = 3.8) than non-YouTube video creators (mean = 3.0) to watch YouTube. Video sharers use more devices (mean = 3.3) than those who those did not share YouTube videos (mean = 2.7). YouTube app owners are more likely to own more device (mean = 3.3) than non-YouTube app owners (mean = 2.9). Male users are also more likely to use more devices (mean = 3.3) than female users (mean = 3.1) to watch YouTube videos.

HOW VIEWING SETTINGS AND DEVICE USAGE AFFECT VIDEO WATCHING

Another factor we examined is the viewing setting's effect on video watching. We asked respondents their frequency of watching YouTube videos in five settings: 1) at home, 2) at work place or class time, 3) on the go/commuting, 4) in the waiting line, and 5) in between classes on campus in a seven-point scale from daily, 2 to 3 times a week, once a week, once a month, less than once a month or never. We found home viewing is the most conducive to frequency of watching the videos: the higher the frequency of YouTube viewing at home, the higher was the frequency of watching YouTube videos across different genres, such as professionally made entertainment videos including music videos and TV programs (beta = 0.37, $p < 0.01$), as well as user-generated videos (beta = 0.31, $p < 0.01$) and news videos (beta = 0.32, $p < 0.01$).

Because smartphones are carried around by the users all the time, where do the heavy smartphone users use their phones daily to watch YouTube videos? Educators may be alarmed that almost half (42%) reported watching videos daily at workplace or class time. Some classes do use YouTube videos as class materials but the frequency of such usage is not as high as every day. So such a high rate means that they use YouTube in class or work to kill boredom or obtain distraction. The next most popular setting where smartphones are being used daily is tied between on-the-go usage and usage during commuting and waiting in lines. As much as 35% of these heavy smartphone users watch videos daily there. Only 18% of them watch videos between classes. Most remarkably, very rarely these heavy smartphone users watch the videos daily at home. Only 1.9% of these heavy smartphone users reported watching videos daily at home. They watch videos on their smartphones less regularly at home than in other settings.

Viewing Device Use and Frequency

Among all devices, smartphones are the most common devices used to watch online videos. All respondents who watch online videos reported using their smartphone to watch the videos. Computers are a close second with 83.3% respondents using it to watch online videos. Much fewer people (41.5%) use tablets or iPads to watch online videos. But this is primarily due to ownership and not a choice as only 59% of respondents own a tablet. Even less commonly used is the video game console as only 32% watch videos with it. Very few students use OTT receiver boxes such as Roku (22.5%) and SmartTV (18.6%) to watch online videos.

In addition to being the most commonly used device to view online videos, smartphones also facilitates the most in viewing frequency of online videos. Those who watch online videos on smartphone on average watch them several times a week (mean = 4.3). Those who watch online videos on computer on average also watch them several times a week (mean = 4.2). Those who use tablets watch videos several times a month. However, those who watch videos on TV screens (including those who use video game consoles, Smart TV or digital TV) are the ones who least frequently watch videos. They watch videos less than once a month on average.

Even more interestingly, we discovered along with higher frequency of viewing of YouTube videos on smartphones is higher diversity of video genres viewership (beta = .43, $p < 0.01$). Mobile devices are often used to fill interstitial time while on the go and waiting in lines (Dimmick, Feaster & Hoplamazian 2011). When people uses videos to fill the interstitial time, their selectivity may be low and they may be more willing to try video links suggested by their friends, different genres of content automatically played on or recommended by YouTube, or just quickly search for information or instruction on video to accomplish a quick task.

Importance of Video Game Console as Viewing Device

Despite our finding that the video game console is not a very commonly used device to watch online videos, it serves as a low frequency but high impact device in the viewing of YouTube videos. Users play games, watch, share, and create videos (especially gaming videos) on their video game consoles on television's big screen. YouTube viewing experience and integrated viewing experience on a video game console facilitate viewers to learn, play, and demonstrate game playing seamlessly. This explains the high popularity of gaming videos on YouTube: top 100 channels all have more than three million subscribers (see chapter 11 for more details on gaming channels on YouTube).

We then further examine how heavy viewers who watch online videos daily use different devices. Laptops and smartphones are most frequently used by heavy viewers and light viewers. But frequency of watching videos on laptops is highest (mean = daily 4.6), closely followed by smartphones (mean = daily 4.5). The gap is highest between heavy viewers and light viewers in laptops (mean = 4.6 vs. mean = 3.9 several times a week). Video game consoles show modest difference (mean = 2.7 vs. mean = 2.4 several times a month).

Is Setting or Device More Important in YouTube Video Watching, Creation, and Sharing?

We then compare whether viewing setting or the device used to watch YouTube affects more the audience's YouTube behavior. We found that the setting where audiences watch YouTube videos affects their video watching, creation, and sharing frequency more than the devices they use to watch the videos. First, the explanatory power of the variation in the video *watching* frequency by *setting* is as high as 63%, but the explanatory power by *device* is only 12%. Second, the explanatory power video sharing frequency by settings (33%) is much larger than by device (12%). Third, the explanatory power of setting on the variation of video creation frequency by settings (17%) is also much higher than by device (8%).

Specifically, we found that those who frequently watch YouTube videos at home are much stronger predictors of YouTube video watching frequency (beta = 0.76, $p < 0.001$) than those watching it on the go (beta = 0.06, $p < 0.01$). The leisure and more free time available at home make it more likely for the audiences to watch YouTube regularly and frequently. This applies to different devices. As our in-depth interview shows, many respondents who watch YouTube at home use smartphones as well.

In contrast, watching videos frequently on the go is much likely to lead to more frequently sharing the YouTube video (beta = .38, $p < 0.01$) than watching the videos at home (beta = .23, $p < 0.01$). During the short commute time, student audiences are more likely interested in communicating with friends. Sharing videos is one way to communicate instantly with friends.

Frequency of watching videos in all settings is a positive predictor of video creation frequency. Both frequency of watching videos at home (beta = .23, $p < 0.01$) and frequency of watching videos on the go (beta = .22, $p < 0.01$) are the most significant predictors of video creation frequency.

Figure 4.2 shows the effect of different devices on watching, sharing, and creating videos. Watching videos on laptops are more likely to lead to higher

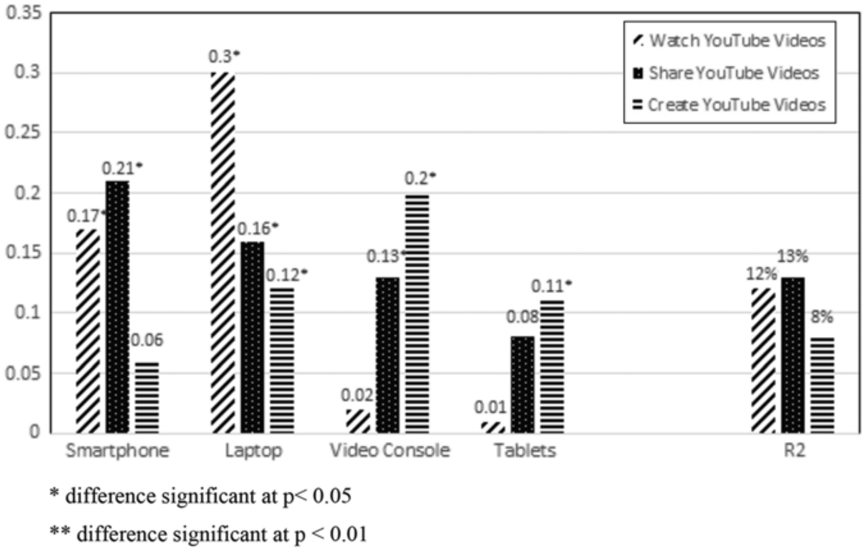

Figure 4.2 Drivers of YouTube Audience Behavior by Viewing Device.

frequency of watching YouTube videos (0.30, $p < 0.01$) than smartphones (0.17, $p < 0.01$), although both devices are facilitators of watching frequency. As shown in Figure 4.1, smartphone video watching frequency leads to high frequency of sharing the videos (beta = 0.21, $p < 0.01$) because of the ease to share videos on social media apps of the phones. However, sharing behavior is not limited to smartphones. Those who watch videos frequently on laptops and video game consoles are also those that share those videos. The most important discovery we found in the survey is that online video viewing frequency on video game consoles watching is the strongest predictor of video creation frequency (beta = 0.20, $p < 0.01$). This means that those who create videos frequently on YouTube are likely to be video game players that watch videos on their game consoles. Laptops (beta = .12, $p < 0.01$) and tablets (beta = .11, $p < 0.01$) viewing frequency are positive but weaker predictors of YouTube video creation frequency. But smartphone online video viewing frequency is not a significant predictor of YouTube video creation. Smartphone is mainly used for viewing and sharing videos, not for posting videos on YouTube.

Similarly smartphone as a device used on the go is also more likely to facilitate audiences to share videos more frequently on social media (beta = .21, $p < 0.01$). But the difference is not very high between those who watch videos on laptops frequently (beta = .16, $p < 0.01$) and those who watch videos on video game consoles frequently (beta = 0.13, $p < 0.01$).

Does Ways of Commuting to Campus Affect Viewers' Use of Smartphones?

In our survey, we compared the way they commute to campus from their residence to see if it affects their use of smartphones in watching the videos. Although those who took campus shuttles or apartment shuttles watch online videos on their smartphones slightly more frequently (mean = 1.59) than those who drove to campus (mean = 1.72) or walk to campus (mean = 1.7) or bike to campus (mean = 2.22) where 1 is daily and 2 is several times a week, the differences are not statistically significant.

The heavy out-of-home use of YouTube videos by smartphone users indeed affects their activities on YouTube. We identified heavy smartphone online videos users as those who watch online videos daily on their smartphones (47% of our respondents). They exhibit significantly higher activities on YouTube than the non-heavy smartphone online video users. As shown in Table 4.1, heavy smartphone online video viewers watch, participate, create, and share YouTube videos more frequently than light smartphone online video users (1 is never, 7 is daily).

It is clear that the audiences use different devices to view YouTube videos in different settings. An Asian graduate student aged 24 said, "I use all devices. I use laptop, I use tablets and I also use phone. I think using phone is probably a little bit small for watching, but it is very convenient. When I was waiting in line, and waiting for my dinner, I just get out of my phone and watch a YouTube make up tutorial." In the in-depth interviews, smartphones are most commonly mentioned as the device used because of its convenience especially with the YouTube mobile app and they carry the phone with them around everywhere. "It's portable. It's harder to get viruses on, it's mine: I can keep it by my side at all times. It's convenient," said a 20-year-old white

Table 4.1 Differences in YouTube Activities between Heavy and Light Smartphone Online Video Viewers

	Heavy Smartphone Video Users (Mean)	*Light Smartphone Video Users (Mean)*
Watch YouTube in General*	6.42	5.92
Watch Product Review Videos*	3.57	2.90
Read Comments on YouTube*	4.16	3.68
Post Comments on YouTube*	2.29	1.86
Upload Others' Videos*	1.6	1.28
Create and Upload Videos*	1.84	1.61
Share Videos On Social Media*	4.0	3.02

(Scale: 7 = Daily, 4 = About once a month, 1 = Never.)
*differences are significant at $p < 0.05$.

female senior student. The comfort of watching the videos on a big screen on TV is also considered: "I can connect the laptop to my TV and watch the videos on a much larger screen. It's more comfortable that way. I do also enjoy watching YouTube on my phone because I have a YouTube app. I don't have to sign in. I just click it and type in what I'm looking for, so I like the convenience of watching it on my phone too." Loading speed is another factor to be considered as one white female student aged 22 said, "The computer loads a lot quicker than my phone."

Privacy and Intimacy in Watching Online Videos

But in addition to convenience, privacy, and intimacy are also mentioned as the reasons for using smartphones to watch YouTube video. A white female freshman said she watch YouTube videos by herself in private: "Usually when I am waiting or if I have headphones, obviously I don't do it like a big public area. Or if I'm sitting in my room by myself, bored, doing homework."

A black female student who watch online video several times a week said, "I usually watch them when I'm in my room laying down in between commercial breaks or right I am about to go to bed." A Caucasian female student also mentioned similar habits of watching video before going to bed: "I use my laptop for YouTube when I'm just bored and browsing the Web and I use my phone when I'm laying down on the couch or my bed before I got to sleep at night." Another female student user reported her favorite time to watch YouTube is before bed at night time, "Usually in my bedroom, laid back and relaxed. Mostly like, at night, when I am done with my homework relaxing. Sometimes, midday. But mostly, night time." It seems watching videos is replacing watching TV or reading a book as a routine before going to bed for many of these millennials.

Some students also view the video with others, especially music videos: "I've watched that particular video … well I've other people turn it on when I'm with them. … How many times is probably too big of a number to count," said a white male frequent online video user aged 20.

Repeated Viewing of Online Videos

One important characteristic of how audiences watch YouTube videos is repeated viewing. Participants had no problem identifying their favorite video and reported that they watched that video multiple times. The ease to watch a video over again is more than ever as the videos are available on demand. A female student user who is also a YouTuber who had her own channel was obsessed with watching a video which featured her in another YouTuber's channel: "Back then when it just came out and I found out that I was in the video, probably like 20 times. I haven't watched it for a while since then. And maybe add 10 more times on it." The enjoyment of revering the moment and possibility of learning from the video are what made YouTube and online video viewing experience different from linear TV viewing: "I've watched this particular video (a college marching band half time show) about 10 times already. I'll probably watch it some more too. I like to study the performance," said a male student who was in the marching band.

Repeated viewing is a common practice as several female participants reported the same repeated viewing. The female student who only had one device and watch the videos in her apartment also reported watching a music video called "No One but You" more than 20 times on YouTube. Another bi-racial female student who is a frequent online video user reported having watched the funny video "I got time today" on YouTube 30 times. "I use the music (lyric video) a lot of times to practice dances too, so, yeah, I do watch them a lot," said a white female freshman.

In our in-depth interviews, we asked the participants to show us their view history and most of them did not mind showing the history to us and those videos listed on the history are similar to what they told us as their favorite video genres.

Video Viewing Completion

Another important characteristic of YouTube video viewing is the wide range of video completion rate among the audiences. When asked whether they often watch a video not in its entirety and why they don't complete watching the video in the in-depth interview, about one half of the interviewees said they did watch the entire videos most of the time. One participant explained:

> If I'm watching a video because it's funny, I'll stop watching it because it's not funny. Or if it's a music video and it's getting towards the end of the video, and I'm just looking to change the music up I'll switch it. But other than that, I usually watch the videos in completion.

Nine out of the 23 interviewees are more selective in completing their videos and told us the conditions that they would not watch the video in entirety. When audiences look for specific content and could not find it in the video, or when they watched the part they liked the second time, they are most likely to stop watching before the video ended:

> Yes. If it reminds me of another video I would just go to the other video before the first one is complete.

> It depends on what the content is. When I open it, if it is not what I was looking for then I just stop watching it.
>
> The first time I watch a video I typically watch from beginning to end. Sometimes they have intros and things I would skip but that's rare. If I rewatch it, then I will start skipping to my favorite parts.
>
> I would say 80% of the videos I watch them through because they are from the YouTubers I like or the subject line looks interesting. There are a few videos that are boring, I will just stop.
>
> If I'm trying to watch a specific part of something, I might not watch a video in its entirety. However, a lot of channels specialize in videos with clips I want to see, so I can just do that. If it's something by a company I like, I know Hasbro starts advertising at the end, so I stop before that. If it's a song, sometimes I only want to listen to part of a song. So, I'd say about half the time I watch a video all the way through.

Interestingly, the older participants, the graduate students, were the most selective in watching the videos, showing they are mostly task-oriented when watching YouTube:

> Yes, yes, I do that [not watching the video completely] all the time. I basically like, skip, skip, skip. Because I feel like, for example, a video is about the top 10 Korean beauty products and top 5 I already knew very well. I had purchased them, I had used them, so I will not watch the five products. I just skipped to that sixth.
>
> When I think that it began, it starts to be a little bit annoying, so I decide stop, maybe when there are something came to my mind, and I think this could be more interesting, then I am curious, then I will change what I am watching.
>
> Yes. Usually I just watch the certain part of a video. I will find the part I need.

YouTube Mobile App Use

Three quarters of all YouTube users have the YouTube app on their mobile device. Heavy viewers (84%) and subscribers of more than 10 channels (80%) are more likely to have the YouTube app than light viewers (68%) and subscribers of fewer than 10 channels (70%). On a seven-point scale in which 1 is never and 7 is daily, YouTube app owners watch YouTube videos more frequently (6.3 vs. 5.8), share videos more frequently (3.6 vs. 3.2) but do not create videos more frequently than non-YouTube app owners (1.8 vs. 1.5). So the YouTube app serves the audiences more than the YouTubers (video creators) even though creators can easily take and upload videos using the app. YouTubers probably prefer to edit their videos carefully on their computers before uploading to YouTube. To the audiences who don't create videos, the regular YouTube app performs the same function as the YouTube web site except that the YouTube web site puts all four separate apps in one place: YouTube Kids, YouTube Music, YouTube Gaming, and YouTube TV. In addition, the YouTube web site has the Creator Academy and YouTube for Artists sites for the YouTube creators.

Ranking of Importance of Cues for Product Review Videos

Among the different genres of videos, we specifically examined the audience's selection of product review videos because users seek opinion from the video and thus credibility of the video is important. The video can serve as the input of purchase decision and influence the perception of the product (see more details in chapter 5). In our survey, we asked our respondents what cues they used in selecting a YouTube video with a featured product with 5 being extremely important and 1 not important at all. Overall, we found audiences do not think the cues are important. Name of the video title has the highest mean score of 3.6 close to very important (4). All the other cues such as thumbnails of the video (mean = 3.3), familiarity of the YouTubers (mean = 2.98), recency of the videos (2.96), length of the video (mean = 2.77), number of views (mean = 2.73), number of likes (mean = 2.56), users' comments (mean = 2.31), and total number of subscribers (mean = 2.19) were rated as neither important or unimportant (3) or somewhat unimportant (2).

In our in-depth interviews, we asked the interviewees if they read additional information about the video posted next to the videos in YouTube. We also found overall audiences do not pay much attention to the information cues about the video or spend much effort in selecting videos. A few do look for specific things. A female student said, "I read the description portion, particularly if it's a song and I want to know who the original author is. Also, if I feel like they're breaching copyright, I'll read the description to see if they actually, like, gave credit where credit is due." Another American Sign Language (ASL) student said, "I actually do, especially when I look up ASL hand signs, I actually look to make sure it is a credible video, number of reviews so I know it's a good video." The white female American studies Ph.D. students said, "Sometimes I read basic information associated with the video to understand the context of the video."

YOUTUBE CREATORS AS YOUTUBE AUDIENCES

YouTube video creators in our study differ quite a bit from other non-creators as YouTube audiences. A total of 13.4% (n = 70) of our YouTube users in the survey are YouTube video creators who create and upload videos to YouTube. They much more frequently watch movies ($t = 3.68$, $p < 0.01$) and TV programs that have been aired on TV on YouTube ($t = 2.31$, $p < 0.01$), DIY videos ($t = 2.35$, $p < 0.05$), travel videos ($t = 4.06$, $p < 0.01$), product review videos ($t = 4.28$, $p < 0.01$), documentary videos, and news videos than non-YouTube creators. There is no gender and age difference between the creators and non-creators. However, video creators have higher personal income than non-creators ($t = 1.95$, $p = 0.05$), reconfirming the resource divide in user-generated content production suggested by Ha and Yun (2014). Minorities such as blacks (36.6%), Asians (23.8%) and Hispanic (27.3%) students have a higher probability than average to be a YouTube creator than their white counterpart even though their total numbers of YouTube creators are lower than whites. College of Musical Arts majors (42.1%), College of Technology, Architecture and Applied Engineering (25%), Communication-related majors (21%), Arts and Humanities and Social

Table 4.2 Differences in YouTube Activities between YouTube Video Creators and Non-Creator Audiences

	YouTube Video Creators (n = 70) Mean (SD)	*Non-YouTube Creator Audiences (n = 452) Mean (SD)*
Income*	3.71 (2.51)	3.09 (2.37)
Watch video frequency	6.29 (1.0)	6.16 (0.9)
Movies**	5.59 (1.58)	4.84 (1.58)
TV programs*	5.70 (1.72)	5.2 (1.43)
Documentaries**	4.36 (1.84)	3.38 (1.64)
Product review videos**	4.31 (2.04)	3.03 (1.85)
Travel videos**	3.46 (2.11)	2.58 (1.61)
News*	4.89 (2.10)	4.32 (1.87)
DIY Videos*	4.27 (2.03)	3.73 (1.75)
Read comments on videos**	4.61 (1.96)	3.81 (2.17)
Post comments on YouTube**	3.66 (2.19)	1.84 (1.52)
Share videos on social media**	4.73 (1.66)	3.33 (1.89)
Video Selection Info Cues		
Total number of views**	3.13 (1.28)	2.67 (1.26)
Length of video title**	3.19 (1.13)	2.70 (1.17)
Recency of the video*	3.25 (1.25)	2.91 (1.16)
Total number of likes**	3.07 (1.32)	2.48 (1.27)
Total number of subscribers**	2.71 (1.33)	2.10 (1.13)
The users' comments**	2.90 (1.33)	2.23 (1.26)

YouTube activity/viewing frequency scale: 1 = Never, 3 = Once several months, 5 = Several times a month, 7 = Daily.
Selection of Cues scale: 1 = Not at all important, 5 = Extremely important (scale reversed from questionnaire).
Personal Monthly Income: 3 = $1,000–1,500, 4 = $1,500–2,000.
*statistically significant different at $p < 0.05$.
**statistically significant different at $p < 0.01$.

Sciences (15.9%) have higher probability than other majors (Sciences, Education, Business and Health and Human Services) to be video creators. They are more likely to post comments ($t = 8.70$, $p < 0.01$), read comments ($t = 2.94$, $p < 0.01$), and share YouTube videos on social media ($t = 5.85$, $p < 0.01$) than non-creators. They also rate the metrics of the videos as more important in their selection of product review videos to watch, including number of views ($t = 2.81$, $p < 0.01$), number of likes ($t = 2.31$, $p < 01$), number of subscribers ($t = 4.04$, $p < 0.01$), users' comments ($t = 3.99$, $p < 0.01$) length of the video ($t = 3.21$, $p < 0.01$), and recency of the video ($t = 2.14$, $p < 0.01$). This is almost opposite to the audience at large reported earlier. Being in the system, the creators probably have a better understanding of the use of these metrics in YouTube than the general audience and care more about them (see Table 4.2).

Recommended Channels

To help users sift through the billions of videos, a user's YouTube's homepage is a list of recommended channels for the user based on its video discovery algorithm. On the one hand, it makes the page individualized to each user. On the other hand, users get a customized video guide from YouTube to select what they watch. Past search and view history are major input to the algorithm. Covington et al.'s (2016), Google researchers, article on YouTube recommendation system explains the two stage algorithm of deep candidate generation and deep ranking in video recommendation. During candidate generation, the enormous YouTube video corpus is winnowed down to hundreds of videos that may be relevant to the user. The view and search history of the users are conceived as neural networks to select the types of content the user is interested. Several hundreds of videos would be selected at this stage. Then in ranking, Google analyze many more features describing the video and the user's relationship to the video to assign an independent score to each video based on expected watch time per viewing. Ultimately a list of videos with highest scores gets to be displayed on the recommended video page. According to Newton (2017), YouTube's recommended videos boosted the total view time of YouTube. More than 70% of the time people spend watching videos on the site is now driven by YouTube's algorithmic recommendations. Each day, YouTube recommends 200 million different videos to users, in 76 languages. And the aggregate time people spend watching videos on YouTube's homepage has grown 20 times larger than what it was three years ago.

I use my own YouTube homepage as an example to illustrate how the recommended video page works. I am a long-time user of YouTube and bilingual in English and Chinese. YouTube would have a rich view and search history from me because I never turned off or cleared my view history. My YouTube home page on my computer had a total of 163 recommended videos listed in many rows with thumbnails of each video; of which 145 are English language videos and 18 are Chinese language videos. On the top two rows are eight recommended English videos, two recommended Chinese videos. Then next row is five videos from a "recommended channel" Think Media, then five "watch it again" videos of which four I could remember watching before and one is in Chinese. Then listed two "continue watching" videos which presumably I did not complete viewing the video previously. Then I have five recommended life-style videos, five Chinese videos from the same recommended channel, five technology videos recommended from different sources, five "recently uploaded videos recommended for you," four of which are in Chinese within the last 24 hours, then five YouTube mix videos which are playlists from a song or an artist, then five videos each from my two subscribed channels, three videos called "soothing relaxation," two more videos from a recommended channel, five software video recommendations from different sources, five "live recommendations" videos of live streaming channels of which one is in Chinese. Continue to scroll down there are more and more videos recommended from other genres. The recommendation is quite on target. At least YouTube was able to identify me as a consumer of Chinese and English language videos with English as the primary language. Of these many suggestions, I probably would be interested in watching about half of them. On a normal day, I probably will not scroll down the whole page, so those at the middle and bottom would most likely be missed by me. Based on my busy schedule, I might end up picking up one or two videos to watch or even forgo this list if I just could only watch the video I needed. When I refreshed the screen again, a somewhat different set of videos were displayed on the page. This time the YouTube Red Original videos were recommended at the fourth row. The size of the thumbnail description of each video is almost the same except one that take up the whole row and two that only have two videos in one row. This customized video guide is refreshed every time the page is loaded with mostly similar but some varied combinations.

In our survey results, 83% respondents reported watching the recommended videos that YouTube displayed on their home page with 59% watch it at least several times a month. The recommended channels are also mentioned as one of the attractive features of YouTube because it helps users to explore the channels of their interest. However, a related feature of "autoplay" which YouTube automatically continue to play another video based on its recommendation list after the video the user watched is over received mixed opinion. Some users like it and some hate it (see chapter 2). When one looks at the recommended videos, one can find that usually they are the most viewed videos of that genre and similar to what has been watched.

We found the frequency of watching those YouTube recommended videos is positively correlated to engagement in YouTube especially in the overall viewing frequency of YouTube ($r = .36$, $p < 0.01$). In other words, the heavy YouTube video users are likely to watch more videos that YouTube recommended to them. These recommended video users are also more likely to watch product review videos ($r = .23$, $p < 0.01$), post ($r = .18$, $p < 0.01$) and read comments on YouTube ($r = .28$, $p < 0.01$), create videos and upload them to YouTube ($r = .15$, $p < 0.01$), share YouTube videos on social media ($r = .17$, $p < 0.01$), subscribe to more YouTube channels ($r = .13$, $p < 0.01$).

We also found that frequency of watching YouTube recommended videos is also positively related to different kinds of videos use frequency with music the highest ($r = .33$, $p < 0.01$), followed by do-it-yourself videos ($r = .33$, $p < 0.01$), product demonstration or review videos and home videos about pets and children ($r = .30$, $p < 0.01$), travel ($r = .27$, $p < 0.01$), documentaries ($r = .21$, $p < 0.01$), TV programs that have been aired on TV ($r = .20$, $p < 0.01$), and movies ($r = .17$, $p < 0.01$).

As critics such as LaFrance (2017) and Dave (2017) observed, YouTube's algorithm is only interested in promoting more of the same type of video, rather than exploring different types of content. In other words, the most shared video and view time are a trending currency and also served as a quality indicator. So it's likely to result in double jeopardy effect that the popular videos continued to get more views while the less viewed videos will be overlooked and forgotten. But there are also exceptions to the rule that a hidden gem could be discovered through the recommendation system if sufficient people advocate for a certain video and share them frequently on Reddit such as the music video of a young unknown Norwegian artist named Pablo whose video became highly popular after heavy sharing (Skelton 2017). So while audiences have the choice of selecting what they want to watch, they are also influenced by what YouTube recommends in which the algorithm encourages more of the same by showing similar videos on the right hand side.

Certainly there are other ways that audiences locate and select their videos. Typing keywords to find a video directly on the subject, clicking on a video link shared by their friend, retrieving their view history, clicking their subscriptions, or bookmarking favorite videos are various ways to bypass the recommended videos home page in finding what they want to watch. YouTube does give its audience the choice of how to locate, select, and watch a video albeit it might try to influence us by following too much what we did in the past in predicting our future interest and presume our interest remains the same. YouTube wants our time and eyeballs. It's up to us whether we are willing to give them to YouTube among the different activities competing for our attention.

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Chapter 5

YouTube Product Review Videos as eWOM

Nicky Chang Bi

Jimmy Luong, a YouTuber, posted a new review for Apple Watch Series 3 on October 7, 2017. The video got 84,034 views (JimsReviewRoom 2017a). The number continues to increase. Jimmy owned a YouTube channel called *JimsReviewRoom* with 360,229 subscribers. He reviews consumer electronics since 2012. At the beginning of one of his review video, "Bose SoundSport Wireless Earphones," posted in July 2016, it shows a logo under the channel name and says "reviews for the average consumer." He then put up the newest model of Bose earphones and says, "I'm here to help you to make a purchase decision" (JimsReviewRoom 2016b). Under each video, he provides links that direct the audience to the product page for ordering. In the past five years, you can see that his videos are evolving along with YouTube. The image and sound quality are getting better. His initial video that reviewed a Logitech product was 3:45 minutes long and only got 2,000 views. But his recent videos usually received 80,000 to 1.5 million views (JimsReviewRoom 2012).

Many of product video review vloggers such as Jimmy Luong own their own personal websites. But YouTube is the channel that drives the most traffic. Product review videos on YouTube is one of the most frequently used electronic word of mouth (eWOM) sources today (Hansen, Lee & Lee 2014). From the interview we conducted in 2015, watching product review videos is one of the top reasons people use YouTube, along with watching music videos, movies, and so on.

PRODUCT REVIEW VIDEOS AS eWOM

eWOM, originally, is defined as the customers' experience, opinion, and evaluation of a product, a service, a brand, a company, or an organization that are communicated via the Internet (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler 2004; Litvin, Goldsmith & Pan 2008; Park, Lee & Han 2007). It should be purely and spontaneously created by ordinary people rather than companies, organizations, or marketers. According to Rathore (2015, 5), eWOM should be "void from any commercial interest," which means the review content created by people should not be sponsored by the product companies. Lisa Aldrich, a makeup YouTuber, is one of them who never reviewed sponsored products. She is not only a YouTuber but also a professional makeup artist who works with celebrities, magazines, brands, and so on. In her YouTube bio, she said,

> I only feature products I like or want to try. The products I use in these videos are either purchased by me or sent to me by make up companies to use in my professional capacity as a makeup artist for fashion and celebrity photo shoots, red carpet etc. … I do not accept payment and am not sponsored in any way by brands to make any of the films on this channel. (Lisa Aldrich 2008, para. 2)

Her video is purely created for helping others to make the purchase decisions. However, some other popular YouTubers are sponsored by marketers to review their products. Jenn Im is an example. She owns a YouTube channel with 2,057,969 subscribers and total 204,186,755 views, called *Clothes Encounters* (clothesencounters 2017). In her recent video published on November 19, 2017, she reviewed some outerwears and provided her audience some styling tips in the winter, while partnered with Nordstrom Rack. YouTube encourages video bloggers to publish pure eWOM because YouTube can share advertising revenues from the video and discourages the private deals of the YouTubers with marketers.

In this chapter, we will not concern with whether people like pure eWOM or sponsored product reviews, nor whether people trust those sponsored and non-sponsored product reviews. You will find more evidence in chapter 9 "Sponsored Videos on YouTube." In this chapter, we focus on how people think about the user-generated product review videos as eWOM. Who seeks eWOM? How is YouTube used as an eWOM source people use to make the purchase decision? What are other word of mouth (WOM) sources people use? What are the relationships between YouTube eWOM and other eWOM sources? To understand audience's attitudes about the eWOM, we start by examining the types of products people watch review videos and the frequency the audience seeks them.

TYPES OF PRODUCTS PEOPLE SEEK REVIEW VIDEOS

Customers seek reviews of different types of product from YouTube. From our survey conducted in 2015, we asked millennials to identify how often they watched YouTube videos featuring different product types, including technological products, environment-friendly products, daily supplies, stationery and books, automobile, clothing, and food and diet products, from never to daily (see Table 5.1).

As we expected, *technological products* are the most frequently used YouTube product video types. From the results, it makes sense that people want to consult others' experience when choosing technological products. Imagine you're deciding on a bluetooth earphone for the workout. You may want to compare several brands to see how they work for you. It is impossible to try different brands at the same store at the time. YouTubers' experience will offer you a great help in making the purchase decision. *Food and diet* reviews are also popular among the seven types of products reviewed. In our in-depth interview, some interviewees did mention that they watched food recipes to learn how to prepare food. However, it is not typical food and diet product reviews.

Clothing is the third popular category. Fashion bloggers are very influential in leading the styling trend. Famous bloggers such as Chiara Ferragni, Aimee Song, Kristina Bazan, Julia Engel, and Wendy Nguyen had millions of followers. Some bloggers even own their product lines. Chiara Ferragni owns her shoe line named Chiara Ferragni Collection. It is sold at 300 retailers and brought in $10 million in 2015 (Indvik 2016). Some fashion bloggers opened YouTube channels, in addition to their social media pages such as Facebook and Instagram. People named them fashion vloggers which is the abbreviation of fashion video bloggers. Those vloggers are personal stylists for their audience. In Wendy Nguyen's YouTube channel, she said, "The goal of my channel is to share outfit suggestions, create fun pairing ideas, provide fashion tips, play with shapes & colors, and put a smile on your face" (Wendy's Lookbook

Table 5.1 Product Review Videos Usage Frequency by Product Types

	YouTube Product Video Use (N = 514)			
			Gender Differences	
Product Category	*Mean (1 = never, 7 = daily)*	*Standard Deviation*	*Male (Mean(SD) N = 161)*	*Female (Mean (SD) N = 315)*
1. Technological products	3.01	1.91	3.80 (2.00)***	2.62 (1.73)***
2. Food and diet	2.95	1.93	2.82 (1.96)	3.07 (1.92)
3. Clothing	2.67	1.92	2.21 (1.73)***	2.93 (1.97)***
4. Daily supplies	2.45	1.76	2.34 (1.71)	2.52 (1.78)
5. Environment-friendly	2.17	1.57	2.23 (1.62)	2.18 (1.57)
6. Stationery and books	2.05	1.51	2.02 (1.56)	2.09 (1.51)
7. Automobile	1.99	1.56	2.50 (1.80)***	1.73 (1.33)***

***differences significant at $p < .001$.

2017). Because of the friendly and intimate style of the vloggers, audiences can easily form a parasocial relationship with those YouTubers, which refers to a one-sided relationship between the audience and the media persona (Horton & Wohl 1956; Shim, Zhang & Harwood 2012). The relationships make the audience generates positive affective and behavioral attitudes toward the YouTubers and the products they endorse (Shim, Zhang & Harwood 2012). In other words, their audience not only watch their outfit suggestions and purchase the products they recommend, but also are willing to seek lifestyle advice from their other videos. The examples can be easily found in many fashion bloggers' channels. *Clothesencounters* and *Lydia Elise Millen* broadcast their lives, along with the videos about dressing tips.

In terms of other product types, *daily supplies* are what people may concern in their daily life, although the products are inexpensive and perceived less uncertainty, compared with other product types. It may not leave so much room for reviews. People are paying more attention to *environment-friendly products* and seek idea and tips for using them. Furthermore, people usually do not watch the reviews of *stationery and books* on YouTube because they can find many book reviews on the Amazon website—another eWOM source. Automobile reviews as the least frequently watched product type is no surprise because the frequency of car purchase is much lower than other products.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN USE OF PRODUCT REVIEW VIDEOS

From the 524 participants who disclosed their gender and watched product videos, the differences between males (mean = 3.09) and females (mean = 2.78) on watching product reviews is small. Males are slightly more likely to watch product reviews. Slightly more males (18%) than females (15.1%) are heavy YouTube eWOM users. There are differences in gender by product type in review videos. Male are more interested in seeking technological products and automobile information from YouTube, while females are more likely to seek clothing product review videos. It is reasonable that males are more interested in digital products such as computers and cameras and females more engaged in clothes and shoes purchasing, compared to males (Nielsen 2014). Many fashion bloggers open YouTube channels and show their daily outfits. Females are more likely to watch those videos to make their purchase decision. There is no significant difference among different incomes on watching product review videos. To compare male and female differences in watching product reviews in terms of product types, males are more likely to watch videos featuring technological products than females.

Similarly, males watch more automobile videos than females. However, females watch more YouTube videos that feature clothing than males.

AUDIENCE'S PERCEPTIONS OF NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE REVIEW VIDEOS

When you seek information about a product, does positively or negatively reviewed videos help you make the purchase decision? Imagine you want to buy a new smartphone and are deciding between Google Pixel 2 and iPhone X. You may prefer iPhone X when you see a positive evaluation of it. It is also possible that you choose Google Pixel after you watched a negative review video of iPhone X because your preexisting positive attitudes toward Google Pixel is so strong that the negative evaluation of iPhone X will strengthen the belief. Several factors may influence how people see those product reviews. Arndt (1967) first revealed that favorable WOM would "aid acceptance of new product" (292) than unfavorable WOM. Some studies found that people perceived positive eWOM as high credibility, goodwill, competence, usefulness in explaining its impacts on their attitudes (Lim & Van Der Heide 2015; Sen & Lerman 2007). However, negative WOM had a greater impact on brand attitudes than positive ones (Herr, Kardes & Kim 1991). The reason of such is that negative WOM is more diagnostic or informative than positive and neutral WOM, which means that negative WOM is more likely to help individuals evaluate a product (Herr et al. 1991).

To understand the association of their attitudes and the overall YouTube eWOM consumption, we asked participants to identify whether they would have a more favorable impression on the product and are more likely to purchase the product when exposure to positive eWOM, and whether they would have a negative impression on the product and are less likely to purchase the product when exposure to negative eWOM. Based on the data analysis, there are no gender differences of the effects of positive and negative eWOM on people's attitudes and behavioral intention. We found that respondents did report more positive impression and purchase intention after watching positive reviews (Table 5.2). Interestingly, there are some audiences who still want to purchase the products when watching the negative reviews, although negative reviews will make them concerned. It is probably because they have strong preexisting beliefs about the products (Anderson, Brossard, Scheufele, Xenos & Ladwig 2014).

Of course, other factors will interact with eWOM valence in influencing people's attitudes and purchase intention of the products. For example, Dichter (1966) found that speaker-listener and speaker-product relationships influenced whether WOM messages are to be accepted or rejected. It suggests that eWOM users will evaluate whether the YouTubers concern

Table 5.2 Comparison between the Effects of Positive and Negative YouTube Product Reviews

	Comparison of the Effects of eWOM Valence (n = 493)	
	Mean (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)	*Standard Deviation*
Purchase intention		
Positive reviews	3.43	.93
Negative reviews	2.66	.88
Product impression		
Positive reviews	3.70	.80
Negative reviews	2.49	.84

their audience's well-being and whether the YouTubers' experience and knowledge are convincing. When the users are exposed to negative eWOM, YouTubers' attributes—the perceived reasons that the creators generated the negative information—will affect the overall evaluation of the product (Laczniak et al. 2001). eWOM receivers tend to balance the information and their own knowledge when evaluating a product.

In the context of YouTube, how people think about it as an eWOM seems to be inconclusive. The effects of valence should work "along with other factors illustrated the complicated nature of the consumer decision process" (Park & Yun 2010, 201). Scholars have studied the relationships between product types and people's attitudes toward their reviews such as hedonic products and utilitarian products: "Hedonic goods provide more experiential consumption, fun, pleasure, and excitement (designer clothes, sports cars, luxury watches, etc.), whereas utilitarian goods are primarily instrumental and functional (microwaves, minivans, personal computers, etc.)" (Dhar & Wertenbroch 2000, 60). In other words, people purchase hedonic products to seek pleasure and purchase utilitarian for their functions. Those YouTube videos are very important for people who want to purchase experience products, since people watch YouTubers' live experience. During our in-depth interviews, one interviewee said,

> I think user-generated contents are more versatile. So you can know something you cannot find on other websites or other official things. Sometimes, we need those kind of opinions and when we purchase experience products.

YouTube eWOM is also helpful for deciding utilitarian products. One interviewee said,

> They are real life persons. They are giving you their opinion on products. They will say that products are what they use and the products work for them. … When I was buying electronic products, I read others' reviews—they have experience on tv, cell phone, rather reading what company says.

Previous study has shown people perceived more usefulness when a hedonic product was positively reviewed and a utilitarian product was negatively reviewed. Customers took negative reviews more seriously when choosing utilitarian products, while ignored negative reviews while selecting hedonic products. It is because customers assumed that negative reviews of hedonic products were irrelevant to the actual product quality, while negative reviews of utilitarian products are critical for the purchase worthiness (Sen & Lerman 2007).

Other scholars categorized products into experience and search products by how much product information can be obtained before purchase. Experience products include goods such as music CD and video games, while search products include mobile phone and digital camera (Mudambi & Schuff 2010). Reviews for the experience products had a greater impact on people's behavior than search product reviews, which suggests that customers evaluated experience products based on others' experience (Senecal & Nantel 2004).

Based on product differences explained above, we may infer that technological products and daily supplies provide more functional consumption, while food diet, clothing, and environment-friendly products provide more experiential consumption. It is possible that the YouTube audience will take positive reviews more seriously when they watch positive eWOM of food diet, clothing, and environment-friendly products, while trust negative eWOM more for technological products and daily supplies.

In general, people find YouTube product reviews useful. Most of our participants perceived the videos more trustworthy and honest. One interviewee said, "The user-generated videos are people just like me. I find them to be more trustworthy. I also find them beneficial if it's a product that I use or am interested in trying." Another interviewee found the video creative: "I think they're creative and helpful. Because usually people only make videos about their favorite products. The video about how to clean your laptop is really helpful to me." Probably the main difference of text-based eWOM and YouTube eWOM is that people find entertainment value of video eWOM. They watch the videos not only because they need them, but also because they enjoy the moments of watching them. Their YouTube consumption is not only utilitarian, but also hedonic.

People also find the user-generated content more balanced than company-made videos. One said, "That's mostly to show like either again the really good things or the really bad things. You're probably going to get a mixture of both, though with those. So that's kind of good." However, some people thought that the reviews created by people who are paid by company are less trustworthy than those did not. An interviewee said, I don't really find the information useful cause I kind of feel like, they're not being paid but they're being sent free products by these company to do this, so they can be truthful but I'd just rather ask someone who isn't making videos and receiving free content.

Although there is still some who trust sponsored videos less, people are changing their opinions about those sponsored YouTubers due to their professional and high-quality product review videos. They find the overall experience of watching product review beneficial. They need them to make the purchase decision.

PRODUCT REVIEW VIDEOS WATCHING FREQUENCY

As shown in Table 5.3, almost two-third of the Millennial participants do watch YouTube as one of the eWOM sources. Although the percentage of daily or weekly use is low, it still demonstrates that people will seek those product reviews to make their purchase decision. Most people may not be heavy users of YouTube eWOM. From the number of "several times a month," "about once a month," and "once in several months," we can tell that it is highly possible that only when people want to purchase goods, they tend to seek other people's advice to make the purchase decision. The reasons of seeking eWOM are "risk reduction," "reduction of search time," "to learn how a product is to be consumed," "dissonance reduction," and "to learn that products are new in the marketplace" (Hennig-Thurau, Walsh & Walsh 2003, 57).

On the contrary, the motivations of those heavy users—who said they watch product reviews daily—may not be based on the needs of seeking product information (Goldsmith & Horovitz 2006; Hennig-Thurau et al. 2003). To these people, using YouTube product review videos may not be

Table 5.3 Frequency of Watching Product Demonstration or Reviews

	Watching Product Demonstration or Reviews (N = 570)	
	Frequency	*Percentage*
Daily	21	3.68
Several times a week	37	6.49
Several times a month	61	10.70
About once a month	85	14.91
Once in several months	97	17.02
Less than once a year	79	13.86
Never	200	35.09
Total	570	100

a goal-driven process that individuals have recognized the need for a product (King, Racherla & Bush 2014). Passing times or seeking pleasure from watching people commenting on products or sharing their own experience may be potential motivations of heavy YouTube eWOM users.

USE OF OTHER WOM SOURCES

YouTube eWOM users will also seek other eWOM sources. In addition to YouTube product review videos, there are several eWOM sources people use to make the purchase decision (see Table 5.4). We surveyed how frequently people prefer to get information about product reviews from friends/families/colleagues, product reviews on e-commerce sites such as Amazon, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, or blogs, professional product review sites such as CNET and ConsumerSearch, and online forums, from *never* to *always*. The question is available for all the respondents. Among the total 619 participants, 48 did not answer the questions. In Table 5.4, it lists the percentage of people who said they use the sources *most of the time* and *always*.

Interestingly, although people use many online sources to make the purchase decision, traditional WOM is still the top source people seek product information. The results are consistent with Hu and Ha's (2015) study that traditional WOM is influential among all the sources. People are less likely to seek product information from online forums. It may be because customers who visited forums were more likely to enjoy being in a community rather than making the purchase decision (Hennig-Thurau et al. 2004). From Table 5.4, we can also tell that people are willing to seek product information from ordinary people (Amazon's reviews) rather than experts (professional review sites). How people choose sources also depends on the product categories. For example, customers rely more on experts when choosing electronic products, while seeking information from their families or friends when deciding clothing, shoes, and jewelry products (Hu & Ha 2015).

Table 5.4 Use of Other WOM/eWOM Sources

	Use of Other WOM/eWOM Sources (N = 571)		
	Mean	*Standard Deviation*	*Percentage (Most of the Time and Always)*
Friends/Families/Colleagues	3.82	1.07	71.1
e-Commerce sites	3.03	1.19	39.5
Social media	2.86	1.17	28.5
Professional review sites	2.43	1.27	22.0
Online forums	2.35	1.17	17.5

In addition, we also asked respondents to list specific common review sites they used and whether they have a product review/price comparison to learn more about their eWOM use. The most frequently used review site is Amazon. It appears 107 times. Some other websites that have been used a lot include YouTube (n = 77), Facebook (n = 30), Google (n = 28), eBay (n = 23), Reddit (n = 15), Yahoo (n = 13), and Buzzfeed (n = 8). Marketers and scholars should pay more attention on YouTube, since it is a leading product review channel among other sources. Some people provided some specific website names to seek reviews for specific products. For example, they use websites such as gameinformer and GamesRadar to find game reviews. CNET (n = 19) is the most frequently used review website for electronic products. Some of them also mentioned the websites that are specialized for entertainment products such as Metacritic and Pitchfork where they can find movie and music reviews. People would also go to Ask.com and Yahoo Answers to ask specific questions about the products, if they found that the reviews could not resolve their concerns. However, when asking about other mobile applications for reviews, only 43 (12.8%) participants reported they had product review mobile apps. It suggests that their YouTube review channels and social media sites are enough for them to research products on the go.

According to our quantitative data analysis, we found that heavy YouTube users in general and heavy eWOM users tend to be YouTube eWOM users. It indicates that people who trust the YouTube platform are more likely to trust those YouTubers who review products. The people who are loyal to YouTube watch different types of videos (Bi, Zhang & Ha 2016). It is possible that they use YouTube for multiple purposes in fulfilling their daily needs. In addition, people who seek product information from other eWOM sources such as Amazon and social media are more also likely to be YouTube eWOM users. Based on our data, we also found that people who use multiple eWOM sources are more likely to be influenced by YouTube product reviews (Bi, Zhang & Ha 2016). It suggests that customers who find eWOM useful will seek similar experiences from different sources, or they want multiple sources to confirm their overall evaluation of the products (Shade, Kornfireld & Oliver 2015).

Marketers and scholars are paying attention to video-sharing sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, and Vine as online advertising and sources of eWOM for brands. But studying the effects of YouTube product review videos are rare. Although King et al. (2014) found "unboxing" videos as an effective eWOM source, this chapter showed how consumers use different WOM sources along with YouTube as eWOM. Overall, the eWOM users think the YouTube product reviews are more versatile and helpful than company-made videos. They can watch real life experiences from the YouTubers. From our study, only 25% would be influenced by those company-made videos to make the purchase decision. It is probably because people believe ordinary YouTubers care for the customers' interests more than companies—37.2% of our participants think so. People think that YouTubers are more trustworthy and have goodwill since the YouTubers' reputation hinges on the product they review. It can also be important product learning tools and on demand product advice for the audiences.

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Chapter 6

Comments on YouTube Product Review Videos

Xiaoli Wen

The Internet is expanding ways and possibilities for consumers to share their product consumption experiences with others in the form of online reviews or postings on social media. Online reviews on YouTube are an extension of traditional word of mouth (WOM) called electronic word of mouth (eWOM). It can be either in the form a complete product review video or online text comments posted on each YouTube video, such as the example shown below on the product review video "Apple Watch Series 3" with 497,318 views (TechnoBuffalo 2017):

> I disagree with the LTE battery life. I work in an environment where I can't have a camera phone so my LTE apple watch bridges the gap. I generally go 10–12 hours with my watch on LTE and it lasts all day. I'm generally around 30–35% battery life left by 6 pm but once it gets paired back with my phone it definitely lasts until bed time. I love it.

They have become one of the dominant sources providing valuable information about products and services (Aerts, Smits, and Verlegh 2017). Nielsen's (2015) *Global Trust on Advertising* found that online consumer review is the third most trusted source of consumers. As much as two-thirds trust consumer opinions posted online.

This chapter focuses on the online text comments on YouTube product videos, because in chapter 5 we have already explained how those product review videos influence consumers. However, whether the audience would post comments on those videos, and whether they would use the comments in their decision to watch the video in order to assess the quality of the video content, will be explored in this chapter.

Given its potential influence on people, online comments on YouTube videos are becoming a hot topic in academic research. Ksiazek, Peer, and

Lessard (2016) examine commenting and conversational behaviors regarding user engagement and interactivity on YouTube news videos. Obviously, their focus is basically on the comments on YouTube news videos. More specifically, their analysis distinguishes comments between user-content interactions (e.g., commenting on a news video) and user-user interactions (e.g., replying to another user's comment). That said, their study investigates the behaviors and interactions of posting comments in particular. In contrast, our study focuses on both reading and posting comments on YouTube product review videos.

In our study, we found that people who read comments more often are more frequent to post comments on YouTube videos. Similarly, Aerts, Smits, and Verlegh (2017) also find that people who used more concrete language in commenting may possibly be influenced by those prior reviews in concrete language. Their study shows a subtle causal relationship between reading comments and posting comments in regard to a group of Dutch-speaking Belgian men and women. In addition, their data are based on the online consumer reviews in general. Thus, there is no specificity of certain websites such as YouTube.

We could see that past research indicated online reviews exert significant impacts on people's lives, especially people's opinions about a product, which in turn may influence other consumers' decisions to certain products. Liu and Karahana (2017) suggest that the characteristics of online product review play a dominant role in constructing attribute preferences for products. Similarly, Hu, Pavlou, and Zhang's study (2017) also reveals that consumers do depend on other distributional parameters of online reviews, not just being impacted by the mean ratings. That being said, both study admit the existing influence of online product reviews on potential customers' decision.

Gao et al. (2015) investigate the relationship between online rating and population perceptions of physician quality based on the literature of eWOM. Their study indicates that in spite of the positive correlation between online ratings and population opinions, there is a tendency of overemphasizing physician's positive quality in eWOM. That means eWOM is biased in reference to patients' experiences. Besides, they also find that those who were rated lower in quality in reality by the patient population are less likely to be rated online. Such omission means online comments are not a good representation of the population. However, our qualitative in-depth interview did not show pronounced impact (14 out of 23 reported not being affected by the comments on online product reviews) of online product review on decision making or preferences to products.

In Hu and Ha's (2015) article, they compare WOM use on Facebook fan pages between general population and college students. They find that the effects of eWOM are not as powerful as traditional WOM in terms of online shopping. Likewise, our study obtained similar findings that eWOM does not affect viewers' perceptions as much as past research on online comments and reviews have found. Interestingly, their study also finds that there is no gender difference in the likelihood of being persuaded among college students. Similarly, in our study, we also failed to find a significant gender difference in reading, posting, or being affected by comments on YouTube product review videos. Additionally, we tested the correlation between income and read and/or post comments as well and found no relationship between income on posting and reading comments on YouTube product videos.

Momeni et al. (2015) analyze user-generated comments collected from Flickr Commons collections and YouTube to examine the characteristics of useful comments through the analysis of three different sets of features: text statistics and syntactic, semantic and topical, and user and social. Their findings indicate that a few relatively straightforward features can be used for inferring useful comment. However, our qualitative and quantitative data show that most people did not use the comments or find them useful regarding comments on product review videos on YouTube. Moreover, they believe that the quality of user-generated comments ranges from very useful to entirely useless.

DEFINING COMMENTS ON VIDEOS

First of all, for the sake of better understanding online comments, it is crucial to clarify its definition. Online comments are the written assessments generated by users and customers after using or purchasing the products provided by websites. For our study, the comments are about videos on YouTube. Through sharing individual's experiences of the video on the websites, people can inform others about their feelings of using the video, particularly their attitudes toward the quality of the video. According to Park, Lee, and Han (2007), these comments function "both as informants and as recommenders, are important in making purchase decisions and for product sales" (125).

Online comment is a dynamic and cyclic process. Starting from reading other customers' comments, one forms an expectation of the quality of a product for the sake of updating one's quality beliefs based on the overt attributes and the available reviews and then making purchasing decisions. In the end, one may choose to write one's own review depending on actual experiences of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Ultimately, once a new review is posted, it starts to exert influence on subsequent consumers' quality expectations of the product (Hu, Pavlou & Zhang 2017).

In Aerts et al.'s (2017) study, they find that language abstraction in comments is contagious. They conclude that when previous reviews used concrete language, that is, words meant to contain tangible qualities or characteristics, the subsequent users may also choose to use more concrete language in their reviews. Correspondingly, they also examine whether the biased language use may potentially affect the persuasiveness of reviews.

Regarding who are the people writing online reviews, Hu, Pavlou, and Zhang (2017) indicate that there are two categories of customers who are likely to write reviews online. Those who are either consumers with a favorable predisposition acquiring a product and, hence, write a product review or consumers with extreme, either positive or negative, ratings are more likely to write reviews: "When a consumer's realized utility greatly deviates from her prior expectations, she will be more motivated to exert the effort to 'moan', to complain and warn others, or to 'brag', to share the surprising good news and recommend the product to others" (Hu et al. 2017, 453).

MEASURING USE OF COMMENTS

We first examine YouTube viewers' propensity to read reviews and post or add comments. Both a comparison and a correlation between "read comments" and "post comments" are conducted to explore more covert factors. We also compare the audience's ratings, the importance of review comments versus other cues in their choice of product review videos. We obtained data from the following four survey questions:

Q1 When you see YouTube videos that interest you, do you read the comments on those videos before deciding to watch them? (Yes/No).
Q4 How important are the following cues when you select a YouTube video with a featured product?—The users' comments (five-point scale from "extremely important" to "not important at all").
Q7–1 How often do you do the following activities on YouTube?—I watch videos (seven-point scale from "daily" to "never").
Q7–3 How often do you do the following activities on YouTube?—I read the comments posted about YouTube videos (seven-point scale from "daily" to "never").
Q7–4 How often do you do the following activities on YouTube?—I post comments on YouTube (seven-point scale from "daily" to "never").

The two in-depth interview questions we used are:

Q20 Do you read other users' comments and additional information about the video posted next to the videos in YouTube? If yes, do the comments affect the way you view the video or the product featured in the video?

Q22 Usually after you complete watching video, will you rate the video or add other comments? Do you usually rate the video or add comments when you are on your phone or laptop?

READ COMMENTS VERSUS POST COMMENTS

Our quantitative data show that only 14.1% reported that they read the comments before watching videos. However, there were 14 (3 claimed sometimes or occasionally) out of 23 participants in the in-depth interviews who reported reading comments, which accounts for 60.8% of all participants. When being asked if the comments affected the way they view the video or the product featured in the video, 14 out of 23 (60.8%) denied the influence anyway. Here, we think it is very necessary to clarify the same percentage of reading comments and not being affected by comments. In fact, those who have ever read comments are not the same people reported as not being influenced by comments.

Interestingly, one of the interviewees reported that he has read comments to seek other similar thoughts to his own, though he did not think he himself might be affected by others' comments before watching the video. He is one of those who read comments after watching the videos to see if others share the same opinion. He responded as,

> Usually I look at the comments, but that's mostly if I think a certain way about the video. Maybe I just look and see if people agree with the way I was thinking, or maybe try to figure out more information about the video… maybe people that kind of stuff on there. But it doesn't really affect the way I think about the videos. … I know of just view the video and then look at the comments.
>
> Yes, I see what others have said if the product is good or not then, determine if I want to buy the product or not. I don't rate or comment on ads ever. (A Black female college student, age 22, watches online videos several times a week.)

In contrast, another interviewee, who is an African American female, 21-year-old college student, viewing online videos everyday on her smartphone, said,

> I never read other people's comments. I don't really pay attention or care. I don't think I've ever actually rated a video.

It is also common for viewers to acclaim or boo to the videos they like or dislike through thumb-ups or thumb-downs instead of commenting with text. One of the interviewees mentioned her opinions about reading comments and clicking thumb-ups.

> No. I seldom read those comments. I don't care. No. Sometimes I did some thumb-up. I seldom did thumb-down, I seldom commented, never commented it. (An Asian female college student, heavy YouTube user, watching cosmetic videos every day, watching movies on YouTube occasionally.)
>
> I don't comment. Sometimes, I just put favorite, bookmark, and come back to it later.
>
> Or, I follow that person's channels. But I don't usually comment.

Coincidentally, in our in-depth interview, there was one white American female self-claimed heavy YouTube user, watching all kinds of videos, including makeup tutorials, comedy shows, music, movies, and so on. When being asked if she had ever rated the video or adds other comments after watching the video, she responded,

> Yes. It depends on the video. Depends on how bored I am. I want to know is there a drama in the comments? Like the video I just watched about Detroit. If you read through the comments, you will see people hold their opinion. I'd like to do that. I will see whether recipe and makeup tutorials work for them (the people who comment). But music videos or funny videos, such as Ellen show, I am not going to read the comments.

Apparently, video type makes a difference on whether comments are used. When the video is about learning and experience, then comments can help the audience to choose which video to watch. Gao et al.'s (2015) study indicates that a tendency of positive comments on physician's quality in eWOM exists, but our study does not show a distinctive tendency of posting positive comments on YouTube product review videos.

In order to have a solid interpretation of the people who read the comments posted about YouTube videos and people who post comments on YouTube, we combined quantitative data with the qualitative data from in-depth interview. First, we compared the frequencies of reading and posting comments in Table 6.1. The results show that both "Never read comments" and "Never post comments" are the highest in frequencies. Interestingly, "Never read comments" is 23.9% in its category, while "Never post comments" is 62.3%, nearly triple of "Never read comments" group. In comparison, those who report "Read comments daily" is 14.1% and "Post comments daily" is 3.1%. The frequency of "Read comments daily" is four times of "Post comments daily." Thus, it is obvious to tell from both "never" and "daily" that more people read comments than post comments.

Likewise, the data from the qualitative in-depth interviews show similar results obtained in quantitative data. Among 23 interviewees, 14 claimed that they read, or sometimes read, comments. But when being asked if they have

Table 6.1 Comparison of Reading and Posting Comment Frequency

	Read Comments		*Post Comments*	
	Frequency	*Percentage*	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Never	125	23.9	326	62.3
Less Than Once a Year	40	7.6	58	11.1
Once Several Months	62	11.8	36	6.9
About Once a Month	54	10.3	31	5.9
Several Times a Month	85	16.2	27	5.2
Several Times a Week	84	16	29	5.5
Daily	74	14.1	16	3.1
Total	524	100.0	523	100.0

ever rated the video or added comments, 4 out of 23 reported "Yes" straightforward, among them 2 responded "Yes, sometimes." and the other two said "Yes, but it depends." Hence, there were still more people reported ever read comments than those who posted comments. Such finding corroborates with our survey results in which the frequency of reading comments (mean = 3.92, SD = 2.16) is much higher than the frequency of posting comments (mean = 2.09, SD = 1.74) where 1 = Never, 3 = Once several months, 7 = Daily.

Despite that people are more likely to read comments than posting on YouTube videos, we need to know if there is a correlation between those who "read comments" and "post comments." Therefore, we run a correlation between "I read the comments posted about YouTube videos" and "I post comments on YouTube." Indeed, there is a moderate positive association ($r = .464$, $p < 0.01$) with statistical significance between "read the comments posted about YouTube videos" and "post comments on YouTube," which means that people who read comments are more frequent to post comments on YouTube videos. We may also understand the result the other way around, that is, people who read less comments may be less likely to post comments as well. In other words, those who found the comments useful or fun to read are also likely to share their opinions and further, post comments on the videos. Thus, posting comments can reinforce reading comments.

YOUTUBE VIEWING FREQUENCY VERSUS READ AND/OR POST COMMENTS

Usually, it is reasonable to assume that the more often one watches videos, the more frequently one comments on videos. To confirm this assumption, we ran a correlation between YouTube viewing frequency (how often do you do the following activities on YouTube?—I watch videos) and comment frequency (read and/or post comments). Indeed, there is a significant positive correlation between viewing frequency and reading comments ($r = 0.342$, $p < 0.01$). In other words, the more often one watches YouTube videos, the more likely he/she reads comments. Then, we also ran another correlation between YouTube viewing frequency and posting comments. YouTube viewing frequency is also positively correlated ($r = .206$, $p < 0.01$) with posting comments on YouTube videos, which is also statistically significant. Hence, heavy viewers of YouTube videos are likely to be the frequent readers and posters of comments on YouTube.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF COMMENT READERS AND POSTERS

To further investigate who the comment readers and posters are, we compared the demographics of comment readers and posters. Accordingly, we tested the associations between demographic differences and read and/or post comments on YouTube product review videos.

First, we compared gender and the frequency of reading comments. We found that although our male participants (mean = 4.23) are more frequent readers of comments than female participants (mean = 3.86), on the seven-point scale starting from 1 (never) to 7 (daily), the difference is not statistically significant. Yet, male participants also post comments (mean = 2.49) more frequently than females (mean = 1.96) do. The difference is again statistically insignificant. Even though male participants post more frequently than female students, their reading of comments is still more frequent than posting of comments (4.23 vs. 2.49). Hence, gender is not a major factor influencing the frequency of posting comments by reason of expressing one's opinion in writing to the public.

Second, we examined if respondents' race may affect comment frequency on YouTube videos, especially between white majority and nonwhite minorities. Given that our participants are predominantly white (88.4%), we ran a T-test to compare the means of white and nonwhite and read and/or post comments. The average frequencies of white viewers when compared to nonwhites in reading comments are 3.90 and 3.95, showing nonwhite viewers and white millennials read comments on YouTube videos similarly. But in posting comments, the difference between the average of white (2.07) participants and nonwhites (2.48) is 0.41 (2.48 – 2.07 = .41). Apparently, we see a somewhat higher difference in posting comments between white and nonwhite. Therefore, in contrast to the difference of reading frequency (.05), the frequency of posting comments is relatively higher among nonwhites than among whites. That is to say, white viewers post less frequently than do nonwhites. Although the difference does exist, neither reading nor posting comments is statistically significant, similar to the results we reported about the gender differences in both reading and posting comments.

In addition, we also analyzed our qualitative data from 23 in-depth interviews. One of our interviewees, a white female, self-identified as heavy YouTube user, reported that she likes the recommendation system of YouTube, but she doesn't read comments because she does not think comments are helpful to her. The quote from her interview may fairly represent some users' motivations to read/not read comments generated by users prior to them. Controversial videos are likely to attract comment readership.

> Sometimes I read basic information associated with the video to understand the context of the video. But I don't find other users' comments useful. I don't read them in general. If it is a very controversial kind of video, I want to read the comments to see what other people are saying, but I generally avoid comments.

Although we not only compared the frequencies and means between people who read comments and people who posted comments and also ran the correlation between the two, we are still curious about the relative importance of users' comments as a cue used in viewing decision. When asked the importance of comments out of a list of nine possible cues they used to choose a YouTube video with a featured product, comments on the video was the second least important cue. For a detailed comparison of cues in selecting videos, please refer to chapter 4.

Surprisingly, in our qualitative data from the in-depth interview, there were two interviewees who preferred the product reviews on Amazon.com to the comments on YouTube product videos. They felt the comments on Amazon are higher in quality than those on YouTube. When being asked if they ever read other users' comments and whether they think the comments may affect the way they view the video or the product featured in the video, one of them remarked,

> I typically don't because in comment section, people are having conversation that's totally not related to the video. Maybe one or two are related. If I am really interest in the product, I will go to amazon where the reviews tend to be more on point. But the comment section in YouTube is garbage. It's very entertaining, but has nothing to do with the video.

The other interviewee felt more comfortable to comment on Amazon than on YouTube. She answered,

> It really, really depends, most of the time I do not rate anything YouTube wise but if it was a really really good video or clip or anything then I will rate it but honestly I don't think I've ever left a review. I mean if it were on Amazon

> then yeah, I'd review it but on YouTube, no I don't, I might leave a review but normally I do not.

According to the above two interviewees' explanations, it seems that the comments on YouTube product review videos are less informative and unhelpful compared with product reviews on Amazon. Because Amazon has quality rating of its reviews while YouTube comments have only likes and dislikes, the comments on YouTube may be more impulsive and not as thoughtful.

Momeni et al.'s (2015) article suggests that there are a few relatively straightforward features that can be used for inferring useful comments. Also, they believe that the quality of user-generated comments ranges from very useful to entirely useless. Online comments as an alternative to traditional WOM for the videos as shown in our study is not as important as researchers assumed.

Edgerly et al.'s article (2013) examines how the characteristics of videos can direct the comments through a case study of Proposition 8 campaign in California in 2008. They analyzed 207 YouTube videos and 45,759 comments to identify how the tone and the focus of a video are associated with comment features. They suggest social media's democratic forum can facilitate higher quality online information exchanges. Likewise, Park, Lee, and Han (2007) consider the significance of online customer reviews as meaningful promotions to inspire more viewers' interactions.

Although online comments may not influence a viewer's decision to watch a video or to read the comments, reading and/or posting comments are unique modes of communication. Wu and Atkin (2017) suggest that more agreeable and narcissistic users are motivated more to post comment on online news for the sake of establishing social connections, which could be incentives to the behavior of commenting on the news shared in social media. For example, there was a 21-year-old African American interviewee who mentioned her enjoyment of the interactions in comments similar to *Danmu*, a scrolling marquee of comments that displayed as streams of moving subtitles overlaid on the video screen very popular in East Asia (He et al. 2017, 2). The interviewee felt amazed by the way experiences of a product were communicated via users' online product reviews. She said,

> I always read the comments, for some reason. I don't know why. I guess it's just kind of, like, I like to interact with people. I like to see what other people said about it, and it gives true true sense.

Online reviews, or user-generated comments, are perceived as eWOM as reference to traditional WOM. Given that our study shows a large gap between reading and posting comments on YouTube product review videos, it is critical for YouTube, and other social media as well, to reconsider the interactive feature among users, more importantly between users and websites. For example, Schneider (2016) uses Qualitative Media Analysis to examine how the users on YouTube interpret music videos through an analysis of comments to improve the overall understanding of music culture online. Comments serve the observable and documented virtual interactions of the users.

The previous research on YouTube video comments mostly employed the content analysis method to examine the opinion reflected on a certain topic. Our study focused on YouTube product review videos only, applying both quantitative data and qualitative in-depth interview to analyze comments on YouTube product review videos. Our study revealed that although making comments is a way that audiences can engage in the videos, they are not used much before watching the video. When the comments are highly controversial or the video itself is controversial, then the importance of comments increased in arousing audiences' interest in watching the videos. We also noticed that comments are also used after watching videos, because users read and/or post comments in order to confirm their opinions with others. Interestingly, reading comments are much more common than posting comments. Those who are heavy YouTube users are more likely to read and post comments. Hence, comment on video is an indicator of viewer engagement. Nonetheless, this is not a very reliable measure of engagement because there is a large number of people who do not post or read any comments and just only watch YouTube videos. The discrepancy in the large number of views and the low amount of comments, like and dislike ratings of YouTube videos shows that comments or consumer rating should not be considered as a good representation of viewers' opinion of the videos. Rather, they are just opinions expressed by a small group of people who are willing to share their thoughts in public.

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Chapter 7

YouTube and Other Social Media

Fiouna Ruonan Zhang and Nicky Chang Bi

YOUTUBE'S DIFFERENCE FROM OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

The birth of YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and other kinds of platforms for user-generated contents have drastically altered the way people receive updates of what's going on, send out information, and voice their opinions. YouTube is reported in 2014 as the second most used social networking sites, attracting 63% of adult Internet users, following Facebook which is used 77% online adults (Anderson 2015). While YouTube and other social media share many similarities, like interactivity, fast growing popularity, and multimediality, YouTube has some unique features.

One major difference of YouTube from other social media is the difference in proportion of viewers and active content creators. The nature of Facebook and Twitter as social media renders their users higher possibilities of being both active posters and viewers at the same time. On YouTube, the percentage of content viewers are way more than content creators. According to Pew Research Center, 72% of adults watch online videos, while only 31% reported posting original videos or sharing unoriginal videos online (Purcell 2013). The reason behind the difference might lie in the effort required for content creation and management of accounts. On social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram people post pictures and/or usually no more than several sentences. On YouTube, however, content sharers are required to put a little more effort and determination, since they need to shoot and potentially edit videos. Also, unlike other social media where users are required to register before using, audience do not have to register to view videos on YouTube.

Another feature that separates YouTube from other social media is the imagined audience. While people upload content to Facebook mainly for friends and families, the imagined audience of YouTube is beyond that and more of a public nature. People decide what videos to watch both by searching keywords and by depending on an automatically generated feed from subscriptions, like on Facebook, but the subscription to YouTube channels is often one-way, rather than mutual “friends” on Facebook. Most popular user-generated content on YouTube are neither the online version of traditional television programs, like on Netflix or Hulu, nor privately shared videos, like those circulating on Facebook and Instagram. The target audience of most YouTube videos are people outside of the creators’ social circle. From content creators’ perspective, more than 35% video sharers posted videos with the hope that they will be widely viewed (Purcell 2013).

YOUTUBE AS A SOCIAL MEDIA SITE

Although many differences exist between YouTube and other social media, YouTube should not be recognized as a completely noninteractive video displaying platform, nor a copy of traditional television programs showing on a computer screen. The main reasons behind the social aspect of YouTube are: first, most content creators on YouTube are individuals, rather than organizations, transmitting a sense of authenticity; and second, the level of interactivity on YouTube makes the platform more of a social ground for communities rather than being used simply for information gaining and entertainment.

Authenticity

The logic of content creation and distribution on YouTube is drastically different from the traditional established media, which is characterized by intermediation, barriers of entry, and fictional contents distanced from everyday life (Cunningham, Stuart, and Craig 2017). Many popular YouTube videos are created by individual YouTubers about their own lives and experiences, rather than established organizations. Although YouTubing is gradually becoming a monetized profession, the main logic of YouTube remains for audience to see people who are just like them, but did something that they didn’t do. When asked about whether they can be YouTuber stars, 55% of audience aged between 14 to 17 and 51% of audience between the age of 18 and 24 said yes (Pittman 2017). In addition, the most popular genres of user-created content on YouTube are not fictional story telling or talk shows with celebrities, but are vlogging, gameplay, and style tutorials (Dredge 2015). Those types of content are down to earth, rather than unreachable for normal audiences. YouTubers make audience feel like they “show everyone who they are.” They are approachable real human beings, rather than actors or movie stars that make the audience feel a hundred miles away, or simply as “a body with a script” (Pittman 2017).

Community

YouTube is a community-concentrated space in two senses. First, unlike traditional mainstream television shows which predominantly serve the majority, the content of YouTube videos approximately cover all kinds of interests for audience of all profiles. YouTube shares the benefit of Internet’s Long Tail effect (Brynjolfsson et al. 2011) in bringing people with niche interests together to form virtual communities. Second, while the traditional video viewing on television is mostly one-sided passive viewing, the viewers of YouTube have a lot more roles than just being audiences of other people’s videos. Viewers can “like” or “dislike” the video to make the videos more or less popular in the YouTube system. They can voice their opinion to YouTubers and other viewers directly in the comment area right under the videos. For professional YouTubers, the requests from viewers often set the agenda of their future videos. The level of interactivity on YouTube grants the platform more room for mediated social relationship construction, rather than simply displaying videos.

YOUTUBE AS A CONTENT PORTAL

Since viewers do not have to register on YouTube to watch the videos of the platform and YouTube videos are easily shareable via instant communication tools and other social media, the audiences of YouTube videos are not exclusively directly from YouTube. A significant portion of YouTube views is from other social media. Research has discovered that 40% of YouTube views come from Facebook (Lake 2011). The relationship between YouTube-like video sharing websites and Facebook-like social networking websites is tightly knotted and mutually beneficial (Ma et al. 2014) in an online culture of connectivity (Van Dijk 2014). In our study, out of 525 participants who have watch YouTube videos, 76.4% of them have shared YouTube videos on other social media, and 18.9% participants revealed that they shared in a quite high frequency: daily or several times a week (see Table 7.1).

We further examined the most popular social media for audiences to share YouTube videos on. Facebook is found to be the platform that people share YouTube videos on the most frequently, followed by Twitter (see Table 7.2). Prior research shows that people share videos to their social circles (Ma et al. 2014). Compared with other social media, Facebook sharing is most likely to be concentrated with friends and family, rather than strangers.

Table 7.1 Frequency of Sharing YouTube Videos on Social Media

How Often Do You Share YouTube Videos on Social Media (e.g., on Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	
Less than once a year	9.7%
Once several months	16.8%
About once a month	15.8%
Several times a month	15.2%
Several times a week	12.6%
Daily	6.3%
Total	100 (N = 525)

Table 7.2 YouTube Video Sharing on Social Networking Sites (SNS)

	Sharing via SNS (N = 218)	
SNS	*Mean*	SD
Facebook	4.10	1.89
Twitter	2.84	2.18
Google+	1.39	1.21
Reddit	1.33	1.07
Tumblr	1.83	1.72
Pinterest	1.69	1.47
LinkedIn	1.24	.94

SHARING OF PRODUCT REVIEW VIDEOS

After examining the general sharing of YouTube videos, we ana the sharing of product review videos specifically. We found that people are more likely to share videos in which YouTubers review products positively rather than negatively. A comparison of positively reviewed and negatively reviewed product video reveals that people are significantly more likely to share positively reviewing videos made by YouTubers. Even company-made promotion videos are as likely to be shared as negative product review videos made by YouTubers (see Table 7.3).

COMPARISON OF YOUTUBE VIDEO SHARERS AND NON-SHARERS

There are very few people who actually create videos and upload them to YouTube. Most people only refer links to web pages or YouTube videos in their social media. However, there are still people who never share a thing. It is interesting to understand the motivations of the sharers and non-sharers. In chapter 5, we have discussed why people use product review videos. For example, they use them to reduce the uncertainty of products to make the

Table 7.3 Sharing Behavior after Watching Product Reviews Created by YouTubers and Companies

	Sharing Behavior after Watching Product Reviews (agree = 4, strongly agree = 5)	
	Agree	*Strongly Agree*
Positively reviewed by YouTuber (N = 492)	16.5%	4.1%
Negatively reviewed by YouTuber (N = 492)	10.2%	3.3%
Company-made videos (N = 489)	11.5%	2.5%

purchase decision. In the context of sharing YouTube videos—either product reviews or other types of videos—is the nature of *sharing* a form of eWOM? It is possible that people who share videos have the same motivation as the product review creators. Instead of endorsing a product, a sharer aims to influence others by referring a video that embeds certain beliefs and attitudes similar to himself/herself. According to Hu and Ha's (2015) new definition of eWOM, it refers to "any information, including not only customer's own statements but also shared/forwarded posts from retailers or other published sources, which are exchanged among potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (p. 17). In other words, sharing as a form of eWOM affecting the people who are in the sharers' social circles.

In the survey conducted in 2015, we asked the participants how frequently they shared YouTube videos to their social media feeds in general. In total, 525 interviewees answered the question. We identified heavy sharers as the people who *share videos daily* and *several times a week*. Among all the 99 heavy sharers, 33.4% of them were males, while 63.5% were females. Light sharers refer to the people who share videos *about once a month*, *once several months*, and *less than once a year*. Non-sharers are those who never share anything via any social media.

We then compared their device use for video consumption, types of video watched, activities engaged in YouTube, and setting of watching the videos among sharers and non-sharers (see Table 7.4).

From the results, we can tell the significant differences of the media- and video-using behavior between different sharers. Smartphones and computers are the most frequently used device people use for heavy sharers to watch YouTube videos. It makes sense that the younger generations use more mobile devices rather traditional devices. However, computers are still a very popular device, probably due to the fact that the comfort of watching videos on a larger screen should not be neglected. Mobile devices, on the other hand, have less technology affordance that allows people feel easy to search and switch video channels. One interviewee in our in-depth interviews said that it was impossible to listen to the music via YouTube mobile app when the

Table 7.4 Comparison between Heavy Sharers, Light Sharers, and Non-sharers

	Heavy Sharers		*Light Sharers*		*Non-Sharers*		
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	
	1 = never, 7 = daily						*F*
Device							
Smartphones	4.73	.61	4.20	.94	4.15	.96	14.23***
Tablets/iPads	2.64	1.63	2.14	1.43	1.90	1.44	7.08**
Computers	4.50	.92	4.14	.96	4.04	1.21	6.11**
Videogame consoles	2.44	1.60	1.82	1.26	1.60	1.14	12.25***
Smart TV	2.00	1.49	1.48	1.12	1.29	.85	11.33***
Digital TV using OTT boxes	1.88	1.39	1.62	1.19	1.27	.80	8.12***
Type of videos watched							
Music videos	5.58	1.46	5.09	1.46	5.04	1.61	8.91***
Movies	5.60	1.43	4.49	1.52	4.53	1.77	13.03***
TV programs (aired on TV)	5.76	1.51	5.3	1.60	4.78	1.92	9.60***
Do it yourself videos	4.57	1.76	3.71	1.73	3.46	1.86	12.03***
Product demonstration and reviews	3.50	2.08	2.88	1.68	2.69	1.78	6.2**
Travel	3.30	2.00	2.63	1.57	2.38	1.67	8.87***
Home videos about pets or children	4.36	2.25	3.59	1.99	2.92	1.91	14.01***
Documentaries	4.31	1.72	3.40	1.56	3.11	1.83	15.83***
News	5.31	1.61	4.29	1.88	3.88	1.99	17.30***
Videos/channels recommended by YouTube	5.33	1.92	4.50	1.94	4.47	2.12	7.33**
Activities engaged in YouTube							
Watching videos	6.48	.90	6.12	.87	6.06	1.26	6.28**
Watching videos involving consumer review	3.88	2.08	3.17	1.84	2.77	1.90	9.57***

Reading comments	4.71	2.24	3.91	1.99	3.32	2.29	11.84***
Writing comments	3.16	2.34	1.98	1.51	1.52	1.30	28.75***
Uploading videos created by others	2.04	1.99	1.36	1.06	1.08	.61	18.05***
Creating and uploading videos	2.25	1.96	1.63	1.17	1.27	.94	26.24***
Settings of watching videos							
Workplace or class time	4.38	2.31	3.24	2.18	2.78	2.14	14.89***
Home	6.48	1.06	6.23	1.10	6.11	1.34	2.89
On the go/commuting	4.55	2.42	3.42	2.19	3.00	2.20	13.79***
In the waiting line	4.93	2.33	3.30	2.13	2.75	2.22	28.61***
In between classes on campus	6.00	1.59	4.45	2.11	.09	2.44	25.28***

*differences significant at $p < 0.05$.
**differences significant at $p < 0.01$.
***differences significant at $p < 0.001$.

screen turned off. (Right now, YouTube improved its app that videos will be playing when the screen is off. It also launched YouTube music mobile app.) It is only an example, but we do notice that mobile apps have the limitations that traditional Internet browsers do not have.

Heavy sharers have a higher frequency of use across all devices than light sharers and non-sharers. It means that the more people frequently use the devices to watch YouTube videos, the more likely they share those YouTube videos. Those heavy sharers have higher access to more videos than those who do not or cannot frequently use the devices to watch videos (Ha & Yun 2014). Furthermore, the ease of pushing the "share" button costs people less effort when using mobile devices (Boyle & Cook 2004).

As shown in Table 7.3, heavy sharers consume all types of videos frequently than the light or non-sharers. The diverse types of video consumption allow them to share different videos to different people. Moreover, heavy sharers engage in more YouTube activities such as reading and writing comments, they also spend more time on YouTube and have stronger interest in sharing to others what they watched. They have different motivations for sharing YouTube videos. One is to influence other people as opinion leaders (Kümpel, Karnowski & Keyling 2015). For instance, heavy sharers can influence others by sharing product demonstration/reviews and news to their social media pages. As it has been discussed earlier, sharing is a form of eWOM by endorsing and diffusing an idea embedded in the videos (Hu & Ha 2015). Imagine what type of YouTube video you share. Potentially, you share a music video or a movie trailer that is worthwhile to watch. You may also want to share a product review with a friend who recently wants a product like this, which shows others your care and can be of assistance (Huang, Lin & Lin 2009). Or you share a video featuring a product simply because it is fun (Eckler & Bolls 2011; Guadagno, Rempala, Murphy & Okdie 2013). Another motivation is to build your identity through sharing (Kwon, Ha & Kowal 2017). Whatever video you share, it represents at least one aspect of yourself. The shared YouTube videos not only influence sharers' audience, but also helps the sharers build their identities. The behavior may fulfill sharers' need to belong to a community (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh 2003). It may also facilitate social interaction that people share news to start a conversation.

Interestingly, when we look at the video-viewing settings among different sharers, we found that there is no significant difference between heavy, light, and non-sharers whether they watch videos at home. It makes sense when we consider their device usage. People who are the frequent sharers own and use mobile devices to share videos on the commuting. So sharing most likely occurs when someone is out of home or on the go with a high intent to socialize with people.

Choi (2016) revealed a strong positive relationship between news reading and actively sharing the news on online social networking sites (SNS). We found that same results on YouTube using. The heavy sharers are heavy viewers and video creators as well. They engaged in different YouTube activities, like reading comments, uploading videos, and even creating videos. Their motivations are usually very similar to those content creators, such as "platform assistance," "concern for other consumers," "social benefits," "helping the company," and expressing feelings (Hennig-Thurau, Walsh & Walsh 2003, 46).

The YouTube sharers are the advocates of the videos and YouTube, no matter what reasons motivated them to share. The referrals improve the YouTube traffic. The sharing behavior leads to more video exposure, which brings more revenue to YouTube (Kümpel, Karnowski & Keyling 2015). A report from Pew Research Center found that people who get the news shared by their family and friends are more likely to inspire follow-up actions such as sharing, seeking more information, and talking about it with others (Mitchell et al. 2017). For YouTube, the follow-up actions will be watching the videos shared by others. YouTube's latest initiative is to add a feature to its mobile app to encourage people to share YouTube videos, they can send it directly through the YouTube app to their contacts as text-messaging with a video thumbnail without going through social media (Ingraham 2017).

YouTube users forms their unique communities based on their interests through YouTube channel subscription. However, the transmission of the media content is still active. Unlike other social media such as Facebook and Twitter, audience can share YouTube videos to other platforms by simply clicking the "share" button. As we discussed earlier, the YouTube users do not need to register before using, which increases the video exposure to other channels. The sharing of YouTube videos increases viewership, since the videos usually are transmitted between both strong-ties and weak-ties. It brings a great impact on the audience. YouTube as a content portal also benefits several parties, including YouTube itself, content creators such as YouTubers, advertisers, marketers in diffusing new products and services, and even in constructing ideology, which will bring huge influence on the society.

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Chapter 8

Brand Videos on YouTube

Alyssa Fisher

With over a billion hours watched daily, YouTube's broad reach and video capability are increasingly used by marketers to promote their brands. Brand use of YouTube can typically be divided into three categories: advertising prior to or during the playing of videos, product partnership videos with popular YouTube channels, and brand channels on YouTube. Companies use their brand channels on YouTube to house commercials, product overviews, and promotional videos on initiatives or community-based projects. But increasingly, creative and unique content on the branded channels draws viewers and subscribers, effectively establishing an audience that chooses to be exposed to branded content. Such use of YouTube channels is an example of content marketing, defined as "a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience—and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action" (Content Marketing Institute, n.d.).

On Thanksgiving Day 2017 in the United States, Verizon's YouTube channel provided a 360-degree view of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, enabled by six different cameras. This streaming view of the parade was mentioned several times during NBC's more traditional airing of the parade on broadcast television as a way to engage with the parade and view things that one might not be able to see on the broadcast. The concept was launched in 2016, when Verizon, Macy's, and NBCUniversal created a live stream of the parade on Verizon's YouTube channel hosted by Olivia Culpo, who returned as host in 2017, and co-hosted by Marlon Wayans in 2016 and Keith Habersberger in 2017. In 2016 the effort was portrayed as a marketing partnership for Verizon, giving them the opportunity to promote the new Google Pixel and its superior camera. In contrast, in 2017 the stream was labeled as an enhanced way to watch the parade that provided a unique perspective that only those who attend the parade in New York City have previously experienced. *Variety* magazine called the television broadcast the "linear parade broadcast," while the YouTube experience was the "live-stream," proposing that the Verizon video would be an equally authentic way to watch the parade, which 1.3 million people livestreamed in 2016 ("Verizon 360 Live—Thanksgiving Day Parade—The Shorty Awards" n.d.). The 360-degree view that Verizon promoted was provided by several 360-degree cameras placed throughout the parade route and on the lead float for the parade. Viewers could watch any of the cameras and also click on the feed to move around the camera's view. The stream, available exclusively on Thanksgiving Day, also added a picture-in-picture view in the 2017 stream, allowing viewers to continue watching the parade stream during commercial breaks.

This content provided a creative opportunity to bring visitors to Verizon's YouTube channel. With over 111,500 subscribers as of November 2017, the channel is updated several times a week with videos that include commercial spots for their mobile wireless service, a series called #whatsonfios that promotes their FIOS television cable and Internet services, promotions for specific technological devices like smartphones and smart watches, more community-based efforts housed under playlists called Verizon Innovative Learning, and also Policy, which features an interview on Net Neutrality. The channel's videos include a wide variety of content and can serve as a pretty standard example of a successful brand channel on YouTube, where companies use YouTube to provide access to on-demand commercials, information about products, and also often attempt to curate unique content that give more personality to massive brands.

This chapter will briefly first review the three different ways that companies use YouTube, before focusing on brand channel content. It will select five of the most popular brand channels as examples, as well as examine our survey and in-depth interviews of YouTube viewers on their perception of company videos that they choose to watch and why. Finally, the chapter will offer some best practices for brands wanting to create YouTube channels that attract viewership and loyal audiences.

ADVERTISING AND PRODUCT PARTNERSHIP VIDEOS

Company or brand-created videos on YouTube can be approached from a few different directions, including advertisements, brand channel videos, and brand sponsored or partnered videos. Each of these methods is an example of a company's effort to sell a product and place a message before a YouTube viewer, but each of these avenues presents its own difficulties and benefits. Whichever method(s) a company employs, it must be said that the YouTube model has changed the way that companies approach commercial advertising—no longer do brands rely on thirty second or one-minute spots placed in primetime slots on television. On YouTube, sometimes brands only have five or ten seconds to catch the attention of a viewer, while other times they have the opportunity to craft a narrative for up to five minutes or spread over several videos linked to one another.

In its earliest iterations, brand partnership and brand content on YouTube was considered guerrilla marketing, as in the case of Nike's 2005 "Touch of Gold" video featuring Ronaldinho and his soccer tricks and Smirnoff's 2006 "Tea Partay" music video inspired advertisement (Keen 2007; Kyncl & Peyvan 2017). These were videos posted online and shared virally because of sensational content or such production quality. Both videos created buzz around as to whether the video was produced by an amateur or professionally made, as YouTube was largely known as an amateur video site at the time. Neither video was posted from a brand-named account, and when it was revealed that these videos were created for promotional purposes, conceptions of online advertising shifted to a space where content itself could be branded, rather than separating out ads from consumables.

The introduction of skippable ads, a feature on YouTube called TrueView, also encourages brands to create content rather than placing advertisements in front of other content in which people can skip the ads easily. As YouTuber and brand partner Casey Neistat states, the proliferation of screens in society creates an oversaturation to the point where advertising has become invisible due to the highly cluttered environment, and "in order to be effective, you have to penetrate that ... influence is the only thing that matters in marketing" (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017, 205). This feature further encourages content marketing rather than advertising, which results in the creation of brand channels, or exclusive channels owned and run by the company, and brand partnerships, or paid collaborations between YouTubers like Neistat and the company. TrueView also puts pressure on the companies who do advertise to create spots that attract the viewer's attention in five seconds, so they don't skip them. For more information on viewership of skippable ads, see chapter 10. The interactive and seemingly optional take on advertising created by YouTube encourages brands to create innovative advertising, and some brands, like P&G, use YouTube to test market commercial concepts before large advertising events like the Super Bowl (Kyncl & Peyvan 2017).

Another form of brand presence on YouTube is sponsored videos, or those created through a partnership with a YouTube creator like Neistat, are housed on the YouTuber's channel and are designated as #sponsored or #ad. These videos may be woven into a creator's typical content releases or created specifically for the partnership. For more information on sponsored videos, see chapter 9.

Marketing crossovers are increasingly popular, such as Verizon's livestream of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. These unique ways to provide content without using typical advertising breaks are increasingly popular, as Brian Steinberg of *Variety* points out, "marketers are placing new emphasis on devising content that dovetails with the programming that attracted viewers in the first place, rather than interrupting a show with messages routinely viewed as something of an annoyance" (Steinberg 2016).

Branded YouTube marketing channels are often a part of social media and marketing initiatives and are just as integral to brand identity as a Facebook page or a website. They provide a way to show a more in-depth and multifaceted view of the company through behind the scenes or everyday happenings. Creating content that audiences want to watch, combined with the social aspects of YouTube like commenting, liking, and sharing, allows brands to reach individual viewers as well as their community circles for free without paying huge sum of advertising fees.

BRAND CHANNELS

Just as success on broadcast television is measured in viewers by Nielsen, so are successful YouTube channels—the branded marketing channels with the most views on YouTube are ranked each month and are consistently dominated by toy-based brands like Lego, which had over six billion total views of their videos and 4.4 million subscribers as of December 2017 (Socialbakers 2017). Lego's YouTube channel is multidimensional and includes a weekly show called "REBRICKULOUS," behind-the-scenes videos from the Lego movies and new Lego product releases, and "mini movies" featuring popular Lego figurines like DC superheroes and Star Wars characters (Lego 2017).

Successful brand channels provide unique content that ties into their products and brand identity without serving as duplication of aired commercials. As of December 2017, the top five brand channels calculated by video views are mostly companies targeting children including Lego, Kids TV HD Egg-Videos.com, and Hasbro (Socialbakers 2017). Lego, top ranked, and Hasbro, ranked number five, both share content consisting of primarily animated series that support the toys they sell, such as a My Little Pony animated series offered by Hasbro and the previously mentioned mini movies featuring Lego superhero characters. Also aimed at play and following a similar tactic, is number four brand channel Angry Birds which produces animated shorts featuring the characters from their mobile games. These channels and their content seem to be intended for the children that they market their end products to, providing the digital equivalent to Saturday morning cartoons and the commercials that accompany them all tied in together.

The Vat19 channel, ranked at number two with 4.5 million subscribers and a total view of 3.8 billion, and Kids TV HD EggVideos.com, ranked number three with a total view of 3.8 billion but no subscribers, are unique brands on YouTube in that they both represent brands who have non-mainstream products, or products that are not advertised in other mass media. The videos on Kids TV HD EggVideos are the only product that they create, which are meant to educate young children about color recognition through the use of toys and candy. Vat19 is an online specialty gift store, but their videos present themselves as less of a brand than as other content creators presenting funny toys and gifts with a comical air, with a series called "Burning Questions," in which they use their own products to do YouTube-style challenges like "Will it blend?" (Vat19 2017). Vat19's audience are those who can buy their own products, rather than children in whom they need to build brand loyalty and product awareness in order to have children remember to ask for their toys. The videos presented challenge-style or in a funny manner provide a kind of instant demand for their products.

In looking at these top five brand channels on YouTube, presenting content that is engaging and loyalty-building is important to continue to build views and subscribers, with the goal of inspiring purchases. While aimed at children, brands like Lego and Hasbro provide an example of ways in which to enhance the brand with relevant content while promoting product tie-ins. Their animated and other produced content also appeals to digital natives who are already watching these brands getting into the realm of television show programming. Although they represent products that are not as widely known, Vat19's popularity proves that its content is distinctive enough to draw viewers in, even without name recognition. These five brands' branded channels stand out and gain the viewership with engaging content to the audience. They go beyond simple commercial announcements and provide an extension of the products that they offer, showcasing merchandise and compatible content in ways that are as engaging and entertaining as other regular YouTube channels.

DIGITAL NATIVES AND BRANDED CONTENT

Digital natives have a keen ability to pick up on branded content, whether it is a sponsored video, advertisement, or brand-created video. While brands are constantly trying to creatively present their products, users of social media increasingly find ways to avoid advertising, whether through ad blocking software or skippable ads. In contrast, there are brands like the ones just discussed that attract millions of subscribers every year. To gain some insight into how digital natives perceive branded content, participants in our study were asked about their opinions on company-created videos.

In the in-depth interviews, many of those interviewed initially shared negative comments about company-produced content. Most interviewees answered that they did not find the company-made videos to be beneficial in any way, often citing that they only show positive aspects of a product or are biased in their representation. One interviewee, a female undergraduate, summed up several negative comments with the thought that “it’s probably just showing the positive aspects, it’s not showing if people don’t like it or anything like that. So it’s going to highlight all of the good things of the product, so that’s good. But at the same time you’ll probably want to see the negatives too.” Another male undergraduate interviewee found company-created videos to be completely untrustworthy: “I do think they are fabricated because they are trying to sell a product.” Even those who admitted that they found the videos helpful, such as one female 21-year-old undergraduate, acknowledged that vetting the videos was difficult to do, stating that “I think it’s biased, and I often don’t trust them without someone I personally know discussing the product.” In this statement, she acknowledges that company-made videos can be entertaining or even persuasive, but that she finds it difficult to trust them because of an implied end goal of sales rather than providing impartial and reliable product with consumers’ interest in mind.

Navigating a line between finding videos that viewers want to watch and avoiding “annoying” company-made videos points to increased media literacy on the part of viewers, discovering how companies brand their content and cultivating an increased ability to avoid it. As one participant, a 20-year-old female undergraduate student stated, “A lot of channels specialize in videos with clips I want to see,” stating that one company may hold rights to a share a library of clips, such as vintage commercial spots. But, in watching many videos from the same company, the viewers learn the company’s patterns in video format, for example, the female respondent continued, “I know Hasbro starts advertising at the end, so I stop before that.” Just in the same way that DVRs allowed the ability to skip commercials during television watching, pattern creating in the ways that branded videos include more advertising-style content are quickly caught on to by viewers, so brands must keep their videos and content original and dynamic in style and format.

A graduate student interviewee distinguished between advertising and company-made videos, stating, “These aren’t ads. These are just videos they made about it. I think I’d react a lot differently mainly than I would to a pure commercial because it’s something that you are not forced to watch. It’s a free video you watch, like, hey we made this YouTube video. I would probably watch that, like, more closely than I would ads. Mainly because I am watching it and I have my whole attention to their video than I do in an ad.”

This student identified that advertising and company-made YouTube content can and does differ from each other, and that this differentiated content also elicits a more attentive watch experience for them as a viewer.

Finding ways that viewers consider company videos helpful or engaging is important for brands who want to reach heavy viewers who will share the video and believe it to be purchasable. One interviewee, a male undergraduate, said, "I do find [company-created videos] beneficial, I don't know if YouTube has their own type of commercial production cause sometimes I feel like a lot of commercial strategies come from YouTube ads because they know a lot of different age groups watch YouTube," showing that they believe that company-created content on YouTube is unique and targeted in its development and tactic approach. In the same vein, this user acknowledges that he finds company-made videos to be beneficial but does simultaneously associate company-made videos with advertisements. Another viewer, a 20-year-old female undergraduate, added that commercial personalization may be beneficial, saying that they might find company-made videos more interesting "maybe if they were personalized and in my 'Recommended Videos'" and made a comparison to the personalized ad experience that can sometimes be found on sites such as Hulu.

Even if the viewer associates company-made videos only with advertising, it may still prove to be helpful when it comes to the moment of purchase. As one 22-year-old female interviewee said, "It's a good idea to get your name out there and your product out there so definitely it's beneficial. Most people when they watch these brand videos they don't consciously prepare to buy the brand. They may just watch it for information or even entertainment. But when they are ready to buy the product, the brand will become on top of their mind in their choice."

One positive aspect of company-created videos that connects to a popular viewership category for digital natives is the how-to video. While some interviewees dismissed company product videos as untrustworthy, company-produced instructional videos are considered to be more trustworthy than user-created ones, as one female graduate student interviewee stated: "The YouTubers or reviewers or bloggers can show their own reviews. But those are their personal ideas. That is not official instructions or official information. Sometimes, I will go to the brand official accounts for legitimate information." Another graduate student added, "The company made product promotion videos can tell you how to use that product. It is important and beneficial to us." So aside from content that is purely entertaining, information about products that could be educational or instructional is deemed as more trustworthy than videos from YouTubers who are not affiliated with the company. The official status of the brand video increases its credibility.

Based on responses during our interviews, digital natives still perceive brand videos to be advertising, and only seen as helpful when they look for official instructions on how to use or set up a product. While company-created videos sometimes serve an entertaining purpose, they are also seen as purely promotional and potentially biased. Because people typically search for the brand videos to meet their specific needs or encounter brand videos through recommended videos, they are less likely to be avoided. This is an opportunity for brands to present the creative content that is discussed as most popular on YouTube among viewers. Interesting and unique videos that provide a new view, way to engage, or content that is not available elsewhere and doesn't outwardly act as a commercial are the best ways to gain viewers as a brand channel.

During our survey, we asked participants about their engagement with company-made videos, specifically those that feature a particular product. Over a quarter (26.8%) of participants stated that after watching a company-made featured product video, they would be more likely to purchase the featured product, responding that they agree or strongly agree that they would, compared to 19.6% who said they would not, choosing disagree or strongly disagree. Third person effect, or perceived influence on others was even stronger—when asked whether the video would influence others to buy the same product, 41.5% stated that they agree or strongly agree that others would be persuaded to purchase the product, compared with only 11.9% who did not think others would purchase.

In looking closer at the survey results, we identified no significant differences in their responses to brand videos when it came to demographic factors such as race, income, and gender. However, respondents who identified as a YouTube creator had significant differences in their perceived effect of a company-made product promotion video versus participants who were merely a part of the audience, as seen in Table 8.1. YouTube video creators are more likely to believe the positive effect of company/brand videos on the audience than their non-creator audience counterparts: more than one half (54.7%) of creators said they would be likely to purchase a product

Table 8.1 Comparison of Effects of Company-Created Product Videos on YouTube Creators versus Non-Creators

	I Will be More Likely to Buy the Product		*I Would Share the Video on My Social Media*		*Other People Who Watched it Would Buy the Product*	
	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*Agree*	*Strongly Agree*	*Agree*
Video Creators	18.8%	35.9%	10.9%	23.4%	20.3%	35.9%
Non-Creators	2.8%	19.9%	0.9%	9.7%	4.3%	35.1%

featured in a company video, compared to 22.7% of non-creators. Creators have a significant difference when it comes to company video perception and have a higher likelihood to share the company video to their own social media accounts, with 43% of creators stating that they would share the video compared to 10.6%of those who are not creators. A majority (56.2%) of creators also believe that others who watch a company-made product video are likely to purchase the featured product, compared to 39.4% of non-creators who believe that others would be likely to buy.

Race was only a significant factor when it came to sharing the videos in questions. Nonwhites are twice as likely to share company videos on their personal social media pages when compared to white viewers: 24.4% nonwhite viewers said that they would share a company-made video featuring a product while just 12.1% of white survey respondents expressed a potential intention to share. These quantifiable results show that a key piece in brand videos, especially those that feature a promoted product, is to engage users to share the video to their social media accounts, because there is a strong impression that these videos are persuasive to others. Adding a call to action to share the video, potentially through asking a question at the end of the product video, or providing a hashtag to use on social media, can increase interaction and positive response as well as potential purchasing power on company-made videos.

Brand content on YouTube has evolved from guerrilla marketing, videos produced and released without demarcating that they were advertisements to current day, where YouTube use by companies is a part of a multifaceted social media marketing budget and content marketing as a new strategy for company to promote their brands. Apart from toy marketers, sports content is also highly used by marketers such as Nike and Red Bull and they became the most subscribed sports channels on YouTube as a result (see chapter 11). Currently, successful brands require a channel with videos that attempt to gain viewers' attention through tactics like content created uniquely for YouTube, special behind-the-scenes content that builds a brand personality, or cross-promotions like Verizon's Thanksgiving Day Parade sponsorship that present a brand with a pushed viewership to their YouTube channel, and provide audiences with an exclusive opportunity to experience content they are already interested in, in addition to content that directly relate to a product such as product demonstration.

While digital natives claim to dislike company-made videos, they do find use for them, particularly when authenticity of information about a new product is concerned. Interviewees stated that company-created videos are merely advertising, and it is up to the brand channels to prove that companies can create more engaging content. Our surveys showed that YouTube creators believe in company-made videos and their ability to persuade. Continued partnerships with creators and engaging efforts to get viewers to share promoted video campaigns are tactics that could lead to further success with company-made programming. The next two chapters will examine sponsored videos and online video advertising as two other forms of promotion for marketers on YouTube.

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Chapter 9

Sponsored Videos on YouTube

Fiouna Ruonan Zhang

SPONSORSHIP IN ONLINE VIDEOS

Sponsors invest in online videos for various reasons, like promoting recently released products, bringing awareness to brands, or nurturing positive brand images. The vloggers being sponsored, on the other hand, gain either monetary benefits from the sponsorship or other kinds of support from the sponsors, such as free products, tickets to VIP events, or early access to new products. Similar to the cooperation between sponsors and traditional media programs (e.g., TV programs), the common interest between sponsors and sponsored online vloggers is the audience. Online video makers' ability to attract and potentially influence a large number of audiences is the fundamental reason behind any collaboration with sponsors.

In the world of YouTube, YouTubers have two main methods of making money. First, YouTubers can receive money from audiences' views of advertisement prior to watching their videos. If the video gets hundreds of thousands of views, the profits generated by audience watching the pre-roll video advertisements become quite significant. YouTuber Vexxed, who has 455,000 followers up until December 2017 revealed in his own video the amount of money he made out of YouTube advertisements (Vexxed 2016). From June 2016 to November 2016, the YouTuber's videos received 18 million views all together and brought the YouTuber an income of $24,000.

Another method for YouTubers to make profits out of their channels is to benefit from collaboration with brands. Some YouTubers' channels are specialized in reviewing certain types of products, and the YouTubers are recognized by their followers as experts in their respective specialty. The ways YouTubers work with brands ranges from producing sponsored videos, to launching collaborated products, to adding affiliated links in the description box under their videos. For example, Claire Marshall, who owns a YouTube channel subscribed by 932,000 people up till December 2017 was a makeup artist, then turned into a beauty and lifestyle vlogger. She collaborated with Sephora by using the company's products in her makeup videos (Marshall 2017).

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION REGULATION ON SPONSORED ONLINE POSTS

With the growing national coverage of Internet access and the continuous expansion of personal computer and smartphone ownership, more and more people, especially the younger generations, are deviating from traditional media and turning to online platforms for information. Thus online advertising becomes critical for brands to attract millennials and maintain existing connections. The year-over-year growth rate for global online advertising hit 29.6% for the third quarter of 2017 (eMarketer 2017). However, while the regulation on sponsorship in traditional media programs is already established (FTC 2017), the collaboration between brands and influencers on online platforms was difficult to manage. Unlike traditional media, online space is far less structured. Websites that attract huge volumes not only belong to certain established media or other types of organizations, but also belong to personal content creators like bloggers and YouTubers.

Scientific research has revealed that people have an inherent distrust against media organizations (Arceneaux 2012). Thus, promotional messages distributed through bloggers and YouTubers can be very impactful in influencing audience's purchasing decisions. This is beneficial for brands that want to cooperate with influencers. But from the audience perspective, they might confuse advertisements or sponsored contents with unbiased product reviews if the information regarding the sponsorship is not properly disclosed. For example, Trevor Martin and Thomas Cassell, two impactful social media influencers widely followed by online gaming community as "TmarTN" and "Syndicate," faced charges from Federal Trade Commission (FTC), a U.S. government agency alleging to protect American customers and maintain fair corporate competition (Our Mission, n.d.), for deceptively promoting online gaming service CSGO Lotto without disclosing their co-ownership of the company (CSGO Lotto 2017).

To enhance the regulation on online brand endorsement and protect people from stealth marketing messages, FTC updated The Endorsement Guides in September of 2017 (FTC Guides 2017). According to the new guides, all influencers (e.g., vloggers) need to clearly disclose their financial or family connections with sponsoring brands. The instructions were very specific, since the word "clearly" might be interpreted differently by different people. For example, FTC explicitly instructed that all influencers need to use unambiguous words to reveal the cooperation (FTC Guides 2017). Expressions like "Thanks to X brand" or "I am honored to be an ambassador for X brand" are not enough to display the financial relationship. Hashtags like #sp, #thanks, and #collab should also be changed into a clearer version: #ad. In addition, FTC instructs influencers to let audience be informed without the need to click the "click for more" buttons. Video sponsorships should be displayed for long enough time within the videos, instead of being put under the description box. Sponsored Instagram posts should contain at least #ad above the "click for more" button.

YOUTUBE REGULATION ON SPONSORED CONTENT

Apart from complying with FTC guidelines, YouTubers who intend to post sponsored videos on their channels also need to make sure that their collaborations with brands are in line with the lastest YouTube policy on "paid product placements and endorsements" (YouTube 2016). In the updated policy, YouTube requires all content creators on the platform to disclose any sponsorship from third parties by checking "video contains paid promotion" box in content declaration section within Creator Studio. After being notified on third party sponsorships, YouTube will still run advertisements before the sponsored videos, but will replace any ads that contradict with the sponsored brands mentioned within the videos. For example, if a video is sponsored by clothing brand A, YouTube will avoid showing company A's competitors in the ad displaying before the video rolls. YouTubers can also check the "help me notify viewers" box to display a 10 second text disclaimer displaying "Includes paid promotion" right above the play button of the videos. A spokesperson from YouTube disclosed that if a sponsored video was found violating the YouTube ad policy, it might be removed from the platform (Alvarez 2017).

AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO SPONSORED AND NON-SPONSORED VIDEOS

While YouTube and its sponsored contents are comparatively under-researched to traditional sponsored media programs, we investigated audiences' awareness regarding persuasion attempt and their trust toward sponsored YouTube content in our study.

ATTENTION TO SPONSORSHIP

In traditional media programs like TV broadcast of sports games and entertainment shows, the name of the sponsored brand are often repeatedly mentioned by the hosts for maximum return on investment for the sponsors. The more attention given to who the sponsor is, the more likely that fans of the TV shows will grow awareness and positive attitude toward the sponsoring brand. In the world of YouTube, things are different. Many YouTubers review products for a living. It's reasonable to believe that the subscribers of these YouTubers will more likely build favorable attitude toward products if the YouTuber recommends them based on their independent and unbiased opinion. Too much knowledge of the fact that the video is sponsored by certain company might drive away those audiences who came for YouTubers' independent opinion.

We asked our participants whether they pay attention to the information about whether the YouTube videos they watch were sponsored. According to FTC's latest guidance for influencers, all sponsored videos must disclose the information about the sponsorship in clear and noticeable ways. However, whether the viewers pay attention to this information remains unknown. From the 516 YouTube users of our study, only 30% answered "Yes," 44.4% responded "No," and 25% chose "Don't know if the video is sponsored." The results indicate that to almost half of the viewers, the information regarding whether the YouTube videos they watch are affiliated with sponsorships is not important enough for them to notice. To one-fourth of the viewers, they are unable to clearly distinguish unsponsored videos from sponsored videos. The reasons might be that the information about the sponsorship is not prominently displayed or not all YouTubers declare that their videos are sponsored or not and whether they receive any benefits from brands.

Comparison between Audience With and Without Persuasion Knowledge

We divided our participants (N = 516) into two groups based on whether they paid attention to the sponsorships of the videos they watch. As shown in Table 9.1, a comparative analysis between the two groups generate statistically significant findings in terms of YouTube usage, preferred topics of videos, eWOM effects, and preferred sources of product review.

Audiences who pay attention to whether the YouTube videos they watch are sponsored have significant higher frequency of watching and creating videos, and posting and reading comments. For all topics of YouTube videos, audiences with persuasion knowledge have a higher frequency of consumption. They appear to be heavier users of YouTube in the length of time

Table 9.1 Comparison between Audiences Who Paid and Did Not Pay Attention to Sponsorship Information

	Paid Attention to Sponsorship Information					
	Yes			*No*		
	N	*Mean*	*SD*	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*
YouTube usage*						
Watching videos	158	6.42	0.78	357	6.07	1.05
Watching product reviews	158	3.75	1.96	356	2.97	1.87
Reading comments	158	4.54	2.12	356	3.68	2.12
Posting comments	158	2.39	1.90	355	1.97	1.66
Creating videos	158	1.91	1.42	356	1.64	1.36
Preferred types of product videos*						
Technological products	156	3.46	1.92	357	2.82	1.88
Environment-friendly products	157	2.52	1.65	356	2.02	1.51
Daily supplies	156	2.76	1.81	358	2.31	1.72
Stationery and books	156	2.42	1.68	356	1.89	1.39
Clothing	157	3.17	1.98	356	2.46	1.86
Food and diet	157	3.34	1.97	356	2.78	1.90
Attitudes toward positive reviews						
Favorable impression	149	3.86	.74	344	3.62	.82
Product review sources*						
Product reviews on e-commerce sites such as Amazon or eBay	147	3.37	1.05	336	2.97	1.18
Online videos on websites	147	3.10	1.10	335	2.68	1.15
Online forums	147	2.69	1.12	335	2.25	1.17
Professional product review sites	147	2.73	1.29	334	2.28	1.20

Seven-point frequency scale: 1 = daily, 7 = never.
**differences significant at p < 0.01; ***differences significant at p < 0.001.

and breadth of activities. Having persuasion knowledge does not necessarily mean being less likely to be influenced by product reviews. Audience who pay attention to sponsorships have higher possibilities of having favorable impression on products positively reviewed on YouTube. For product review sources, audiences with persuasion knowledge use all investigated online channels more heavily. They appear to be more concerned with how products are rated online rather than in traditional interpersonal word-of-mouth effect.

AUDIENCE'S TRUST TOWARD SPONSORED VIDEOS

As argued above, the main sources of monetary benefits of YouTubers include sponsorship from brands and subscribers' viewing of advertisements prior to watching the YouTubers' videos. One might be curious whether those two sources of income are contradictory. With more sponsored content in one's

YouTube channel, the number of subscribers might drop due to the loss of trust toward the YouTuber. Some audiences rely on YouTubers for independent and unbiased reviews of products or services. It's reasonable to think that audience might repel those YouTubers who take on many sponsorships.

For participants who did pay attention to whether the YouTubers they watch videos from are sponsored or not (N = 156), we asked them whether they think non-sponsored videos "explain the product better," "are more trustworthy" and "have the customers' interests in mind more" than sponsored videos. On a five-point Likert scale, "Neither Agree nor Disagree" is the most popular choice (as shown in Table 9.2), which indicates that a good number of audiences do not see non-sponsored videos superior or inferior than sponsored videos, even though they did care about whether the YouTube videos are sponsored or not. For the other participants, they either consider non-sponsored videos more effective (23.7%), trustworthy (37.2%), and have customers in mind more (45.5%), or the exact opposite as less effective (21.8%), less trustworthy (20.5%), and don't have customers in mind more (16.0%).

When asked about whether the sponsorship will alter their view of the YouTuber's genuineness, the qualitative interviews with the participants revealed that compared to deliberately hiding information about sponsorship, they are more willing to accept YouTubers if they explicitly disclose the sponsorship. One participant said during the interview:

> A lot of cooks in YouTube are sponsored by companies. If such information like "They are paying me for saying this" is explicitly stated, I trust them more. If that information was not revealed, it would be less trustworthy.

When asked whether she would still trust a YouTuber if she had known the YouTube is sponsored by certain company, one participant said:

> For the most part, yes, if I am really familiar with that YouTuber. Because I know the YouTubers won't accept the sponsorship except they really enjoy the product. If they have sponsors, I know they are telling a truth, at least enjoy the product.

Table 9.2 Audience's Perception of Non-Sponsored Videos

	Attitudes Toward Non-sponsored Video (N = 156)		
	Explain Product Better	*More Trustworthy*	*Have Customers' Interests in Mind More*
Strongly Agree	8.3%	13.5%	17.3%
Agree	15.4%	23.7%	28.2%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	54.5%	42.3%	38.5%
Disagree	17.3%	17.3%	12.2%
Strongly Disagree	4.5%	3.2%	3.8%

TRUSTING VERSUS UNTRUSTING AUDIENCES TOWARD SPONSORED VIDEOS

Although 69.4% of the total participants do not pay attention or care about whether the YouTube video they watch is sponsored or not, out of those who did (30.6%), a good number of audience expressed that they trust (20.5%) or distrust (37.2%) sponsored videos. Although the number of distrust is higher than trust, that still one fifth of people who pay attention to sponsorship trust those sponsored videos, meaning the persuasion knowledge does not affect their trust in the videos. To find out more about the differences between audience that trust sponsored content and don't, we did a series of comparison on their preferred content of videos, settings of video consumption, behaviors on YouTube, purchase and sharing intention after watching product reviews, sources of video consumption, and demographic information (see Table 9.3). The questionnaire was programed in the way that only participants who answered "Yes" to whether they pay attention to sponsors of videos could answer the questions about their trust toward sponsored videos. Therefore, the sample size of trust related questions is only 156, rendering a statistically insignificant finding. After taking out participants with neutral attitude toward sponsored videos, the sample size for the comparison study is 90.

Demographics

The average age of trusting and untrusting audiences are very similar (20.5 vs. 21.66). However, the standard deviation, or the range of age within each category, is different. The age range of audiences who trust sponsored videos is 1.67, while the age range of untrusting audience is 4.65. This result indicates a higher level of homogeneity among trusting audiences than untrusting audiences. For incomes, the average income of trusting audiences is 1.96 and untrusting audiences' average income is slightly higher at 2.18, for which 1 stands for a monthly income lower than $500, 2 stands for a monthly income between $500 and $1,000, and 3 stands for a monthly income between $1,000 and $1,500. We also did a comparison on the majors of trusting and untrusting audiences of sponsored videos, and no significant difference can be found in this respect.

Content Preference

We investigated the types of online videos watched by both trusting and untrusting audiences. Overall, no significant difference has been found between the video consumption of the two types of audiences, which

Table 9.3 Comparison between People Who Trust and Who Distrust Sponsored Videos

	People Who Trust and Distrust Sponsored Videos (N = 90)			
	Trust Sponsored Videos (N = 32)		*Distrust Sponsored Videos (N = 58)*	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
Types of videos watched				
Music videos	4.97	1.38	5.05	1.73
Movies	5.00	1.68	5.22	1.34
TV programs (aired on TV)	5.16	1.87	5.66	1.31
Do it yourself videos	4.28	1.20	4.10	2.02
News	4.63	1.81	4.81	1.90
Videos/channels recommended by YouTube	4.63	2.01	5.28	1.72
Product demonstration and reviews	3.50	1.57	3.66	2.04
Travel	3.22	1.56	3.10	1.78
Home videos about pets or children	3.59	1.90	3.41	2.00
Documentaries	3.66	1.56	3.84	1.88
Settings of watching videos				
Workplace or class time	3.34	2.13	3.84	2.45
Home	6.55	0.69	6.61	0.73
On the go/commuting	3.36	2.23	3.93	2.47
In the waiting line	2.86	2.12	3.42	2.29
In between classes on campus	4.76	2.06	4.94	2.02
Reading comments	5.00	1.55	4.45	2.34
Writing comments	1.97	1.33	2.66	2.11
Creating and uploading videos	2.72	1.42	2.09	1.60
Sharing on social media*				
Facebook	4.22	1.60	3.98	2.00
Twitter	5.26	1.77	4.90	2.13
Google+	6.78	0.85	6.45	1.47
Reddit	6.78	0.70	6.63	1.08
Tumblr	6.04	1.58	5.1	2.18
Pinterest	6.33	1.30	5.96	1.76
LinkedIn	6.74	0.86	6.71	1.08
Instagram	6.07	1.73	5.96	1.78
Behavioral intentions after watching product review videos				
Positive reviews				
Purchase intention	3.57	1.04	3.66	0.96
Sharing intention	2.23	1.04	2.66	1.21
Negative reviews				
Purchase intention	1.59	0.82	1.54	1.09
Sharing intention	2.10	0.94	2.40	1.22

*differences significant at $p < 0.05$.

indicates that the content of preferred online videos does not affect whether audience trust or distrust sponsored videos. Among all the categories shown in Table 9.3, audiences who trust sponsored videos have slightly higher frequency of consumption in more user-generated types of videos: DIY videos, travel videos, and pets and children videos, while audiences who do not trust sponsored videos watch more professional videos such as music videos, movies, online versions of TV programs, product demonstration and review videos, documentaries, news, and YouTube recommended videos more frequently than those who trust sponsored videos.

Viewing Setting

Audiences who distrust sponsored videos reported higher frequency of all video-viewing settings, particularly for settings “at workplace or class time,” “on the go/commuting,” and “in the waiting line.” Online video consumption under these settings is more likely to be short and fractured. The content of videos are more likely to be quick entertainment such as music video, short funny videos, and product review videos viewed just for entertainment as opposed to for serious information gathering before big purchase. This result reveals that people who watch online videos in a high frequency under both fractured and unfractured manners might hold more discrete opinion against sponsored content.

Behaviors on YouTube

We investigated participants’ behaviors on YouTube other than just watching video, such as reading comments, posting comments, uploading self-made videos, and sharing YouTube videos to other social media platforms. Compared with audiences who do not trust sponsored videos, audiences who trust sponsored videos read comments more frequently, post comments less frequently, and upload original videos more frequently. The reason why millennials in general trust YouTubers is that they believe YouTubers need audiences’ trust to survive and won’t dare to harm their reputation by promoting sponsors. As one of the participants said during follow-up interview when asked whether they trust sponsored product review videos created by YouTubers:

> Personally I say yes, because whenever they (YouTubers) sponsor a product, their reputation hinges on that product. If the product is bad, their livelihoods are gone since once they lose the loyalty of the viewers, it’s bad. That’s why I actually trust them (YouTubers) more, because they are basing their career on making sure the product is lining with their [reputation].

From the dataset we also discovered that trusting audiences have slightly higher sharing frequency of YouTube videos to other social media platforms than untrusting audiences, except for Tumblr, where the difference is not slight, but more noticeable. Research has shown that college students use both YouTube and Tumblr for curation purpose, rather than instant communication (Ha et al. 2017). Therefore, it's reasonable that audiences who trust sponsored videos also share videos more frequently on Tumblr than on other social media platforms.

Behavioral Intentions after Viewing Product Review Videos

We found that compared with audiences who trust sponsored videos, audiences who are more suspicious toward sponsored videos have higher purchase intention after watching a video in which the non-affiliated YouTuber positively reviewed the product, and have lower purchase intention after watching a video in which the YouTuber negatively reviewed the product. This result shows that audiences who distrust sponsored videos are not refusing the information given by unaffiliated reviewers. They value the independence of the reviewer, thus are more likely to be influenced by the reviewer in making purchase decisions. We also found that distrusting audience of sponsored videos have higher sharing intention after watching videos of both positively and negatively reviewed products. This result displays that audiences who distrust sponsored video carry higher possibility of secondary influence.

YouTube is an open platform for individuals and organizations to disseminate videos. However, YouTube also belongs to Google, a business empire that needs to generate profits for its shareholders. What needs to be noticed from our study is that audience's attention to sponsorship does not equal to distrust against sponsored YouTubers. YouTubers' perceived integrity does not contradict directly with disclosure of sponsorships. Their hard-earned reputation will not be torn down simply by telling their audience the sponsorship behind their videos. YouTubers are advised to always explicitly disclose any connections they have with organizations and sponsors, not only for legal reasons, but also for maintaining a honest and transparent persona for their subscribers.

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Chapter 10

Online Video Advertising Viewership and Avoidance on YouTube

Kisun Kim and Claire Youngnyo Joa

A surge of popularity in Free Video on Demand (FVOD) content has caused advertisers' increased interest and attention in the online video platforms, such as YouTube. Advanced Television (2018) projected that media users only for FVOD will globally increase to 4.5 billion by 2022, and content assumption will grow to the amount of data usage of 840 Exabytes by 2022, the same as 129 billion hours of 4K streaming. The advertising expenditure on FVOD is estimated to grow from \$16 billion in 2017 to \$37 billion by 2022.

Among various social media video platforms, YouTube had come to hold the leading position in the online video market. Over 1.5 billion users, or almost one-third of the Internet users, are actively using YouTube website monthly, and one billion hours of video content on YouTube are watched by users per day (Blattberg 2015; Cumming 2016; Scott 2017). Most importantly, YouTube reaches more 18- to 49-year-olds than any cable network in the United States (YouTube 2016a). As many as 85% of teenager and young adult Internet users said they watched video on YouTube, while 53% watched on Facebook, 37% watched on Instagram, and 33% watched on Snapchat (eMarketer 2016). YouTube appeals to advertisers with the platform's audiences who are the younger generation reluctant to pay for television and cable and enjoy free alternative for all kinds of media content, from user-generated video content and corporate media content, ranging from music videos, educational content, game-related content, to original short video clips provided by YouTube (Lange 2007). For example, Magna Global of Interpublic Group has signed a multi-year deal with YouTube to invest \$250 million into digital video (Johnson 2016). As more consumers (particularly millennials) cut the cord (cable subscription), YouTube is increasingly attractive to advertisers as an advertising medium.

Such an explosion in the consumption of video on the Internet created an opportunity to leverage online video for advertising. eMarketer forecasted YouTube's net U.S. video ad revenues would reach $2.59 billion in 2017, as a single company owning the largest share of the market by far (eMarketer 2017). In 2017, 20% of all video ad revenues in the U.S. went to YouTube, and the platform's market share is expected to remain over 20% of the U.S. video advertising revenue market for 2018 (Statista 2018). As predicted, YouTube is taking the leading role in online video advertising market due to increased spending on mobile video ads with the evident shift from traditional media, including television, to social media platforms (eMarketer 2016). More importantly, YouTube's young audience, U.S. millennials, is appealing to the platform's clients, advertisers, who are looking for an alternative medium, which can provide a surpassing power of advertising and broad audience outreach rather than television. With this leverage of YouTube on video consuming, Google and Youtube was ranked first as the platforms marketers planned to advertise their products (eMarketer 2016).

As a leading online video platform, YouTube went out of their way to apply leverage in the growth of online video advertising as well. In 2010, YouTube launched its skippable ads, *TrueView ads*. TrueView in-stream ads play before or during another video from YouTube partners, and viewers see five seconds of the video that they wanted to watch and then have the choice to keep watching or skip it (YouTube 2016b). *TrueView* video discovery ads appear alongside other YouTube videos, on YouTube search pages. YouTube explained such innovative type of advertisements could be beneficial for both YouTube viewers and advertisers. It gives the audience options to skip the advertisements they are not interested in and provides advertisers opportunities to experiment with creative formats that YouTube viewers are willing to watch and promote their brands effectively at the same time. It appears that people are actually more likely to prefer *TrueView* to mandatory full-length advertising format (Rouse 2012). The data about which viewers click “skip,” on the other hand, can be beneficial for evaluating the success of different marketing strategies. Advertisers can even learn how long viewers continued to watch, whether they skipped immediately or after a certain point in the commercial (Scott 2017). It's not only enhancing YouTube audience's choice whether to skip the ads or not but also giving advertisers options to develop better ways of delivering their advertisements using all the user behavioral data provided by YouTube.

According to YouTube (2015), ads on YouTube have been regarded as content, not a background, since the launch of skippable *TrueView* ads in 2010 because brands have been encouraged to develop ads that YouTube viewers can engage with and feel like as entertainment rather than ads. As a result, in 2014, 42% more views per month was created by the top 100 global brands on YouTube; the number of advertisers using *TrueView* increased up by 45% in 2014 (YouTube 2015). Moreover, when advertising is placed on YouTube influencers' powerful content, including beauty products, game playing videos, the channel subscribers and fans' affinity are expected to be transferred into the brands or products introduced through advertising. Importantly, industry-specific and informational videos can be an effective place for advertisers to target their specific audience who is into reach niche markets, adding to YouTube's broad audience who stay on the platform on a daily basis (Scott 2017). Thus, *TrueView* ads work to nurture such win-win situation on the platform. This way viewers can choose what they want to watch, advertisers can find the audiences they want, and YouTube partners, including content creators, will continue to generate and share quality content based on users' ad experience data.

As the case of *TrueView* ads showed above, when advertisers decide to place their advertisement on YouTube, they can target any specific demographics and regions that they want to reach using the large volume and wide variety of content and traffic data on YouTube. Thanks to such cost-effective approach enabled on YouTube, many businesses and brands are turning to YouTube for online marketing. By sponsoring specific kinds of content, advertisers can attach their ads on the types of videos most likely to appeal to their potential customers. For example, *Customer Match* allows advertisers to filter the audience for particular videos using data from AdWords and uploaded email lists provided by YouTube (Scott 2017). In doing so, advertisers can expect to reinforce brand loyalty and shape the brand reputation. Furthermore, with data about which ads are most effective, advertisers are better able to tailor promotional and marketing strategies in the future.

As YouTube is replacing the traditional advertising market and considering the importance of ads as YouTube's main source of revenue, it is important for YouTube to make advertisers feel happy and safe in promoting their brands on YouTube. For instance, one of the major issues for YouTube to deal with to defend their leading position in the social media video ads market is to make sure that advertisers' ads are not placed in videos against the brand values and images. When the brands' advertisements were associated with controversial videos produced by YouTube partners, YouTube has faced complaints from advertisers who have no control over their ads placement within the platform. To solve such problems and provide premium service, YouTube launched *Google Preferred*, allowing brands to only run ads on the most popular 5% of content (YouTube 2016c). The volume of Preferred that was bought by advertisers and the number of brands that are using Google Preferred have been rapidly increased (Heine 2016). Google's Preferred Program aims at achieving multiple goals, including preventing YouTube video creators' abuse of the platform, equipping advertisers with enhanced tools and controls (Johnson 2018).

Despite the efforts and advancements in targeted advertising, undesirable consumer behavior to advertisers, such as advertising avoidance, still remain constant along with the increase in the number of media channels and the use of media. Individuals, potential consumers, use various media channels, and consequently get exposed to around 4,000 to 10,000 advertisements every day (Marshall 2015). When people are surrounded by such abundance, people's attitudes toward advertising are not positive, but rather negative because the intensity of advertising irritates them (Ha & Litman 1997; Johnson 2013); the unexpected interruption of ads makes viewers' responses even worse (Chatterjee 2008). Most importantly, avoiding advertising becomes a common behavioral response for those who dislike advertising (De Mooij 2010).

Through the survey and in-depth interview, the current chapter, therefore, seeks to understand YouTube users' general online video advertising viewership, their basic attitudes toward different forms of online video advertising, and perception of the option to skip advertising. Moreover, we examine which elements could have an impact on their advertising viewership and ads avoidance, including the option to skip advertising, ad-appeals strategies, and the types of advertising. We also explore how advertising viewership may influence audiences' memory of ads, purchasing the products, and sharing with others around them. Finally, we investigate YouTube users' perceptions of personalized advertising, and YouTube Red.

GENERAL VIEWERSHIP OF ADVERTISING ON YOUTUBE

In traditional media environment, the concept of media users' viewership was regarded as receiving information from the media, and this concept can be applied to the ad viewing. But with the technological advancements and changes in the general media viewing behavior, ad-viewing is also facing its redefining moment (Belanche, Flavian & Perez-Rueda 2017). Compared to the past, in the recent online environment, people have more chance to watch diverse types of advertising and not to watch those ads by clicking the skip button. Considering that, general online video advertising viewership was measured by the amount of time YouTube users spend watching them.

Video advertising on YouTube can be broadly divided into two types, which include *TrueView advertisements* and *Mandatory full-length advertisements*. *TrueView advertisements* are an ad format usually employed on YouTube, giving the viewers options to skip the ads after watching it for five seconds or keep watching it even after they are given the skip button. There are four types of *TrueView* advertisements: (1) In-stream ads, which allow "viewers to skip the pre-roll ads after five seconds"; (2) In-slate ads, which allow "viewers to among several sponsors' ads or opt for commercial breaks interspersed through the video content"; (3) In-search ads, which "appear in YouTube search results when the viewer's search is related to the ad's keywords"; (4) In-display ads, which are "legacy formats that appear in the YouTube-promoted videos overlay, in video suggestions and related videos" (Rouse 2012).

Mandatory full-length advertisements, on the other hand, are ads which YouTube users are required to watch the ad in full before they can watch the video. Non-skippable in-stream ads are video advertising, which can be 15 to 20 seconds long or around 30 seconds. This type of ads may appear pre-, mid-, or post-roll while watching the editorial video. Audiences cannot skip this type of ads, and so they must watch them before the editorial video content they select to watch (YouTube 2018).

YouTube users' ad viewership may become different depending on having the *TrueView* options or not and whether they play (watch) advertisements in the *TrueView* format. Our survey asked how participants deal with advertising in a given situation where they are given a choice to skip advertising. The example questions we asked them are "Do you watch YouTube advertising that allow you to skip after running five seconds?" for *TrueView* ads and "Do you watch YouTube advertising that you are required to watch the entire commercial before you can watch the video?" for *mandatory full-length advertising*. The answers were obtained on a six intervals anchored ranging from 1, *Yes, always*, 2, *Yes, at least 70% of them*, 3, *Yes, about half of them*, 4, *Yes, between 20–40%*, 5, *Yes, but rarely, less than 20%*, to 6, *never*. The higher the score, the higher the ad avoidance. To measure ad viewership, we reversed the score so that the lower the score, the lower the viewership.

In general, our respondents reported low ad viewership with an average of less than 20% of the ads. Regardless of the types of advertising, participants were more likely not to watch advertising. By comparison with *TrueView* advertising and *full-length advertising*, our analysis shows that YouTube users reported slightly higher ad viewership of *full-length advertising* (mean = 1.80) than skippable *TrueView* advertising (mean = 1.66).

Even though audience's viewership of the *mandatory full-length advertising* is statistically significantly higher than the skippable *TrueView* advertising in the survey, it may not mean they pay attention to the *full-length advertising* than skippable *TrueView* advertising. To investigate how people react to advertising came out while they watch editorial media content on YouTube, in our research, an observation was conducted during the in-depth interviews. Interviewers asked interviewees to choose and watch their favorite editorial video, and observed their viewership of skippable *TrueView* advertising and *mandatory full-length advertising*. After observing their viewership of advertising embedded in the interviewees' selected editorial video, interviewers showed them another video which included another type of advertising compared to the previous one. If the video content they chose included skippable *TrueView* advertising, for example, another video including *mandatory full-length advertising* was shown to interviewees. The ad that we prepared for the observation for both the *TrueView* and mandatory ad was a commercial of QuickBooks accounting software before a funny video of MTV News clip Decoded with Franchesca Ramsey. One version has a five second skippable QuickBook commercial and one version plays the QuickBook commercial in full.

All of the interviewees except one person skipped advertising when *TrueView* advertising came out while they watched their own favorite video or the video we showed them. Interviewers reported that participants immediately were getting ready to put the skip button right after advertising came up. Only one female Caucasian student aged 20, surprisingly, enjoyed the skippable advertisements, who did not skip the advertising deliberately. Not only did she not skip the ads, but also she really involved in the ads. For deeper understanding, the interviewer asked her why she paid attention to the advertisement. She answered that her major was advertising related, so she wished she would work one day in advertising industry. The majority of participants did not attend to the *mandatory full-length advertising*. An interviewer reported that audiences did not keep their eyes on advertising, rather they looked around other places or talked to interviewers. Only one interviewee paid attention to the advertising, watching it and not looking around at other things. The *mandatory full-length advertising* the person watched was a movie commercial with attractive lyrics of the song with high entertainment value.

NEGATIVE GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD ADVERTISING ON YOUTUBE

There have been a considerable amount of studies of individuals' attitudes toward advertising as online advertising market has increased with the development of information communication technology (ICT). Previous studies indicated that although people are more likely to recognize the needs of advertising in this media environment, clutter generally arouses the audience's negative feelings and attitudes such as being bothered and irritated because the audience are more likely to consider a great number of advertising as a junk mass media content (Tsang, Ho & Liang 2004; Jack Rotfeld 2006). Despite this general negative attitude, to what degree of the audience is reluctant to, or in favor of advertising could be different depending on having the option to skip advertising or not. According to Google, for example, people are more likely to prefer *TrueView* advertising to *mandatory full-length* advertising (Rouse 2012).

We found our results concur with previous research with interesting outcomes as well, pertaining to attitudes toward online video advertising on

YouTube. In the survey, we asked participants which types of advertising formats they find most intrusive and wasting their time. They were asked to answer select among (1) commercials that allow me to skip after 5 seconds, (2) commercials in full length before the video starts, and (3) sponsored products recommended by YouTubers.

The results indicated that people are more likely to think *mandatory full-length* advertising as more intrusive and annoying than skippable *TrueView* advertising. A large majority of participants (81.4%) answered that *mandatory full-length advertising* is the more intrusive type of ads, only 11.2% answered skippable *TrueView* advertising. Even fewer (7.3%) said sponsored videos. For more discussion about sponsored videos, please refer to chapter 9.

Our interview showed more robust evidence for the audience's attitude toward advertising as well. When asked what they think about the *TrueView* ads and the mandatory ads as irritating and annoying, most interviewees expectedly answered that they usually had negative attitudes toward advertising when they try to watch YouTube videos. They were more likely to regard the advertising intrusive. A Caucasian undergraduate student aged 20 said, "Advertising is annoying and I just hate them because they get in the way of my entertainment. If I wanted to watch commercials I would be watching them on television."

Nonetheless, some participants' attitudes were not that much negative toward advertisements compared to degree of negative attitudes given from the previous research. Almost every participant in the interview was more likely to think they could live with streaming advertisements on YouTube more than traditional TV ads, answering they have no problem with commercials on YouTube. The interviews indicated extensively two primary reasons they can endure those commercials and keep a less negative attitude, even though they don't want to watch them, are because (1) they can use YouTube for free, and (2) the site gives them an option to skip advertisements.

The negative attitudes toward commercials seem to languish and attenuate when YouTube gives them options to skip their *TrueView* ads. The majority of interviewees answered that the reason why they did not feel too much bothering from the advertisements on YouTube, even though they did not like to watch them, was because they recognized YouTube could make money from advertising so they could enjoy a wide range of media content on YouTube for free, similar to the finding of Campbell et al. (2017). Compared to traditional cable channels on TV, which they need to pay a large amount of money to use the service, people do not need to pay anything to YouTube to use video content and to subscribe specific channels on YouTube. Because of this reason, many YouTube users are thinking they have a sort of responsibility for watching commercials whenever they use YouTube. In our interview, one female student aged 23 said, "I know a lot people or my friends complain about the mandatory ads. But I know it's the way to make money. I don't think it's too annoying." Another male student aged 24 also said, "I think we will be able to avoid commercials because that how we are able to use these sites for free, they are annoying but I get why they use them."

ADVERTISING AVOIDANCE ON YOUTUBE

Advertising avoidance refers to ad viewers' cognitive and behavioral tendency to stay away from advertisements and decrease the exposure of advertising (Speck & Elliott, 1997). People with negative feelings and attitudes toward advertising can be inclined to have advertising avoidance behavior easily (Cho 2004; Kelly, Kerr & Drennan 2010; Joa, Kim & Ha 2018). According to previous research, advertising avoidance can occur in three ways: cognitive avoidance, behavioral avoidance, and mechanical means to avoid ads (Kell, Kerr & Drennan 2010). For example, people can select whether or not they pay attention to advertising (cognitive avoidance), they can leave their seat from the media during the showing of advertising (behavioral ad avoidance), and they can skip advertising on the Internet using fast forwarding function or ad blocking software (mechanical means).

Moreover, there has been considerable research examining the factors facilitating ad avoidance. Elliott and Speck (1998) identified four significant factors on advertising avoidance: (1) demographic variables, (2) media captivity, (3) advertising perceptions, and (4) communication problems. Their study investigated four types of different media (magazines, newspapers, television, and radio) and revealed that older people, educated smaller families, and single, not married, were more likely to avoid advertising, and people using broadcast television channels tended to avoid advertisements.

Alternatively, Cho (2004) used perceived goal impediment, perceived ad clutter on the Internet, and prior negative experiences to explain ad avoidance. His study showed that people are more likely to avoid message from advertising when people have a strong purpose and goal to watch editorial content, thus they perceived advertisement as intrusiveness. Also, advertisement avoidance occurs when users perceive there are too many advertisements on the Internet and they have negative experiences derived from prior dissatisfaction.

Although the credibility or believability of information in advertising has been a focus of research of advertising in previous research (Fogg et al. 2003; O'cass 2002), interestingly, individuals are more likely to consider the ad appeals with respect to advertising avoidance on YouTube through our interviews. Since individuals expect to achieve their goals from YouTube content, such as enjoying media content or getting information, they do not care much if YouTube commercial are trustworthy, rather, they consider how those ads are related to them and how they are interested in those ads.

When ad viewers perceive advertisements something relatable, then they may consider their experiences of watching commercials even desirable and engaging. Kim and Sundar's (2010) experimental study found a significant association between user perceptions on relevant website advertising and their positive evaluations of the website. The data from the interviews revealed that YouTube users are more likely to regard the relevance between individuals and advertising as a determinant of their viewership of advertising. One female student aged 24 in interviews answered, "I like the commercials so I never skip them, because I think one day I would like to go into advertising and I think most of the commercials they show are interesting." Another male participant aged 25 said, "I would watch an advertising if it is related to my interest, even if it was a skippable advertising."

Not only relevance, but also entertainment is an important determinant for individuals to want to watch advertising, leading positive and favorable attitudes. If people are interested in the advertising, and they think it is useful, advertising avoidance will be decreased (Speck & Elliott 1997). Rather, they are more likely to perceive it as information and not a hindrance. From our interview, we found that many people, sometimes, enjoy advertising when they are interested in those advertisements in many ways. It might be their interest, such as game-related advertising and movies related advertising. One of the participants who is a freshman aged 18 answered, "I like funny commercials so something like that I would be interested in watching unless its sports because I'm not really into that."

To explore individuals' ad viewership, we also asked respondents how often they watch the following types of ads in YouTube videos. Respondents were asked to answer each of the ads types: (1) Movie trailers ads, (2) Ads with celebrities in ads, (3) Ads with ordinary people only, (4) Ads about products that are relevant to me, (5) Funny ads, using a five-point scale ranging from 5, "*I never watch that specific type of ads in YouTube videos,*" to 1, "*I always watch that specific type of ads in YouTube videos.*" The higher the score, the higher the ad avoidance. To measure ad viewership, we reversed the score so that the lower the score, the lower the viewership.

The survey results indicate a significant difference in YouTube users' advertising viewership among advertising types. People are more likely to watch movie trailers ads (mean score = 3.68), followed by funny ads (mean score = 3.44), ads with relevant products (mean score = 3.14), celebrity ads (mean score = 2.85), and ads with ordinary people only are least likely to be watched (mean score = 2.56). YouTube users reported higher ad viewership of advertising with entertainment than relevance appeal (Joa, Kim & Ha 2018). Hence, the key attributes for advertising to get more attention from audiences were entertainment and relevance. With respect to persons in advertising, advertising with celebrity was more effective to draw audiences' interest and higher viewership than ads with ordinary people. Thus, it is suggested that a combination of entertaining or relevant advertising with celebrities would ensure higher online video ad viewership.

THE EFFECTS OF YOUTUBE AD WATCHING ON BRAND RECALL, BRAND DISCUSSION, AND PURCHASE

The primary purpose of advertising is to call audience's attention to businesses, learn about products and brands, and consequently, sell services or products for the advertisers. In order to achieve the aims of advertising, it could be the most significant to make individuals inscribe on the memory of products or service (Chatterjee 2008). As discussed above, nonetheless, the principal reason of poor memory for advertising may be derived from inattention in the saturated advertising media environment. Especially, the audience's evasion of advertising could increase when people are given the option to skip ads. Previous research has focused on the potential determinants of advertising viewership, including advertising exposure, duration of page viewing on audience's advertising retrieval and brand evaluations (Danaher & Mullarkey 2003; Keller 1987).

In our interviews, we found several interesting attributes of advertising which facilitates memory which is germane to products or brand. While a majority of interviewees answered they didn't recall any advertising because they paid less attention to the advertising when they watched video on YouTube, several of them recollected several products and advertising. We could explain favorable attitude toward brands or products increase individuals' advertising recall, as Keller (1987) indicated that audience are more likely to remember products they are interested in or familiar with. One female Asian graduate student aged 27, who frequently uses YouTube for obtaining information in relation to the beauty, answered, "I can recall commercials on make-up and hair, specifically, Pantene, hair product. I've watched a lot of make-up commercial being that I'm a girl and the commercials know what market to advertise to."

Moreover, the answers of participants could be able to map the number of exposure to advertising on advertising recall, even though people do not pay attention to advertising. Since they should be exposed to those advertising at least 5 seconds regardless of the types of ads, it is inevitable for them to be exposed to advertising anyway. Research findings have been somewhat equivocal, with respect to the number of exposure as a determinant. According to Google, users who heard a YouTube ad are more likely to recall the brand by 33.1% than the one who never hear the advertising (Sloane 2015). Yet Keller (2007) noted that although repeated exposure of advertising has an impact on individuals' memory of the ad, but it may not help in the recall of specific brand.

Interestingly, our interview supported such argument of remembering the ad and not the brand. One participant, graduate student aged 26 replied, "Advertising about food, about pizza, or about cars, any types of advertising about laundry, yes, that's all about I can recalled. I remember, those types of advertising, because I see it several times, sometimes they came, they are replayed, replayed, replayed again, and this is the reason why I can recall them recently. Sometimes I learned them because they still broadcast the same advertising." Even though this participant recalled a lot of advertising, he couldn't remember which specific product or particular services he watched through advertising on YouTube.

In addition to the number of advertising exposures, entertaining or familiar products could help attract people to watch and remember ads. In our interview, people reported that they are more likely to watch advertising when movie or celebrities are in the advertising. One male participant answered, "Yes. I can recall advertising. Actually, they used the characters from the Big Bang Theory. Sheldon. Do you know Big Bang Theory? It is about Intel commercial, and I like Intel, they used these characters a kind of process. Because I like my technology videos." Another participant, undergraduate student aged 19, also answered, "It is a Target commercial. Many movie actors appeared in the commercial, the whole story is divided into several commercials and you have to watch them all to combine the story together."

To explore the effects of logo visuals on viewers' memory, we asked participants which would be easy for them to recall the brand when they watch commercials. Most of the participants (86%) said it is easy to recall advertising when brand logo visuals are in advertising, while only 14% answered they recall advertising when the brand logo visuals do not show up in advertising. So for lesser-known brands in which brand accessibility is low, brand logos must be prominently displayed in the visuals of the ads to help brand recognition and memory.

Despite the general negative attitude toward the ads, the majority of participants answered they had an experience with purchasing the product embedding in advertising they watched before.

Another interesting observation was the relationship between the ad recall and sharing with others. They are more likely to talk to their friends about ads they remembered. The interview indicated that advertising recall could lead them to talk with their friend about the item, even though their memory of a specific advertisement could not lead people to purchase that item. For instance, participant who recall Drake sprite commercial, replied that he had experience to talk to his friend about Drake sprite commercial, even though he did not purchase the product.

PERSONALIZED ADVERTISING

Personalized advertising helps advertisers to easily reach to potential consumers who may be interested in the products or brands based on their information, including demographics and interests. The information could be the channels users are subscribing on the websites or prior video content they watched before. This enables the websites to efficiently operate their service, providing not only users a better experience, but also advertisers high satisfaction in targeting (Google 2018). To make this system more efficient, YouTube also offers personalized service to advertisers, called as Director's Cut, which allows business to create thousands of versions of one ad (Pandolph 2017).

Despite the efforts of YouTube and advertisers to make advertising attractive by increasing personalization, YouTube users seem not to view such personalization in a positive way. According to the survey conducted by eMarketer (2018) on U.S. Internet users' primary attitudes toward personalized video ads in 2017, 72.3% of participants said any personalized advertising would harm their viewing experience. Almost 60% of them answered that more personalized ads also made them have a negative attitude in their streaming services use, while only 9% thought personalized ads were an improvement.

To better understand how YouTube users think about personalized video ads offered by YouTube, we asked our interviewees what they think about personalized ads. As we expected, negative perceptions toward personalized ads were noticeable. One male participant answered, "I don't think I would want that, I think I would be irritated even though advertising is personalized." Another female participant said, "On sites like Amazon where they show you things you might be interested in—it still bothers me."

Unlike eMarketer's (2018) survey results, nonetheless, there were more users who had a positive attitude toward personalized advertising. One participant said, "If they're going to have the personalized ads anyway, it might as well be one that I kind of enjoy or am interested in." Another participant answered, "Yeah personalized advertising is a really good idea. Like I said, I like funny commercials, so something like that I would be interested in watching would be enjoyable, unless advertising is related to sports because I'm not really into that."

When the interviewees were asked to watch different types of YouTube video content, which type of video content they are interested in mostly and how much involved they are with watching YouTube were observed and reported. Interestingly, during the interviews, the participants said they did not receive any personalized in-stream video advertisement matching their information on their YouTube profiles. One female Asian graduate participant answered, "Stop showing me horror movie advertisements. I hate it. And I hope there is a button that shows, 'Never show this advertisement again'. If there is such kind of button, it will be so great because I'm just so annoyed with this kind of advertisements. For example, if people are so annoyed with this kind of advertisement, they can just shield it. Because you will show advertising anything, but not this. Horror movies are extra. They are not for everyone. I believe lots of people will hate horror movie advertisements." Another female participant also replied, "Actually I had done that before, but it came out with some weird results. I once received the ads for birth control tools." Such answers show that technological advancements in providing personalized ads enabling hyper-targeting or accurate targeting are key to convince YouTube users to change their views on ads in general.

Our participants recognized they got free media content from YouTube thanks to advertisements and paying extra to avoid ads can be hardly the answer to their negative attitudes toward ads. They said they prefer YouTube to stay free rather than charging users for ad-free services. A male undergraduate student immediately dismissed the YouTube Red service charging $9.99 a month that was just launched during our study period, "I was talking with a coworker about the advertisement for the new YouTube service that allows you to pay for commercial free experience. It stood out because I would never pay for that. I don't want to pay for cable, and I cannot afford it. YouTube being free is why I like to use it to watch videos."

YouTube as a leading online video platform has created a new advertising environment, applying numerous innovative and original ideas, including giving users chance to choose advertising with highly targeted and individualized ad display. With the growth of popularity of YouTube and the higher exposure of video advertising to media users, investigating YouTube users' advertising viewership and perception is significant not only to academic researchers but also to practitioners. We showed that there are many determinants of viewers' online video ad viewership or avoidance on YouTube. Depending on those factors, YouTube users' perception and attitudes toward advertising would vary by individuals and the videos they chose to watch.

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Chapter 11

Most Popular YouTube Channels

Louisa Ha

Unlike our previous chapters which are based on the results of our student survey and in-depth interviews, this chapter presents the global and U.S. YouTube audience behavior and YouTube programming attributes from an analysis of 2017's most popular YouTube channels. The analysis included the 20 most subscribed and 20 most viewed channels, and the top five most subscribed channels in the ten common channel genres on YouTube: (1) YouTube's own aggregate channels, (2) Music, (3) Film & Entertainment, (4) Sports, (5) News, (6) Education, (7) Science and Technology, (8) Comedy, (9) How To and Style, and (10) Gaming.

A YouTube channel essentially is a YouTube creator account open to the public for viewing. Each channel can have one video only or thousands of videos. Approximately there are five million YouTube channels (Carl & Ben 2017), which means that out of more than one billion users, less than 0.5% created videos (the numbers will be lower if we count users who have multiple accounts). But the competition for audience is high enough that YouTubers need to develop a niche unique from others or have such a common appeal that people chose to tune in to their channels.

Although YouTube is based in the United States, only 16.2% of its traffic came from the United States (Alexa.com 2017). In general, the number of Internet users as a function of population size and Internet penetration of the country are good predictors of traffic on YouTube. The other four of the top five countries using YouTube are India (8.6% of all traffic), Japan, Russia, and China are similar constituting around 4% of its traffic. Despite China's censorship against YouTube, Chinese people can use VPN to overcome the censorship and watch YouTube videos.

So a look at the country of origin of the top 20 most viewed channels shows that only six of them (30%) originated in the United States and they

Table 11.1 YouTube's 20 Most Viewed Channels (December 22, 2017)

Channel	*Country of Origin*	*Genre*	*Total Number of Views*	*Number of Videos*	*Number of Subscribers*
1. T-Series	India	Entertainment and Music	27,709,480,507	11,800	30 million
2. World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE)	United States	Show and Sports	18,812,491,805	32,300	20 million
3. NetDMuzik	Turkey	Music	17,683,597,580	7,100	8 million
4. Ryan Toys Review	United States	Product Review	17,080,344,771	889	10.3 million
5. JustinBieberVevo	United States	Music	16,669,408,491	123	33 million
6. PewDiePie	Sweden	Gaming	16,651,210,230	3,400	58.5 million
7. LittleBabyBum	Canada	Education/Nursery Rhymes	15,310,284,205	585	13.7 million
8. KatyPerryVevo	United States	Music	14,746,265,086	124	25.8 million
9. Get Movies	Russia	Film and Entertainment	14,420,375,779	2,700	14.7 million
10. TaylorSwiftVevo	United States	Music	13,843,022,623	83	26.6 million
11. Masha and the Bear	Russia	Animation	13,830,535,190	517	12.4 million
12. FunToyzCollection	United States	Product Review	13,552,255,869	2,400	9.7 million
13. SET India	India	Entertainment	12,903,721,560	25,000	17.2 million
14. ShakiraVevo	Columbia	Music	12,238,799,206	139	18.2 million
15. El Reino Infantil	Argentina	Music	12,229,012,039	451	10.3 million
16. RihannaVevo	Barbados	Music	12,200,319,606	106	26.2 million
17. Zee TV	India	Entertainment	12,154,530,388	71,600	9.7 million
18. Spinnin' Records	United States	Music	11,873,200,088	8,300	19.3 million
19. ChuChu TV Kids Song	India	Music	11,844,812,330	204	13.7 million
20. CanalKondZilla	Brazil	Music	11,804,698,184	601	23.5 million

Sources: Vidstatsx.com 2017 and Author Research.

are mostly limited to sports entertainment shows (World Wrestling Entertainment), music (four artists), and toy reviews (see Table 11.1). Russia and India as large audience sources for YouTube also have considerable presence in the top-viewed channel list. Two Russian channels (*Get Movies* and *Masha and the Bear*) and three Indian channels (T-Series, SET India and ZeeTV) took the top 20 spots. Although music comprised most of the top-viewed channels (12 out of 20), but the artists were not just from the United States, but also from Argentina (El Reino Infanti), Barbados (Rihanna), Brazil (Canal KondZilla), Columbia (Shakira), India (T-Series), and Turkey (*NetDMuzik*) and include also children's songs such as *ChuChu Kids Songs* showing music is the most universally liked genre and appeal to different ages around the world. One explanation of why music is the top-viewed categories is the likelihood of repeated listening as background music. Because there is no information breakdown whether the views are repeated views or not, we cannot tell if the high views means only high reach of people or high occurrence of repeated views in addition to a high reach of people.

One may suspect the authenticity and manipulation of the view count. According to Ben Hook of YouTube (2017), YouTube conducts audit of the view count and any suspicious view count surge will be subject to the audit and offenders' account may be suspended. YouTube only counts the view when it is "a viewer-initiated intended play of a YouTube video that … isn't an autoplay, scripted play, spam play, or playback. Views should only be a result of pure viewer choice to watch a video, not as a result of a transaction through incentivised views" (Hook 2017). With the high stake of views as an advertising currency, the manipulation of views is strictly monitored.

WHY FOCUS ON SUBSCRIPTION

This channel analysis focuses on the most subscribed channels, not the most viewed channels, for three reasons. First, subscription is a much more stable measure than viewership because viewership fluctuates tremendously by one viral video that may not be sustainable from an advertising and programming perspective. Subscription represents regular viewership, interest in and commitment to the channel from the users. As Postigo (2016) stated: "Subscribers are the central most common social currency on YouTube; happy viewers subscribe to channels, and unhappy ones unsubscribe or stop visiting the channel" (p. 338). Second, subscription to a channel provides opportunity for the channel to cultivate relationship with audiences because the subscriber has profile and contact information that the channel creator can follow up while ad hoc viewers are not identifiable and traceable. Third, subscriptions allow the channel and advertisers to collect data and push information and updates to the subscriber. The subscribers must be a registered user of YouTube to subscribe to channels. Even if the subscribers are dormant and inactive and turn off their YouTube notifications, the channel can still measure the activity of its subscribers. Hence a subscriber is a more valuable audience than ad hoc viewers who may not come back after watching a video and have no digital trace. As shown in our survey, a majority of YouTube users (69%) subscribe to YouTube channels and channel subscribers are typically heavy users of YouTube who watch YouTube daily.

AGGREGATE VERSUS INDIVIDUAL CHANNELS

Most Subscribed Channels

As shown in Table 11.2, out of the top 20 most subscribed channels, six are YouTube aggregate channels and they are the top five most subscribed channels.

YOUTUBE'S OWN AGGREGATE CHANNELS

To help bundle the channels of the most popular genres on YouTube, YouTube creates aggregate channels such as *YouTube Music, YouTube News, YouTube Gaming, YouTube Sports*, and *Popular on YouTube*. These channels automatically pull out the most popular videos of that genre by YouTube's video discovery system and helps users explore and discover the new videos. They do not have their own original videos but just organize the videos by different categories to help users to find and discover the latest or most popular videos in that genre. It is an easy one-stop portal for those who do not want to limit themselves to specific channels. It also attracts advertisers as well as the page is the landing page for the subscribers. These aggregate YouTube channels captured the most subscribers among all channels.

Apart from the conspiracy theory that YouTube presents its own channels as most subscribed, there are many reasons why a user wants to subscribe to them. Receiving update is one main reason. YouTube, as the hosting site itself, knows what is popular and uses it to its advantage by aggregating the most popular channels in the most popular genre under a channel in YouTube's name. So, for a user who wants to learn the latest, the easiest is to subscribe to these YouTube Music or Gaming Channel which includes all the most popular channels in one spot and to receive regular update by e-mails instead of subscribing to multiple channels of the same genre. YouTube has the store privilege to be the most successful aggregator, others are hard to replicate it as simply an aggregate channel.

Table 11.2 YouTube's 20 Most Subscribed Channels

Channel Name	*Country of Origin*	*Genre*	*No. of Subscribers*	*Total No. of Views*	*Number of Videos*
1. YouTube Music	United States	Music	98,871,219	N/A	N/A
2. YouTube Gaming	United States	Gaming	77,706,659	N/A	N/A
3. YouTube Sports	United States	Sports	75,302,940	N/A	N/A
4. PewDiePie	Sweden	Gaming	58,495,963	16.65 billion	3,400
5. YouTube Movies	United States	Film and Entertainment	54,665,574	3.2 million	
6. YouTube News	United States	News and Politics	33,838,078	N/A	N/A
7. JustinBieberVevo	United States	Music	33,061,500	16.67 billion	123
8. HolaSoyGerman#	Chile	Comedy	32,808,687	3.33 billion	137
9. T-Series	India	Music and Entertainment	29,950,557	27.71 billion	11,800
10. Popular OnYouTube	United States	Miscellaneous	29,666,128	N/A	N/A
11. YouTube Spotlight	United States	Miscellaneous	27,042,581	1.34 billion	267
12. elRubiusOMG	Spain	Comedy	26,639,820	6.09 billion	750
13. TaylorSwiftVevo	United States	Music	26,640,496	13.84 billion	83
14. RihannaVevo	Barbados	Music	26,164,296	12.2 billion	106
15. KatyPerryVevo	United States	Music	26,164,296	14.75 billion	124
16. whinderssonunes	Brazil	Entertainment	25,389,551	2.6 billion	330
17. Fernanfloo	El Salvador	Comedy	25,232,531	5.98 billion	569
18. EminemVevo	United States	Music	24,871,635	9.81 billion	71
19. DudePerfect	United States	Sports	24,801,991	4.33 billion	168
20. Ed Sheeran	United States	Music	24,642,934	10.77 billion	115

Video numbers N/A to YouTube aggregate channels because the numbers are counted at the individual channels.
#HolaSoyGerman discontinued new posting on his channel one year ago.
Source: Vidstatsx.com 2017, December 22, 2017 and Author Research.

As shown in Table 11.2, *YouTube Music* is the top-subscribed channels with almost 99 million subscribers, *YouTube Gaming* is the second most subscribed channels with almost 78 million subscribers, *YouTube Sports* is the third most subscribed channels with over 75 million subscribers. Then *YouTube News* is the sixth most subscribed channel with almost 34 million subscribers and *Popular on YouTube* is the 10th most subscribed channel with about 33 million subscribers.

YouTube Music Channel is a very comprehensive organized site to enable users to easily select different music genres from various sources. On top of the page is Hotlists: Hot Music of Top Genres, New Music of the Week, and then Champagne Diet which is a collection of party music, Seasonal music such as Christmas songs, and other lists of music by genres. Although Vevo is YouTube's partner, but the sources of the music videos come from many different sources.

YouTube Movies Channel is the one that features full length movies and is a pay per view channel for watching movies. The rental price ranged from US$1.99 to US$14.99. It is the fifth most subscribed channels with more than 54 million subscribers. Movies are organized by film genres such as action, crime, comedy, and so on. New releases, new to rent, top selling, animated movies are special top categories featured. The channel even has a pre-order category for movies not yet available. The uniqueness of the channel lies in its use of a preview of varying lengths for most movies (from one to several minutes) and listing of all comments from users about the movie before users make a choice. However, in some movies such as *American Made* starring Tom Cruise, the comments were disabled. The movie collection is quite good with 72 newly released titles, 200 titles for each movie genre including world cinemas.

Different from *YouTube Movies*, the other YouTube aggregate channels offer free content that is updated daily by the YouTube automatic discovery system. *YouTube News* classifies news by categories such as business, technology, world, national, science and health from various news channels and has a "Live Now" section that plays the live news reports from different live-streaming news channels. Most notably, it selects several major headline stories such as Donald Trump lashes at his own FBI and compiles videos of several different sources such as CNN, MSNBC, Times of Oman, and Russian Television America. *YouTube Sports* is similar to *YouTube Gaming* and covers any physical games or contests that can be counted as sports with live-streaming videos that user can watch live and upcoming live sports and gaming event that users set a reminder to watch the program live. Videos are also grouped by popular sports genres such as basketball, soccer, motor sports, and American football. *Popular on YouTube* includes a wide variety of popular content that YouTube audiences watch such as latest music videos, trailers, comedy clips, and so on.

Because the most viewed and subscribed channels are so dominated by music, to fully understand the diversity of content and audience behavior, we need to examine each specific program genre.

In the quantitative analysis of the top 20 most subscribed and most viewed channels and top five most subscribed channels in each genre, a team of 18 students in a media programming class were trained to code the channels and used the regular YouTube to capture whether commercials or other advertising presence in the channel and the most viewed video of each top five channels in each genre. We excluded the YouTube-owned channels in the statistical analysis because YouTube-owned channels do not own any videos itself but compile others' videos. The view count and number of videos belong to individual channels. The genre, total number of videos, view count, and subscription figures of these channels were drawn from Vidstatsx.com, a site that publishes the ranking of YouTube channels by viewership and subscription with genre classification. For a list of the channels and links to their most viewed videos, please see Appendix A1 online at https://works.bepress.com/louisa_ha/46/.

Among the 85 most subscribed individual channels, 79% are veterans who joined YouTube before 2011. Only three of the most subscribed channels joined YouTube in 2014 (*Masha and the Bear, National Football League (NFL) and Brave Wildern*ess). Around 62% of the channels originated in the United States.

On average, videos of the most subscribed channels across the ten genres and overall under study were updated weekly, with one-third updated daily. Only 14% updated less than once a month. So the most subscribed channels typically keep their audience through fresh content. The median number of videos posted on these most subscribed channels is 726. When we compared the most viewed videos versus the least view videos within the past seven days in the same channel, we found a big difference in viewership of the videos. The average difference within the same channel is as much as 285 million views and a very high standard deviation of 642 million. The most viewed video with 2.8 billion views is the music video "Sorry" on JustinBieberVevo and the least viewed video in the same channel with one million views is Justin Bieber's interview with Fuse Network. The high fluctuation of views shows viewers select videos to watch. Even they subscribe to a channel, they will not watch all or most of the videos. Some videos liked by the viewers may be watched over and over again resulted in an extremely high view.

Although we only analyzed the most subscribed channels, we also analyzed the most viewed and least viewed videos on each channel to identify what attract eyeballs the most in these popular channels and the nature of the popularity. Among the 85 most viewed individual channel videos we analyzed, all except three are longer than 30 minutes. This shows that regular YouTube is still essentially home for short form video consumption.

We also examined the advertising presence in these most viewed videos. Overall, the advertising presence is moderate in the most viewed videos. But there were some videos (32%) actually contained no advertising, 29% used unskippable mandatory pre-roll advertising, and 39% used TrueView (skippable) format pre-roll commercials. The program genre is a good predictor of advertising presence. Music, gaming, science and technology, and news are most likely to carry advertising (80% to 93% of the top five videos). But education and entertainment and sports are mostly unlikely to carry advertising (40% to 62.5% do not have ads). One reason for sports programs not to carry ads is because those are already branded channels such as Nike and Red Bull so they do not want other products to advertise on their channel. In terms of advertising type, music (67%) and how-to style (60%) have the highest proportion of unskippable ads, while news and politics (83%) has the highest proportion of TrueView ads. High tech products are appealing to young adults such as Apple Watch and Microsoft and also video games and movies dominated the advertiser roster. There were also four local advertisements (local shopping mall and local car dealership) so we can see Google/YouTube's local geo-targeting at work.

Because the ad is customized to each viewer based on their view history and search history (Scott 2017), especially if viewers use their YouTube app and account to watch, each user gets a different commercial experience from another. This type of individualized ad exposure environment is different from traditional media. While critics may say YouTube content is controlled by advertisers through targeting and imitating the TV commercial culture (e.g., Kim, 2012), the experience is unique and it is programmed so that one will not watch the same commercial again for the same video. This is very different from TV when viewers are repeatedly shown the same commercial.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIEWS, LIKES, AND COMMENTS

Not surprisingly, among the most viewed videos of each channel we analyzed, we found a very high correlation between the number of views and the number of likes ($r = 0.92$, $p < 0.001$) and between the number views and number of comments ($r = 0.86$, $p < 0.001$) (two channels disabled their comments feature in our analysis so they were not included). The number of comments and the number of likes are also highly correlated ($r = 0.88$, $p < 0.001$). Hence the amounts of likes and comments are good predictors of views because the more the audience like the video, the more they will repeat watching it (boosting the number of views) and perhaps sharing it to their friends to encourage them to watch it. Readers can learn more about the sharing behavior in chapter 7. Comments can be positive and negative. But based on the high positive correlation between likes and comments, most of those who leave comments are likely to have enjoyed the content and write to show their support of the video. A controversial video can still attract attention and the more comments (no matter positive or negative) were listed, the more audience is curious to find out if the video is as good or as bad as the commenter said, which explains why number of comments are so positively related to the number of views. See chapter 6 on the role of comments in influencing viewing behavior and how audiences perceive the comments on videos.

BRANDED MARKETING CHANNELS AND GENUINE MEDIA CONTENT CHANNELS

Aside from YouTube's genre aggregate channels, the rest of top channels are individual channels. So we can see individual channels comprise the vast majority of channels on YouTube. We can divide individual channels into two broad types based on its purposes. One type of individual channels is the professionally made, commercially and promotional-driven channel which can be called *branded marketing channels*. They are there to promote one specific individual brand and company. No editorial independence is expected and the performance is measured by how effective the channel promotes the brand or company. Examples of such branded channels are Nike and Red Bull which are top-subscribed channels in the sports genre. They provide sports content but with a clear purpose to promote the Nike brand and Red Bull brand. In a sense, all the music artist channels on Vevo can be categorized as branded channels because their content is sole promotion for the songs and the artists and other auxiliary sales such as concerts and albums. Please refer to chapter 8 for more detail about branded marketing channels.

Another type of original channels is *genuine media channels* which have some editorial independence and do not explicitly belong to any brands. These channels may or may not have sponsors but they ultimately control what they chose to present in the video. Among these channels, some of them are run by professionals and belong to legacy media companies such as PBS which has live streaming and full-episodes. Most of these *legacy media channels* have their own video sites and use YouTube as a supplementary outlet to reach new audiences. But even more are channels with user-generated content with a host, vlogger or just a narrator creating videos individually or as a series. Some of them became famous YouTubers with millions of subscribers and billions of viewers. It may be debatable if they still belong to amateur and create use-generated content if they do the channel as a full-time job. Nonetheless what distinguish these channels is that these sites rely primarily on YouTube to host their videos. We can call them *native YouTube channels* because they were born and grown on YouTube.

MOST VIEWED CHANNELS IN THE UNITED STATES

In the top 20 most viewed channels in the United States, 10 are branded marketing channels (see Table 11.3). Out of the 10 branded marketing channels, nine are Vevo artist channels, one is WWE (*World Wrestling Entertainment*). In addition, two of the top 20 channels are movie clips and trailer channels. It is clear that millions of U.S. YouTube users do not mind promotionally driven content as long as they found them entertaining. *Genuine legacy media channels* on this list include *The Ellen Show* and the *Tonight show with Jimmy Fallon*. User-generated content such as product review channels such as *FunzToyCollector*, gaming channel *Markiplier* also captured a top 20 spot. Music channels such as *Fueled by Ramen* and *David Guetta* also entered the spot. *Buzzfeed* is the only news media brand that rose to the top 20 spot. U.S. audiences still watch U.S.-based channels the most. Only two non-U.S. music artists in Vevo channels can enter the top 20 list.

ANALYSIS OF MOST SUBSCRIBED CHANNELS BY GENRE

Next we qualitatively analyze the attributes of the most viewed videos in the most subscribed channels in each program genre. The genre is based on Vidstatsx's classification. We will start with the least commercially driven channels: education, and science and technology.

Education

The top five most subscribed YouTube education channels are (1) *LittleBabyBum* (13.7 million subscribers), (2) *TEDxTalk*s (10 million subscribers), (3) *Super Simple Songs* (8 million subscribers), (4) *Crash Course* (7 million subscribers), and (5) *SmarterEveryDay* (5.3 million subscribers). Because *TEDxTalks* and *TED-ED* are highly similar, only *TEDxTalks* is analyzed. If all *TEDx* channels are combined, it has the largest subscribers than all other education channels. Among these top five, *LittleBabyBum* and *Super Simple Songs* are nursery rhymes channels and originated from the UK and

Table 11.3 YouTube's 20 Most Viewed Channels in the United States

Channel	*Country of Origin*	*Genre*	*Total Number of Views*	*Total Number of Subscribers*	*Number of Videos*
1. WWE	United States	Show	18,814,253,237	20 million	32,300
2. JustinBieberVevo	United States	Music	16,670,994,545	33 million	123
3. KatyPerryVevo	United States	Music	14,747,355,152	25.8 million	124
4. TaylorSwiftVevo	United States	Music	13,844,654,597	26.6 million	83
5. FunToyzCollector	United States	Product Review	13,553,192,992	9.7 million	2,400
6. ShakiraVevo	Columbia/United States	Music	12,241,269,854	18.9 million	139
7. RihannaVevo	United States	Music	12,201,143,040	26.2 million	106
8. BuzzfeedVideo	United States	News & Politics	11,635,862,059	14 million	4,800
9. TheEllenShow	United States	Comedy	10,661,421,529	22 million	8,200
10. PopularMMOs	United States	Gaming	10,071,382,613	13 million	3,900
11. EnriqueIglesiasVevo	Spain/United States	Music	9,855,662,366	12.8 million	115
12. EminemVevo	United States	Music	9,809,365,852	24.9 million	71
13. MovieClips	United States	Film & Animation	9,599,778,464	7.6 million	29,300
14. MovieClipTrailers	United States	Film & Animation	9,010,410,540	11.5 million	7,100
15. David Guetta	United States	Music	8,987,810,291	15.2 million	401
16. Fueled by Ramen	United States	Music	8,684,010,751	9.5 million	1,100
17. Markiplier	United States	Gaming	8,555,604,247	19 million	4,000
18. Maroon5Vevo	United States	Music	8,517,301,677	15 million	102
19. The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon	United States	Comedy	8,369,356,571	15 million	4,000
20. CalvinHarrisVevo	United States	Music	8,369,356,571	12.5 million	89

Source: Videostatsx.com, December 22, 2017 and Author Research

Canada respectively. This reflects the demand of both parents and caregivers, and teachers to use nursery rhymes in educating their young children. *Little-BabyBum* has the largest collection of 6,000 3D cartoon nursery rhymes and serve worldwide audiences with multiple language offerings such as Spanish, German, French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Russian. New videos are added every Friday. It was quite profitable with eight million dollars profit earning in 2015 (Siebert 2015). *Super Simple Songs* have 372 nursery rhyme videos in various formats ranging from puppets, cartoons, and human actors. Each video is supported by free teaching resources. There are other sister channels such as *SuperSimple TV* and *Super Simple ABCs.*

Crash Course is hosted by famous U.S. youth fiction author John Greene and brother Hank Green and targeted at high school students. Both of them are former teachers. The channel has nearly 7 million subscribers and 852 short videos (10–15 minutes) on various high school subjects such as history, science, economics, government, and literature. The subjects were presented in a fun and easy way to understand. In addition to ads, there is a link to ask for viewers to make monetary contribution to the channel.

TEDxTalks and *SmarterEveryDay* are education channels primarily for adults. The *TEDxTalks* channel consists of more than 100,000 videos under 18 minutes by TED conference speakers from 130 countries covering a wide variety of topics. The quality of the talks varies tremendously because of the large number of videos. It is an open platform for people to upload content. *SmarterEveryDay* is hosted by engineer Dustin Sandlin that explains science behind a current topic of interest in the video such as a behind-the-scenes look at DNA testing. The channel has 5.3 million subscribers and offers 262 videos.

These top ranked education channels have content that can be viewed multiple times because of their utility values and large collection. The nursery rhymes can be played over and over again when students or parents teach the children to learn the rhyme. *Crash Course* and *SmarterEveryDay* benefit from a popular host who explains and packages the topic in a fun way. The well-organized topics help users quickly find what they need to learn.

It should be noted that education is not a highly subscribed category compared to other genres. Only 49 channels have over one million subscribers (Vidstatsx 2017). But it plays an important role in supplementing the education of young children, high school to college students, and increases the general knowledge for common people on different topics. Some topics are highly specialized such as how to use a certain statistical software. The on-demand availability provided by YouTube videos is especially important to users as people learn best when they have a need to solve a problem. As a form of self-learning, many adolescents who are YouTube creators were found to learn their skills from YouTube (Lange 2014).

The peer learning and community formation in YouTube creates an interesting informal learning space. Education researchers such as Clifton and Mann (2011) and Asselin et al. (2011) found that YouTube helped facilitate deeper learning, content engagement, and critical awareness among nursing student and the time flexibility is a big advantage. Yet other researchers such as Tan (2013) warned that users have focused on the entertainment value of the YouTube content and varied digital literacy skills affect their ability to assess the quality and reliability of the content.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science and technology as a category is slightly better than education in terms of subscribers. At least 61 channels have over one million subscribers. The most subscribed channel in this genre is *VSauce* which has three different subchannels *VSauce* 1, 2, and 3. *VSauce* main channel is the most subscribed with almost 13 million subscribers featuring 356 videos. *CrazyRussianHackers* is run by Taras Kulakov, a Ukraine-born residing in the United States who considered himself as a Russian. His channel is famous for science experiments and features a total of 1,107 videos and update every one to three days. The only non-English language science channel as top five most subscribed is Brazilian *Manual De Mundo* (World Manual) which broadcast in Portuguese. It was one of the oldest science channels which began in 2006 which present the science behind many topics such as magic and recipes. The videos are both entertaining and educational.

Unbox Therapy was created by Canadian Lewis Hilsenteger. He had both IT and art training and uploads videos a few times a week. The channel focuses around showcasing and explaining technological gadgets from all over the world from phones to computers. Launched in December 2010, the channel has 9.3 million subscribers with 1,315 videos. *AsapScience,* the fifth most subscribed science channel with 7.2 million subscribers, was also created by Canadian YouTubers Mitchell Moffit and Gregory Brown. They use the specific style of whiteboard animation with voice-over narration by the two men. The topics are all about scientific facts and educating viewers on topics from anatomy to drugs.

Both science and technology, and education genre channels help audience to learn the subject matter. However, science and technology is still quite gendered, always featuring a male vlogger. The most viewed videos are all with highly interesting titles related to trendy topics such as *CrazyRussianHacker*'s "How to Open a Can without Can Opener—Zombie Survival Tips #20," and *Unbox Therapy*'s "iPhone 6 Plus Bend Test" and *AsapScience*'s "What Color is this Dress? Solved with Science."

FILM AND ANIMATION

The most subscribed film and animation channels on YouTube are a mix of both educational animation such as the Russian *Masha and the Bear* cartoons and *CVS 3D Rhymes,* and Brazilian children's music channel *Galinha Pintadinha* and movie marketing channels such as *MovieClips Trailers* and unscripted interactive channel such as the *Fine Brothers Entertainment* (FBE). Top 83 channels in this category have more than one million subscribers, which do better in subscription numbers than the education and science and technology channels.

The *FBE* is the most subscribed channel in this category with 16.5 million subscribers. It is also one of the veteran native YouTube channels that joined in 2007. It contains a series of different groups "react" to different topics such as "Teens React and Celebrities React." The spontaneity of how people react differently or similarly on different topics is what attract the audiences. The channel also has other sitcoms such as *MyMusic*.

It should be noted that *MovieClips Trailers* is owned by Fandango, a movie booking ticket service company to entertain and guide film fans with movie trailers and movie clips, exclusive and original content, insider and expert commentary (Arrant 2016; Fandango 2017). It appeals to movie buffs and people contemplating to watch movies. By promoting movie going, the company gets business.

HOW-TO STYLE

Among the how-to style category, beauty and fashion channels are the most popular. They capture the top five spots in subscribers. The how-to style category has one of the largest numbers of subscribers with all top 100 channels having over two million subscribers. Unlike science and technology which is dominated by male vloggers, this category is dominated by female vloggers. Except *How-to-Basic* channel, all the videos are personality-driven with the vlogger being the demonstrator and friend of the audience. Many of their videos can also be counted as product review videos when the vloggers comment or demonstrate the use of a certain make-up or fashion brand. The most subscribed channel in this genre is *Yuya*, a channel in Spanish created by the 23-year-old Mexican woman vlogger who became very famous in Latin America with 19 million subscribers. Rachel Levin's *Rclbeauty101* is known for her beauty knowledge and comedic style. A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in the United States, she is only 22 but started posting her first video since 15 years old (Petit 2016).

Two other famous young female beauty vloggers in the top three and four spots are Zoey Elizabeth Sugg from the United Kingdom (*Zoella* channel) and *Bethany Mota* from the United States. Both vloggers give out fashion and life-style advice to young girls in particular. These vloggers are highly engaged with their fans. They directly talk to their audience like their friends and share their daily lives and encounter with them. In an interview, Mota explained her success by how much she responded to her fans: "Every time I post a video, I make sure to go to the comment section, and I reply to their comments. I really utilize my social networking sites" (Darren O 2014). This type of intimate para-social relationship between audiences and the vloggers appeal to young audiences who defy authority but need a trustworthy person for beauty and fashion advice.

GAMING

As discussed in chapter 4, gaming is a unique program category of for YouTube and can explain why a higher proportion of males are viewers of YouTube. All the most subscribed gaming channels appeal to the male audiences with male vloggers. This genre has one of the most subscribers with the top 100 channels have at least three million subscribers (Vidstatsx 2017). This genre involves video game reviews and demonstrations. The appeal is not just on the video games themselves, but the humor and enjoyment derived from playing those games and seeing others play. Because of the YouTube app on video game consoles, gamers can seamlessly learn, record while play games and upload them on YouTube to share with their friends and other players. All the top-subscribed channels are individual user-generated channels, not branded channels of video game manufacturers and teams such as sports. But the vloggers became famous and full-time professionals dedicated to the channels. Among the top five most subscribed gaming YouTubers, only one is from the United States (*Markiplier*). The top-subscribed gaming channel is *PewDiePie*. It is one of the post popular channels with 58 million subscribers and viewers. The Swedish creator Felix Kjelberg (PewDiePie) began posting on YouTube since 2010 and he is famous for his "Let's play" videos which he walk through the games with commentary and off the wall humor. He posts videos daily and builds on a combination of humor and shock value (Alexander 2017). He also adds his girlfriend who is also another famous YouTuber to his videos in appealing to female audiences as well. He uses English in his videos to appeal to a worldwide audience.

While *PewDiePie* is famous globally, *Markiplier* is one of the two top most viewed gaming channels among U.S. audiences and third worldwide. Mark Fischbach, the vlogger, specialized on shooter and horror type of video games and his amusing reactions and gameplay attract the audience. His videos are full of swearing with emotional outbursts which made him look genuine and raw. He has been awarded *Forbes* magazine's 30 under 30 in 2018 as a gaming star (Sarkar 2017).

Chinese-Canadian Evan Fong's *VanossGaming* is the second most subscribed gaming channels with 21.6 million subscribers. The channel is known for team playing games with other famous video game vloggers and recording the amusing outtakes during the games and promoting the gaming community.

The fourth and fifth most subscribed gaming stars are all from the United Kingdom: *KSI* (Olaijide "JJ" Olatunji) and *TheSyndicateProject* (Tom Cassell). Both are controversial figures with Olatunji being criticized for using offensive, sexist, and racist comments and lyrics (Kent 2017), while Cassell was sued for his failure to disclose being paid to promote video games and merchandise (*Forbes* 2017). Their cases represent problems from uncensored and unclear regulation of YouTubers. However, gaming audiences seem uninfluenced by these issues and continue to watch their videos.

NEWS AND POLITICS

The news and politics channels of YouTube changed news from live feed to on demand. It facilitates audiences to watch not only mainstream news channels but also niche and partisan news channels and also news from outside the United States unfiltered through U.S. news media for U.S. audiences. Our analysis of the most subscribed news channels found similar lack of user-generated content on legacy international news channels on YouTube such as CNN, Al Jazeera, RT, France 24 and Ari Arabiya as in the study of al Nashmi et al. (2017).

Out of the five most subscribed news channels, only two are from the United States (*ABC* and *The Young Turks*). The other two are from India (*Aaj Tak* and *Indian TV*) and one is from the Philippines (*ABS-CBN*). All the top-subscribed news non-U.S. channels provide at least English subtitles and descriptions to broaden its audiences and they are legacy media channels. However, native YouTube channels such as *The Young Turks* thrive on YouTube as a liberal leftist democrat channel. It has the second largest subscribers with 3.5 million among the news genre and 3.9 billion total views. It featured both live-streaming content weekdays from 6 to 8 p.m. and on-demand news and public affairs commentary programs such as *Aggressive Progressives*. It joined YouTube as early as December 2005 and encouraged people to be its members with benefits such as free download of its content.

Soft news generally dominates in views than hard news in these news and politics YouTube channels. *ABC News* is also an early participant of YouTube in 2005. Its most viewed news video with 44.3 million views, over

250,000 likes and comments disabled is a rebroadcast of news of a little girl with peculiar medical reaction and aversion to the sun with highly emotional presentation with medical professionals, the girl and the mother and discuss other people with similar conditions.

*Aaj Ta*k and *Indian TV* are both professional Hindi TV channels and highly popular TV news Channels in India which utilize the good YouTube video infrastructure to broadcast their programs to Indian audiences domestically and internationally. *Aaj Tak* is the most subscribed news channels on YouTube with 4.2 million subscribers. *Indian TV* is an independent news service and started early on YouTube in 2006. Both channels' most viewed news videos are soft-news items on children that have amazing power. Aaj Tak's "Super Brain: Watch the amazingly awesome memorizing power of a 5 year old kid" has almost 19 million views and Indian TV's "KBC with Human Computer Kautilya Pandit" has 18 million views. The appeal to sensationalism of these channels offline has been criticized by Indian scholars (Jaggi and Majumdar 2009) and YouTube just amplifies this more with the high views and sharing of these sensational news.

ABS-CBN News is the online news channel of the largest TV network in the Philippines. Although it uses the native language Tagalog, it has English subtitles and descriptions for all its video titles. The channel is a massive collection of all its news and public affairs programs. The most viewed video is about the host teasing a celebrity guest's personal life.

If one just judges news viewership or viewer interest only from the number of views, it will be highly skewed toward human interest and entertainment news because these news items do not require timeliness and instant live viewing. But there are also other documentary types of news videos which are still within the top 10 most subscribed YouTube channels such as Vice News' "The Spread of the Islamic State" video which also obtained 11 million views.

SPORTS

Sports is a highly uneven genre in channel subscription. The top channel Dude Perfect has 28 million subscribers. A mere total of 49 channels have more than one million subscribers. One main characteristic of sports channels is that most of them are branded marketing channels of sports teams and athletic products.

Dude Perfect is a native YouTube channel which is a classic example of how YouTube brought someone online to the TV screen. The show is now is on U.S. cable network Nickelodeon TV with the same name since 2017. It is hosted by five male high school friends including the twins Coby and Cory

Cotton, and Garrett Gilbert, Cody Jones, and Tyler Toney (*The Fulton Critic* 2017). The sports it features are battles of different teams on obstacle courses or creative ways of playing sports such as using different objects to play golf. It mixes comedy with sports. It has much fewer videos (only 157) compared to other most subscribed channels. But the viewership of the videos is very high with the most viewed videos garnering 4.25 billion views.

NBA is a worldwide famous U.S. basketball league. Its channel boasts more than 26,500 videos on YouTube and gained the most total views of almost 4.4 billion views among all sports channels. It uses the channel to promote the players and the teams by posting large number of highlights from different players or different games in the NBA. It also created a "NBA Daily Show" that covers the different stories on the NBA on a daily basis to keep the fans' interests in the games and the players.

Soccer is another worldwide popular sport. But instead of a league channel, the most subscribed soccer channel is *Freekickerz* which is based in Germany and feature mostly European soccer teams and players. It features the different challenges and obstacle in soccer. The videos are in German but it has English subtitles and all videos have titles and descriptions in English. It has six million subscribers and its most viewed video is "Best of Top 500 goals" which showcases the state of the art of the soccer sport.

Red Bull is a well-known sports and energy drink. Its branded marketing channel on YouTube is the top-viewed and highly subscribed sports channel. As a branded marketing channel, *Red Bull*'s videos are uploaded daily on athletes and sports that they sponsor which include snowboarding, biking, surfing, and others. It is very experienced as an early participant of YouTube in 2006 and 6.6 million subscribers and over 7,000 videos. Most of the videos are short clips less than five minutes.

COMEDY

Comedy probably is the second most subscribed channel genre. All its top 100 channels have at least two million subscribers. It is also the most personality-driven genre with focus on one individual comedian. The most subscribed channels came from Spain (*elrubiusOMG*), the United States (*Jenny Mables*, *Nigahiga*, and *Jimmy Fallon*), and Ecuador (*Enchufetv*). Both Spanish channels have English subtitles. But *elrubiusOMG* has also English program title and descriptions.

Ruben Gundersen is the 27-year-old vloggers who started his *elrubiusOMG* channel in 2006 and now enjoyed more than 26 million subscribers worldwide and also the most subscribed channel in Spain. Most of his videos are gameplays such as his most viewed video is his playing of Minecraft but he also has sketch comedies and answer fans' questions in his videos (*El Economista* 2015). Ryan Higa, the creator of *Nigahiga*, is also 27 years old and started his YouTube channel in 2006. Ryan rose to popularity by lip-syncing popular songs with his friends and then making funny "how-to" videos (*The famous people* 2016). His most viewed video is titled "Nice guy" which mocks at men who try to get girls fast but only those that treat girls in a respectful manner as a nice guy eventually win a girl's heart.

Jenny Marbles is the only female most subscribed comedian and second most popular channel operated by a woman (Gillespie 2014). Her first video how to "trick people into thinking you are good-looking" reached 5.3 million views within a week in 2010 (Klima 2013) and is still her most viewed video now. In that video, she makes fun of herself while getting ready and addresses topics relatable to young girls. Another comedian *SuperWomen* is put under the Entertainment category by Videostatsx.

Jimmy Fallon is the only personality in the top five most subscribed YouTube comedy list who is already famous on TV before his YouTube channel. The channel is for promoting his TV show by selecting the highlights of his late-night show *Tonight*. His most viewed video titled "Wheel of Music Impressions," is with famous singer Ariana Grande playing a game of singing and imitating different popular artists.

Enchufetv is a comedy group of three young men: Christian Moya, Martin Dominguez, and Jorge Ulla. Similar to *elrubiusOMG*, it is the most YouTube popular channel in its own originating country Ecuador (elemprendedor 2013). The channel has almost 16 million subscribers and videos are uploaded several times a week. All videos are short comedy sketches. The most viewed video titled "Super Campeonas" shows how girls and boys plays a soccer game against each other to counter the popular stigma that "girls aren't good at sports" and appeal to both sexes.

In fact, humor and fun are the common element underlying most of the popular channels in different genres as we analyzed other genres such as sports, gaming, education, and science and technology. Audiences want to relax and have fun and watch content that can relate to their life. Making audiences happy is the secret sauce of YouTube videos' popularity.

ENTERTAINMENT

The entertainment channel designated by Vidstatsx is quite similar to comedy. The number of entertainment subscribers are even higher than comedy with its top 100 channels all over three million subscribers. Three of them, *HolaSoyGerman* (from Chile), *The Ellen Show* (from the United States), and *Felipe Neto* (from Brazil) can easily be put under Comedy. *T-Series* (from

India) and *Whinderssonnunes* (from Brazil) are more like music channels with mostly singing videos. *HolaSoyGerman,* even though has 33 million subscribers, was said to decide quitting from posting a year ago on his channel after receiving harassment from his fans (*Reddit* 2017).

The Ellen Show is the online highlight of the famous syndicated talk show *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. The long-running 15 season show used YouTube to attract young audiences. It features 8,000 short videos clips of the show with various guests. *The Ellen Show* also added an exclusive "Ellen and more" show on YouTube Tuesdays and Thursdays. It has a combined view count of 10.6 billion and 22 million subscribers. The channel is a great way to keep viewers who might have missed one or two episodes and want to repeat watching a specific guest interview.

Felipe Neto became popular by talking about controversial subjects and celebrities to create buzz around his channel. With 16.5 million subscribers and almost a thousand videos, *Felip Neto* was highly popular in Brazil. He is a 29-year-old vlogger with a strong personality and humor, very typical of famous YouTubers. He founded the largest YouTube multichannel network of 5,000 channels to professionalize the online video market in Brazil called Paramaker in 2011 (Rintoul 2014).

T-Series is a large music company in India. It uses YouTube to promote its extravagantly produced music videos for Bollywood films amounting to 12,000 titles and cumulated over 27.2 billion views and 30 million subscribers. It was the fast-growing and most popular music channel based on viewership in 2016. The channel is an attempt for the company to globalize its movies and music (Bollywood Hungama News Network 2017). May be due to the presence of short films on the channel, it is not classified as a music channel but an entertainment channel by Vidstatsx.

Whinderssonnunes was created by a young 22-year-old vlogger Whindersson Nunes Batista from Brazil. His 300 videos have diverse content that includes parodies, vlogs, songwriting, and movie review and he is highly influential among Brazilian teenagers. His channel is only in Portuguese with no English subtitles.

MUSIC

Our analysis revealed that on a global platform such as YouTube, U.S. channels do not have a huge advantage over non-U.S. originated channels. Corroborated with our audience survey conducted two years ago, music is still the most viewed and most subscribed program genre. One may wonder why YouTube as a video site would garner so much music lovers. Indeed, YouTube serves as a convenient one-stop site to listen (and watch) music for free. Some of the most "viewed" music videos have no visual with a static screen or are lyric videos, but people tune in for the music. We have to remember video can be played in the background so users use their computers or smartphones as MP3 players to play music for their listening. The visual component of the video is extra and not necessary. Understanding this phenomenon, YouTube as a video channel portal probably should be considered an online audio-video portal where audiences can find songs to listen to just like radio or watch video just like TV.

The importance of music videos to YouTube can be seen in the partnership between YouTube and Vevo. All top-subscribed U.S. channels are music video channels and they are all hosted on Vevo. YouTube just directs users to the Vevo site to watch those videos. YouTube shares advertising revenue with Vevo. Vevo was formed as artist-specific channel site by music labels Universal Music Group and Sony Music Entertainment with a majority ownership and Google has a minority stake in it. It was a result of tough negotiation between YouTube and the music labels on the revenue generated from the music videos (Carpenter 2016).

The top five most subscribed individual music channels are all Vevo channels for popular singers: Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, Rihanna, Katy Perry, and Eminem. Their most viewed videos attracted billions of views. Justin Bieber's recently most viewed video was "Sorry" with 2.8 billion views, 9 million likes, and 715,000 comments in seven days. The video includes product placement of Adidas with all dancers wearing clothing with highly visible Adidas logos. Taylor Swift's most viewed video is her new song "Shake It Off" with 2.4 billion views, 6 million likes, and 459,000 comments. Rihanna's top-viewed video is "Diamonds," a dramatic music video showing her running away from someone who is hurting her. The video had 1.1 billion views, 4 million likes, and 255,000 comments. Katy Perry's most viewed video is about her song on feminine empowerment. The video had 2.3 billion views, 7.2 million likes, and 569,000 comments. Interestingly, Eminem's most viewed video "Love the Way You Lie" features another popular singer, Rihanna. Many of the lyrics of Enimem as a rapper are not clean and they are clearly labeled as explicit on YouTube.

Because all these music channels are all on the Vevo platforms, they share similar formats showing lyric videos, behind-the-scenes interviews, and music videos. The videos were uploaded around releases and concerts with a clear purpose of promoting the artists and their music. No personal videos of the artists were featured. So the channel is not for interaction with fans, but a collection of the artists' promotional materials including their music videos.

Attributes of the Most Popular Channels

Based on our above analysis of the most popular channels and the most viewed videos of these channels, we can find some common program appeals of these online videos. Each popular channel will have several highly viewed videos and in general its content is updated frequently and the channel has a good size collection of videos over 100 or more. The only exception is a few superstars' channels such as Taylor Swift and Eminem. People just go to those channels to retrieve content from their favorite stars. For those entertainment-oriented legacy media channels, star power, and high production quality content are key to attract large amount of views. But for the native YouTube channels, edgy content, sarcasm and fun are important elements for the comedy and entertainment content while the genuine and friendly personality of the vlogger are important for the educational and how-to content.

One other important attribute for popularity of many non-U.S. channels is the use of English. Only very few of these popular non-U.S. channels just simply use their own languages without any English description. Most of the popular non-U.S. channels have at least English video titles or even brief description in English. Quite a number of them also have their own English subtitles in the videos. This can broaden the reach of the videos to non-native audiences and enables them to be found by English-speaking audiences. This shows the power of English as the most common second language used in a global platform such as YouTube.

YOUTUBE AUDIENCES OUTSIDE THE MOST POPULAR CHANNELS

There are five million plus YouTube channels (Carl & Ben 2017) but only 2,000 channels have more than one million subscribers (Gutelle 2017). What we analyzed is only a very tiny sample of the many popular channels. They are important to the advertisers and many aspiring YouTube creators who want to be one of them. But we know many channels which have much fewer subscribers or viewers but they serve specialized needs of the audience. If we add up all these small audiences of these five million channels, they easily can rival any major channel. These small audience channels with a few thousand or a few hundred subscribers have little advertising value, but they probably offer those content that we cannot find on TV and the popular channels on YouTube. Most users are quiet who don't show their feelings to the public via clicking likes or leaving comments as discussed in chapter 4. They just subscribe to the channel or watch a specific video they stumbled upon or based on YouTube's recommendation. Some even just type the search on

Google or YouTube to find what they want. They are task-oriented users who come and go in their video consumption. As long as their needs are fulfilled, so is YouTube achieved its role as the video commons for everyone online.

In addition, YouTube plays an important role as a sampling site for music, TV series and movies as shown in high viewership and subscription of the music channels and the movie trailer channels. This popular channel analysis reveals that YouTube's amateur content constitutes only a small portion of its viewership. It's the professional content that drives regular viewership and loyalty. But how amateur content is shown side by side with professional content with open submissions and how well-curated they are are what made YouTube different from other major online video services. People who want to explore alternative content from mainstream can easily find something from the billions of videos available. Some of the genres are too narrow to be shown as a national cable TV network, but they can get millions of viewers online globally. However, those who like mainstream content won't be disappointed on YouTube because they can use YouTube to watch the most current movies online at a cheaper price than going to a theatre on *YouTube Movies*. People who just want free popular media content can find what they want if all they want are highlights. One can watch live TV from YouTube TV in 83 U.S. cities. The easy search function of Google and YouTube and automatically generated recommended function enable content to be discovered and sampled. This is much more convenient than any TV guide or word-of-mouth recommendation from friends and family.

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Chapter 12

Is YouTube Red the Ultimate Viewing Experience and What is the Future of Online Video Audience Research?

Louisa Ha

When YouTube Red was officially launched on October 31, 2015, it was proclaimed by YouTube as the "Ultimate YouTube Experience" (YouTube 2015). However, does it live up to the promise of being the "ultimate" online viewing experience or it is just another way for YouTube to make money or move toward the direct payment model? The launch was right before our survey was conducted in November 2015. We incorporated it in the study and examined the awareness of and interest in the service. Only 36% of the respondents were aware of the YouTube Red service at that time and only 5% planned or already subscribed to YouTube Red.

We examined what factors best predict interest in YouTube Red. We found that those who use Netflix and Hulu as well as YouTube are more likely to be YouTube Red members (11%). Those who subscribe to YouTube only (3.5%) or only one other paid video service (4%) are most unlikely to be interested in subscribing or having subscribed to YouTube Red. YouTube video creators are four times more likely (18%) than non-video creators to subscribe to YouTube Red (4%). Video game console and tablet owners are also more likely (8%) than non-video game console or non-tablet owners (2.5%) to subscribe to YouTube Red. Remarkably, those who said they do not watch advertising on YouTube (2.7%) are less interested in YouTube Red than those who watch advertising on YouTube (9.4%). Hence the commercial-free feature of YouTube Red seems to have no impact on the willingness to pay for YouTube Red. There is no significant difference in income level between those who are interested in subscribing to YouTube Red (mean = 3.9) and those who are not (mean = 3.22) where 3 is an income level between $1,000 and $1,500 per month. The willingness to pay for online video content is contingent on how dependent they are on online videos as their source of entertainment and information and on online viewing video devices, similar to what Yang et al. (2014) found in their survey of Northwest Ohio college students and general population.

Ha and Ganahl's (2007a) ACR webcasting business model framework predicts that accessibility and content strategies determine the ability of a webcaster to collect different revenue sources. In the media business, there is always cross-subsidy of less popular content by the popular content. The basic advertising model of YouTube is that the highly viewed content shoulders the revenue responsibility for the service. Some users complained YouTube's advertising. Now, YouTube chose a multiple revenue mode of both direct payment (subscription for YouTube Red and YouTube TV; pay per view for YouTube Movies) and advertising/sponsorship for regular YouTube compared to other exclusively ad-supported services such as Facebook or exclusively paid subscription services like Netflix. This complex multiple revenue model gives audiences the choice and serves both people who are able or willing to pay and those who are unable or unwilling to pay. This strategy is to maximize the audience base for YouTube and position YouTube as the destination for all types of video content. In addition, it helps low budget work to stay alive via the free platform while allowing YouTube to compete with Netflix with high budget original production and blockbusters; and also it attracts cord-cutters with lower subscription cost than cable TV. To combat with advertising avoidance, YouTube added the choice of in-video advertising overlay format at the bottom of the screen after 15 seconds of the video started from pre-roll mandatory and TrueView skippable ads to ensure people not to avoid the ads. Nonetheless, it respects some consumer sovereignty by letting them click on the ad to make it disappear from the screen (Sweney 2017).

YouTube Red is only available in five countries at the time of writing: the United States, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and Mexico (Mitroff & Martin 2017, YouTube 2017). Obviously YouTube is testing the market in different continents and avoiding Europe for the moment. YouTubers can get income from both advertising and subscription, and these different sources are separately listed in their accounts. More importantly, YouTube Red compensation is based on the amount of time audiences spent on the video, while regular YouTube compensation is by advertiser's advertising placement or sponsorship which is mostly based on the number of views. After one year of its launch, YouTube Red is only able to get one million paid subscribers and 1.5 million free trial subscribers in late 2016 which represents 3% of the subscription video on demand (SVOD) market, and much behind Netflix (34%), Amazon Video (23%), and Hulu (11.%) (Elder 2017). No recent public mentioning about YouTube Red's subscription was available. YouTube's three-month free trial offer to U.S. users in October 2017 should indicate the service is still receiving low reception from

YouTube users. Also YouTube TV subscription also comes with access to YouTube Red Originals as well.

COMPARING REGULAR YOUTUBE WITH YOUTUBE RED

To the audience, is YouTube Red worth the $9.99 monthly subscription fee? Is it really an "ultimate" viewing experience? One has to first determine its value by how YouTube Red is different from regular YouTube and whether it is more attractive than other paid online video service providers such as Netflix, Amazon Video, and Hulu Plus. There are five features of YouTube Red:

1. Exclusive original high quality content from YouTube creators: YouTube Red subscribers will have free access (or first view opportunity) of YouTube Red Originals which are full-length programs or movies made with professional production studios featuring the leading YouTubers. It appeals to YouTube fans who like their YouTubers and is different from all other originals and blockbuster movies that other video services provide.
2. Free subscription of Google Play Music (which may replace Spotify and Apple Music subscription) in addition to YouTube's music (audio) and video services.
3. Offline viewing of YouTube videos—YouTube Red subscribers can save video offline for consumption at different resolution level across different devices (as long as Internet access is available every 30 days). It is highly convenient to build your own video library (good for travel, airplane, and on the go without Internet access and travel to countries without easy or cheap Internet access). Offline viewing is great for frequent travelers and commuters, and Red offers an easy way to download YouTube videos. Red works with the YouTube Kids app, too. So those with children can save videos for offline viewing to keep your children entertained on long plane rides or road trips. It also works with YouTube Music mobile app for music download.
4. Being able to listen to YouTube videos with the phone's or tablet's screen turned off as background. It is a small, but welcome, feature for those who listen to music and want to keep running their YouTube video while they are attending other things, essentially enabling them to multitask.
5. No advertisement on all YouTube videos across platforms and devices.

In addition, YouTube Red directly supports the YouTube creators as a new form of compensation to YouTube creators. Under YouTube Red, creators are compensated by watch time, not by ads. Hence the Red encourages long form viewing. Those who receive longer viewing time receive more money.

Why would an audience want to pay for something that could be free? Let's examine if these five features are compelling enough to create extra value that audiences would care to pay and see it as a superior experience than regular YouTube.

As exclusive premium content is the lifeblood of all premium channels (Eastman & Ferguson 2013), we first examine if the YouTube Red Originals are so compelling to encourage subscription. YouTube Red Originals consist of both movies and series format, similar to HBO. In terms of content genres, it has five categories: (1) comedies, (2) documentaries, (3) reality, (4) sci-fi fantasy, and (5) family. In the first season, it has only 27 titles. As of January 2018, it had 39 titles, 22 series, and 17 movies or documentaries. The series contains both entertainment and information. Many famous YouTube stars can be found in these originals such as PewDiePie (*Scare PewDiePie*), Lindsey Stirling (*Brave Enough*), Vsauce (*Mind Field*), and so on.

Although reportedly there were 250 million views of the YouTube Red original content in the first season and mainly young audiences under 18 (Popper 2017), the number of views are many more than the number of subscribers of Red. It may be caused by YouTube's inclusion of YouTube Red Originals in its YouTube TV subscription package. Its most successful series, Rhett and Link's *Buddy System*'s first episode, has 8.8 million views. College Humor's *Bad Internet* first episode has 4.5 million views. Unlike YouTube's regular practice of showing the viewing figure of every video, only a few series display their number of views (all those who display views are first episodes only and have more than one million views). But for movies and other episodes of those series, the number of views were not shown, or not updated in real time. The Katy Perry Movie *Will You Be My Witness?* only has 24,381 views updated as of October 4, 2017, when the author accessed in on January 8, 2018. Such inconsistent displays may indicate YouTube's unwillingness to show the real performance of these originals. Another indicator of the quality and popularity of the videos is nomination to and receipt of the Emmy or the Golden Globe awards. None of the YouTube Red Originals received any nomination, while other online video services such as Hulu, Amazon, and Netflix received the Golden Globe or Emmy Awards for their original series in 2017 (Huddleston Jr. 2018).

YouTube Red is a way for native YouTube stars to further professionalize their work with a high budget for production and also for YouTube to own its content that can be put in many of its properties including YouTube TV. But to audiences who are used to watching these YouTubers for free, this may be not attractive or exclusive enough. Those who have YouTube TV will not need to subscribe YouTube Red separately. The view information on

YouTube Red was not updated in real time. More importantly, the interactive features such as comments were disabled and the number of likes and dislikes were not shown. One can only share the video link to others with the trailer and invitation to subscribe to YouTube Red.

Because music listening is an important activity for millennials, whether YouTube Red's inclusion of free music subscription of Google Play Music can help it to take away customers from Spotify premium subscription and other leading music streaming services such as Apple Music can be important to audiences as an additional benefit. The library sizes of the two are similar but Spotify is easier to use, select the music based on the taste of the users and the price is the same (Gogoi 2017). So for Spotify users who are fine with watching videos on regular YouTube are unlikely to switch to Red just because of the Google Play Music service. More importantly, many young people prefer to download music illegally so that they can "own" the songs on their devices and they do not like to commit to YouTube Red/Google Play Music. Because of the many options out there, YouTube Red's music option is not very compelling either.

Offline viewing probably is the most unique advantage of Red because it facilitates the use of YouTube videos in places with no Internet access. Those without constant broadband access also will greatly benefit from this offline viewing feature. If you are a frequent traveler, especially internationally, this is really good. But it may be the least known feature of the Red. There are also other ways to download YouTube videos without the need of YouTube Red. So it is not compelling enough to those who know how to download videos.

The feature of continuing to play audio/music in the background and turning off the screen is useful for multitaskers and enables YouTube to be a background for people working on other things. But for those who don't like YouTube to be their background and just want to watch/listen to one video, then the feature is not particularly enticing.

Being commercial free is also not a compelling feature because users who hate commercials can install free ad blockers such as Adblockplus to block the ads on YouTube (Adblockplus 2017). They do not need to pay a monthly fee to get the commercial-free experience. In fact, our survey and interview of millennials show that not many people hate the commercials and those who don't like them have various ways to avoid or block them (see chapter 10). We also found in the survey results that receptiveness toward advertising does not influence YouTube Red subscription. In addition, compared to legacy media such as TV and radio, the advertising on YouTube is not that much and frequent. As shown in our most popular channel analysis in chapter 11, quite a considerable proportion of the most viewed videos do not have ads. The skippable feature grants sovereignty to consumers to select commercials they want to watch. Advertising is not a serious problem compared to other concerns such as quality of content especially full-length professional content.

It was interesting that some YouTubers initially worried that YouTube Red would reduce their advertising income and got upset about the agreement they have to sign with YouTube to include their content in YouTube Red (Estes 2015). They eventually found out that they actually can receive more by both subscription and advertising income. Many also mistook YouTube was becoming another Netflix or moving toward to being a non-ad-supported subscription service (Gutelle 2015). Due to the small amount of people subscribing to YouTube Red, we can see YouTube is still and will primarily be an advertising-supported platform with a paying option for premium content. Due to the vast amount of international viewers who probably are not used to paying for online content and the problem in collecting payment, YouTube hesitates to roll out YouTube Red internationally.

YouTube Red definitely offers additional benefits over the regular YouTube especially the download offline viewing feature. But whether it can be considered as an “ultimate” experience should go beyond access offline to content but the complete consumption experience which includes the choice and quality of content. Audiences want both professional and user-generated content. YouTube has the potential to offer both well. YouTube’s new emphasis of sharing videos and building viewer communities with new features using the subscriber database and other social media and phone contact list of the users will further increase the reach and audience engagement. See chapter 7 for more details on the sharing of YouTube videos.

As more and more people are using digital TV, the potential of a comfortable and collective lean back viewing experience of online videos is high. But this will involve cultivating the public and group viewing of YouTube videos on TV which we found is very rare among the digital natives. The private and repeated viewing of YouTube videos is a highly individualized experience. When YouTube videos are watched together at gatherings or with families on a big screen TV, not computer or smartphones, YouTube will then be part of the daily routine of all people just like watching regular TV. The problem for YouTube is to develop people’s habit to watch YouTube for several hours a day instead of a few minutes per day and fully promote YouTube’s multi-offering of pay per view, regular TV, and the various original and diverse content. YouTube never advertises or promotes itself in legacy media. It limits the awareness of its multi-offering of paid and free services and the vast collection of content among the older consumers who are not online all the time. Another challenge for YouTube is to develop a global media ethics and decency standard that YouTube can work with global advertisers worldwide. Currently it has a community standard that prohibits vulgar language, pornography, harmful, violent, cyberbullying, hateful content (YouTube 2018). But how well it can be implemented, interpreted and adopted by the millions of YouTube creators in different countries with different cultures is a daunting task. The recent upheaval with the Logan Paul's video on suicidal forest in Japan and YouTube's slow response is an example of the difficulty of monitoring YouTube video creators (Sloane 2018).

It is clear YouTube wants to explore more pay video services to strengthen its professional content portfolio and comes into terms with Hollywood and big name music labels—YouTube Movies, YouTube TV, and the forthcoming YouTube Music (Shaw, 2017). Advertising on YouTube alone cannot cover the high cost of those blockbusters. Because of its disadvantage of on-demand viewership, YouTube cannot command top advertising dollars as compared to Super Bowl which can bring large simultaneous audience reach. But asking viewers to pay, YouTube must continue to provide the convenience of on-demand availability and one-stop search for premium content for the viewers at a competitive price with other pay video service providers. The large audience size of YouTube is its liability in negotiating the license fee with Hollywood. There is no free lunch there. The high operating cost of YouTube in hosting and managing the billions of videos means it must explore more revenue sources. In addition, unlike Facebook and Twitter that do not pay for user-generated content, YouTube maintains the 55% revenue sharing with its creators.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR ONLINE VIDEO AUDIENCE RESEARCH?

I. The Use of Online Videos by Digital Immigrants, and Mobile and Social Media Natives

Our study focused on the millennials' attitudes and behaviors. They are the digital natives who are comfortable with online viewing and accustomed to having Internet access. However, as they age, how will their consumption be different from the older audiences? More is needed to study digital immigrants aged between 35 and 59 and the baby boomers who also are becoming more digital literate, how they compare legacy media with online video is a big question. This is especially so when digital TV is adopted by viewers worldwide and they are no longer confined to their traditional broadcast and cable providers. Online videos may be supplementary for them for now. But once they found online has as more content than traditional TV and online video quality is getting better and better with professionalization and technological advancement such as virtual reality and other added services such as recommendation system, they may switch to online video services to replace traditional TV. The free unlimited cloud DVR storage of YouTube TV is a competitive feature to the high cost of cable and satellite TV DVR with limited storage. Longitudinal study of competition and complementarity between online video and TV viewing, similar to Ha and Fang's (2014) study on online news' displacement of print newspapers when audiences realize the superiority of online on-demand viewing with various interactive options, will shed theoretical advancement on the evolution of media choice and competition.

Another important age group that deserves more detailed study is the teenagers and tweens who grew up with online videos, social media, and smartphones. They are the social media and mobile natives. Their phones allow them to have their personal videos, games and music services from young. They take selfies and post live videos. They communicate via text messaging and social media. They use Snapchat and Instagram instead of Facebook and Twitter. Their view of different online video services will determine which service will rise to the top in the next decade. They may prefer to use one rather than multiple video services to satisfy their needs.

Does single video portal service such as YouTube serve audiences better than a combination of several specialized online streaming video services such as Hulu (broadcast TV network content) and Netflix (original series, popular TV series, and movies)? Social media Facebook and Twitter video use also needs to be further investigated. Our study shows very few millennials only rely on YouTube as the only online video service (see chapter 2). YouTube is just one of their online video diet. More research should be done to examine if multiple video service subscriptions will more likely lead to indulgence in video watching rather than critical selection of content and content diversity.

II. DIY Learning from YouTube

As our study of the millennials shows, these young adult audiences have different motives in using YouTube. Although entertainment is also frequently mentioned as the reason for watching YouTube, career building and do-it-yourself (DIY) type of learning are frequently mentioned. Although YouTube's educational channels, how-to channels, science and technology channels do not have the highest viewership or subscribers, they serve as a free video encyclopedia with thousands of informational channels. More analysis of the cumulative viewership across all the different information channels is needed to examine the reach and effect of knowledge dissemination of YouTube, especially in developing countries versus affluent countries. The availability of videos facilitates knowledge accessibility and acquisition. More research should be conducted on the career building and learning from YouTube videos among audiences in diverse fields and how YouTube can play a role in encouraging the lifelong and on-demand learning of different types of topics through its recommendation algorithm.

Another form of learning on YouTube is about use of different products from YouTube product review videos and vlogs. Our survey shows that millennials are more influenced by positively reviewed products in the videos. Consumers can learn how the product works with the demonstration of other unknown peer users or famous YouTubers. How such pre-purchase or post-purchase learning affects consumer knowledge, expectation of products, product usage satisfaction and brand loyalty is another highly fruitful avenue for consumer behavior researcher and consumer rights advocates.

III. Self-initiated Search versus Recommended Content Use

Our survey and in-depth interviews show the high use of recommended videos from YouTube (see chapter 4). But there are also many self-initiated searches through Google or on YouTube directly. Alexa.com (2018) shows that 15.7% of unique visitors of YouTube come from the Google search engines in various countries, illustrating the importance of Google as a referral source of YouTube. We also have not examined the use of recommended/shared video links by friends. How much actual consumption of videos are from self-initiated organic search and shared video links are not known. Self-initiated searches may be task-oriented that only lead to short-term consumption. But a satisfactory search result may lead to repeated consumption too. So how much the search is successful is important to encourage repeated consumption and dependency on YouTube for information or entertainment. Shared video links may be perceived as personal endorsement and may encourage impulsive and more immediate consumption of the videos as a social behavior. Future online video audience research should examine the dynamics and effects of different sources of videos referrals on the types of videos and immediacy of being viewed by the audience as well as on the total amount of video consumption.

IV. Global versus Domestic Audience

An early study on Webcasting worldwide by Ha and Ganahl (2007b) shows that even though the Internet can reach a global audience, people still prefer domestic content. This is especially so in the United States as a major media content supplier of the world. A decade has passed but our most popular channel analysis in chapter 11 still shows that most U.S. viewers stick to the U.S. content in watching YouTube. Those U.S. viewers exploring content in other countries are a minority. But at least international content is available at their fingertips, unlike US TV which basically has little to no foreign content unless they subscribe to international channels from other countries. YouTube can lead in global immersion with its recommendation system on similar content or genre created in other countries that have English language subtitles or in English.

What is currently happening on YouTube is that non-US viewers use YouTube to watch American content and other countries' content. U.S. viewers primarily watch American content but some do explore outside the United States as seen in some popular videos from Canada, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. This is genre specific. Especially when a country does not have good videos on that genre, then audiences would be willing to explore other countries that produce videos on that genre. More importantly, specific country's viewers such as those from India and Brazil and their expatriates watch their own country's content streamed via the YouTube's infrastructure with its search and curation function. More research is needed to determine if YouTube is playing an active role in promoting cross-country consumption of video content or it is just simply the hosting site of different countries' videos.

V. Promotional and Entrepreneurial Culture of YouTube

Burgess and Green (2009) have suggested that YouTube is creating a participatory online culture for our society. Our empirical study did not find that much participation and most people choose a minimalist approach in viewing based on YouTube's recommendation. Instead, this author suggests that YouTube is fostering a promotional and entrepreneurial culture by encouraging individuals to promote themselves in their individual vlogs and how-to channels and organizations to promote their products and services on YouTube as branded content channels. Short video clips and movie trailers propagate YouTube as teasers and samples for full consumption on regular TV and movie theatres.

Videos are increasingly adopted by marketers as the main marketing communication tool. Popular vloggers are called YouTube influencers' selected by marketers to help endorse their products. As we showed in chapter 8, many company or brand videos are well-accepted and can be viral. *Advertising Age*'s (2017) top 10 branded videos includes YouTube's own *2017 rewind video* with 122 million views. All those with millions of views are from big advertisers and brands such as Apple, Kellogg, and Samsung. The promotional culture permeates YouTube from branded content channels to native YouTube user-generated channels. How well the YouTubers can maintain their editorial independence against the lure of sponsors depends on their own integrity because our study found that users are strongly influenced by the YouTubers' product reviews and they do not care whether the content is sponsored or not. Even if they notice the video is sponsored by a company, they still think positively about the video (see chapters 5 and 9). Audiences accept promotion as a normal and legitimate practice on YouTube. Currently branded marketing channels enjoy the same status as user-generated channels to receive free hosting from YouTube. Should they be responsible for paying the bandwidth similar to advertising and paid programs on TV to help defray the cost of YouTube in hosting their videos?

Individuals are encouraged by YouTube to create their channels and join the YouTube creator academy to learn more about how to run their channels. Numerous videos under the YouTube Academy are how to make money on YouTube and get more views and subscribers as entrepreneurs. Indeed, most truly user-generated content channels are one-person operations and the creators play multiple roles from researcher, script writer, cinematographer, editor, show host, and promoter of the channel. Not everyone created the channel to make money. Many do this as a hobby or a way to share their experience or knowledge. But when the videos become well-received hitting the million mark, then YouTube and its multichannel networks will professionalize the creators so that they can maintain their popularity and monetize the views. The boundary between professional and amateur content is diminishing under this entrepreneurial culture.

Most recently, YouTube emphasizes the power of sharing as a promotion and dissemination tool for YouTube. On the YouTube app, users are encouraged to incorporate texting, not just social media media, to share videos by facilitating users to add contacts from their contact list on the phone seamlessly and post the thumbnail of the video with embedded link to their friends. The thumbnail picture is certainly more eye-catching, and the referral by the users as text-message effectively cuts through the clutter in social media. Texting is the most common form of communication among millennials and better than social media because it is not limited by the social media membership of the user or users' friends. As Postigo's (2016) study of gaming video users of YouTube pointed out, video sharing is "a complex set of social practices." The act of sharing is sometimes more important than the actual viewing of video content itself.

YouTube provides very clear metrics to let the YouTube creators know their performance and how that will influence their ranking or probability being recommended as a video to watch in that genre (Postigo 2016):

1. View counts. Videos without many views do not show up on search results and suffer neglect.
2. Comments—but it can also be disabled by the creator.
3. Video rating system—thumbs down and thumbs up.

4. Favoriting of videos—add the video as your favorite.
5. Subscriber counts in red color which also serves as a subscribe/unsubscribe button.

These online video audience feedback metrics are immediate, easy, and quantifiable—thumbs up, thumbs down, favorite, share, subscribe, views (especially repeated views), and comments. The amount of view time is also monitored by YouTube but not displayed to the public. Legacy media lack such immediate feedback. Most importantly, these metrics are displayed in public so they can create peer pressure and competition among the video creators. As our chapter 4 showed, these metrics matter much more to the creators than the non-creator ordinary audiences. Most audiences do not care about these metrics as cues in their choice of watching videos. Chapter 11 explained the importance of channel subscription for programmers and advertisers.

YOUTUBE: THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL VIDEO PORTAL AND GLOBAL VILLAGE

As YouTube's CEO Susan Wojcicki said, "The most important driver of growth is the diverse 'giant long tail' of creators who have carried YouTube this far" (Johnson 2017). The content diversity is what characterized YouTube, not just a few blockbuster hits. YouTube's future as a successful global video portal lies on how it maintains its leadership as the hub of video creators, how it "professionalizes" the successful YouTube video creators from around the globe and working along with the existing legacy media companies including the major Hollywood players, advertisers and organizations who want to access the vast audience base of YouTube.

To really facilitate users' diverse content consumption, not just more of the same type of content and perspective, YouTube's recommendation algorithm should develop new relationships of content in addition to what have been watched by the users. Take news for example, instead of continuing to providing conservative news content such as Fox News, recommend some liberal perspectives on the same topic or vice versa. Instead of showing just news from U.S. media entities, recommend other country's news in English or with English subtitles. Then users can fully take advantage of the diverse offering of YouTube to broaden their horizons. If a person is watching too much entertainment content, then they should be recommended to watch some documentaries or other informative content. Then YouTube may become the ultimate video service provider that not just only entertains, but enlightens its users and takes them to a higher level.

By employing a multiple revenue model, YouTube has to please advertisers, the audiences, and their video creators who are just vendors and not full-time employees of YouTube. Tensions do exist and YouTube is trying to find the right balance to continue its leadership in the online video business as more and more companies are trying to get a piece of the pie such as Amazon's Twitch (*Advertising Age* 2017a). The global audience base of YouTube is unrivalled by others. YouTube is trying to clean up the offensive content by using the yellow tag system but it is mistakenly taking off legitimate content. YouTube has promised to hire 10,000 human reviewers to check the content instead of totally relying on algorithms (*Advertising Age* 2017b). But their success remains to be seen. Because of its huge collection of videos and large number of users and creators, it is virtually impossible to do everything by human. Constant checking and monitoring with user input would be necessary to make it work.

During the course of the study of YouTube, we realized the speed of global dissemination of content around the world overcoming the language barrier through the use of subtitles and Google Translate function. By putting Chinese subtitles in Korean videos, or English subtitles in Spanish videos, the videos can be watched by audiences outside that language. Although the quality of the Google translation still needs much improvement, it is a handy tool to get a basic understanding of what the video is about for the users. The implications of such breakdown of language barriers through these language services remain to be seen. But this is a further realization of a global village with vividness of audios and videos that Marshall McLuhan (1964) envisioned. We can watch almost any other country's people in action on YouTube without censorship and become a distant witness of events far away in other countries or a potential contributor to this global village by posting our own videos (Martini 2018).

Many governments took notice of YouTube as the global online video portal with its large amount of viewers worldwide. Various parties are trying to establish their presence on YouTube to reach these 1.5 billion users including in China where YouTube is blocked. China's state-owned media People's Daily Channel and China Central TV's Live have English language channels on YouTube. They offer many entertainment and useful information for the millions of Chinese expatriates overseas and those who are interested to learn about China from all over the world. RT (Russian Today)'s English TV service also thrives on YouTube with a billion views.

The final big question is how to keep the expensive operation alive and enable YouTube to fulfill its role as a truly global video commons that allows different types of entertainment and information flow freely and discoverable by people. YouTube is currently the best curated video portal with the largest video library and accessible to any person who has broadband Internet.

It revolutionized online video marketing and advertising and compensates users who create content that have audiences, unlike Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter which do not pay for quality work from its users. Audiences should exercise their power by rewarding good YouTube video creators with more views and longer views, subscription, thumbs up, favorites, and sharing after watching the video immediately; or expressing their disappointment by unsubscription and thumbs down to those that provide trashy content. These are simple steps that take little time without revealing one's identity and can make the metrics truly representative of a majority of viewers, not only those who are willing to speak up and dominate in the comments. We need to teach YouTube's algorithm by giving the input it needs and reverse in inequality in the current algorithm (Bishop 2017). Our actions will influence the recommendation system of YouTube.

YouTube Red gives us the choice to pay for commercial-free and offline video experience. For those who don't want to be disturbed by advertising, they should pay for the hard work of YouTube and the creators by subscribing to YouTube Red. It's the responsibility of YouTube to make YouTube Original series compelling to watch for audiences. YouTube should also curate and package content that will be beneficial for learning and career advancement which would be of value to Red subscribers. But for those who don't care about advertising and don't need to watch video offline, they can choose to stay with regular YouTube. Only YouTube creators must agree to offer their content in both Red and regular versions of YouTube.

YouTube is a business. We are its customers. When YouTube fails to meet our needs or betray our trust, that's when we should abandon the service. But if it does do its job in providing, hosting, and promoting diverse video content from around the world impartially, it deserves to be supported. It should thrive as a global video commons where both poor and rich people from around the world can access it and utilize its excellent video hosting infrastructure. Policymakers around the globe and international organizations such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the United Nations (UN) should take YouTube seriously as a global video service affecting the good of billions of people worldwide.

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Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

BSGU Students' Online Video Use Survey

We are conducting a study on BGSU students' use of online videos and in particular YouTube videos for our TCOM4610/5610 Audience Research class service-learning project. You are invited to participate in this study to represent BGSU students. Your help on this would be greatly appreciated. Earlier last week, we invited some of you to participate in the survey. If you have completed one, please accept our sincere thanks and you should not answer this survey again. The benefits of participating in the study is that the results we obtain will be reported to YouTube without personal identification so that they can serve you better. Research articles may be published based on the results on college students' use of online videos. The entire survey will take you no more than 10 minutes to complete. You can skip a question if you prefer not to answer it. Your participation is voluntary. You can withdraw your participation consent at any time and your participation will not affect your relationship with BGSU. The information you gave us will be kept confidential. No individual will be identified in the research report. If you are willing to participate in a follow-up study, we will ask for your contact info but such info will be removed from the survey dataset before data analysis. There are no risks involved in participating in this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. This survey has been approved by BGSU Human Subject Review Board. Approval #8196521. You may call my professor Dr. Ha (419-372-9103) or e-mail louisah@bgsu.edu with questions about the survey. You may also contact the Human Subjects Review Board at BGSU (419-372-7716) with questions or concerns about participant rights. Thanks very much.

Sincerely,

Students of TCOM4610/5610 students (Jarrett Connelly, Carly Jo Crawford; Carlin Dixon, Trenice Foster, Chloe Jefferson, Cieara Little, Kelly McManamon, Mikala Mitchell, Matthew Novick, James Oddo, Jordan Swick, Christa Thomas Enze Xie, William Webb). Clicking the NEXT button indicates your consent to participate in the study.

Please click NEXT to start filling out the survey.

Do you watch online videos?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

[If No Is Selected, Then Skip To How do you get Internet access?]

What devices do you use to watch online videos?

	Daily (1)	*Several Times a Week (2)*	*Several Times a Month (3)*	*Less Than Once a Month (4)*	*Never (5)*	*Don't Own the Device (6)*
Smartphones (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Tablets/iPads (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Laptops/notebook computers (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Videogame consoles such as Xbox or Wii (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
SmartTV (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Digital TV using OTT boxes such as AppleTV and Roku (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

What type of online videos do you watch?

	Daily (1)	*Several Times a Week (2)*	*Several Times a Month (3)*	*About Once a Month (4)*	*Once in Several Months (5)*	*Less Than Once a Year (6)*	*Never (7)*
Music videos (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Movies (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
TV programs that have been aired on TV (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Do it yourself videos (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Product demonstration and reviews (including unboxing videos) (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Travel (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Home videos about pets or children (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Documentaries (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
News (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Videos/channels recommended by YouTube (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Which of the following online video sources do you use? (check all that apply)

- ❍ YouTube (1)
- ❍ Netflix (2)
- ❍ Hulu (3)
- ❍ Amazon Prime (4)
- ❍ iTunes (9)
- ❍ Vimeo (5)
- ❍ Videos on TV networks or stations' websites (14)
- ❍ Videos on Facebook (6)
- ❍ Videos on Twitter (7)
- ❍ Other (please specify) (8) ____________________

[If YouTube is not selected, then skip to which videos will make you remember t...]

[Answer If Which of the following online video sources do you use? (check all that apply) YouTube Is Selected]

Q67 Do you have the YouTube mobile app on your phone or mobile devices?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)

[Answer If Which of the following online video sources do you use? (check all that apply) YouTube Is Selected]

Q7 How often do you do the following activities on YouTube?	*Daily (7)*	*Several Times a Week (6)*	*Several Times a Month (5)*	*About Once a Month (4)*	*Once Several Months (3)*	*Less Than Once a Year (2)*	*Never (1)*
I watch videos (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I watch videos involving consumer reviews or usage experiences (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I read the comments posted about YouTube videos (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I post comments on YouTube (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I upload videos created by others to YouTube (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I create videos and upload them to YouTube (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I share YouTube videos on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

[Answer If How often do you involve do the following activities on YouTube? I share YouTube videos on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)—Never Is Not Selected.]

Q35 How often do you share YouTube video link on the following social media sites?

	Daily (1)	*Several Times a Week (2)*	*Several Times a Month (3)*	*About One a Month (4)*	*Once Several Months (5)*	*Less Than Once a Year (6)*	*Never (7)*
Facebook (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Twitter (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Google+ (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Reddit (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Tumblr (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Pinterest (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
LinkedIn (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Instagram (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Others (please specify) (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

How important are the following cues when you select a YouTube video with a featured product?

	Extremely Important (1)	*Very Important (2)*	*Neither Important Nor Unimportant (3)*	*Somewhat Unimportant (4)*	*Not at all Important (5)*
The total number of views (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The name of the title (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The length of the title (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The attractiveness of the thumbnail screen/picture (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The recency of the video (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The familiarity of the YouTuber(celebrity or YouTube stars) (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The total number of "Like" (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The total number of subscribers (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The users' comments (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

How many channels do you subscribe on YouTube?

- 1–5 (1)
- 6–10 (2)
- 11–20 (3)
- 21–35 (4)
- 36–50 (5)
- 51–100 (6)
- More than 100 (8)
- Don’t subscribe to any YouTube channel (7)

Please indicate how often you watch YouTube videos featuring these product types?

	Daily (1)	*Several Times a Week (2)*	*Several Times a Month (3)*	*About Once a Month (4)*	*Once Several Months (5)*	*Less than Once a Year (6)*	*Never (7)*
Technological products (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Environment-friendly products (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Daily supplies (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Stationery and books (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Automobile (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Clothing (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Food and diet (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Do you pay attention whether the YouTube videos you watch are sponsored?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ Don't know if the video is sponsored (2)
❍ No (3)

[Answer If Do you pay attention whether the YouTube videos you watch are sponsored? Yes Is Selected]

Do you have the following perceptions when you watch the video on YouTube that mention specific products?

	Strongly Agree (1)	*Agree (2)*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)*	*Disagree (4)*	*Strongly Disagree (5)*
The videos without a sponsor are more trustworthy than those with a sponsor. (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The videos without a sponsor explain the product better than those with a sponsor. (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The videos without a sponsor have the customers' interests in mind more than those with a sponsor. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Do you have the following perceptions when you watch videos on YouTube that mention specific products?

	Strongly Agree (1)	*Agree (2)*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)*	*Disagree (4)*	*Strongly Disagree (5)*
The videos created by an ordinary user YouTuber are more trustworthy than those created by a YouTube stars or companies. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The videos created by an ordinary user YouTuber explain the product better than those created by a YouTube stars or companies. (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
The ordinary user YouTuber cares the customers' interests in mind more than the YouTube stars or companies. (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

When you see YouTube videos that interest you, do you read the comments on those videos before deciding to watch them?

❍ Yes (1)
❍ No (2)

After watching a video on a product positively reviewed by a YouTuber, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	*Agree (2)*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)*	*Disagree (4)*	*Strongly Disagree (5)*
I am more likely to buy the product (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would have a more favorable impression on the product (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would share the video on my social media (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think other people will buy the product (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think other people would have a more favorable impression on the product (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think the YouTuber is related to or would get compensation from the company who makes/sells the product (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

After watching a video on a product negatively reviewed by a YouTuber, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	*Agree (2)*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)*	*Disagree (4)*	*Strongly Disagree (5)*
I will not buy the product (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would have a negative impression on the product (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would share the video on my social media (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think other people who watched it would not buy the product (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think other people who watched it would have a negative impression on the product (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I think the YouTuber is not trustworthy (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

After watching a company-made YouTube video about a product, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the statements below.

	Strongly Agree (1)	*Agree (2)*	*Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)*	*Disagree (4)*	*Strongly Disagree (5)*
I will more likely buy the product (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would share the video on my social media (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Other people who watched it would buy the product (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

How often do you watch YouTube videos in the following places?

	Daily (1)	*2–3 Times a Week (2)*	*Once a Week (3)*	*2–3 Times a Month (4)*	*Once a Month (5)*	*Less than Once a Month (6)*	*Never (7)*
At workplace or class time (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
At home (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On the go/ commuting (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
In the waiting line (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
In between classes on campus (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

In which of the following settings are you more likely to watch the ads on YouTube?

- ❍ At work or class time (1)
- ❍ At home (2)
- ❍ On the go/commuting (3)
- ❍ In the waiting line (4)
- ❍ In between classes on campus (5)
- ❍ Never watch the ads on YouTube videos (6)

If Never watch the ads on YouT ... is Selected, then skip to Which of the following advertising fo ...

Do you watch YouTube ads that allow you to skip after 5 seconds?

- ❍ Yes, always (1)
- ❍ Yes, at least 70% of them (2)
- ❍ Yes, about half of them (3)
- ❍ Yes, between 20–40% (4)
- ❍ Yes, but rarely, less than 20% (5)
- ❍ Never (6)

Do you watch YouTube ads that you are required to watch the whole commercial before you can watch the video?

- ❍ Yes, always (1)
- ❍ Yes, at least 70% of them (2)
- ❍ Yes, about half of them (3)
- ❍ Yes, between 20–40% (4)
- ❍ Yes, but rarely, less than 20% (5)
- ❍ Never (6)

How often do you watch the following types of ads in YouTube videos?

	Always (1)	*Most of the Time (2)*	*Sometimes (3)*	*Rarely (4)*	*Never (5)*
Movie trailers ads (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ads with celebrities in them (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ads with ordinary people only (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ads about products that are relevant to me (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Funny ads (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Which of the following advertising formats would you find most intrusive and wasting your time?

❍ Commercials in full length before the video starts (1)
❍ Commercials that allow me to skip after 5 seconds (2)
❍ Sponsored products recommended by YouTubers (3)

How do you get Internet access?

❍ I use only my smartphone to access the Internet (1)
❍ I use primarily my smartphone to access the Internet (2)
❍ I use almost equally my smartphone and computer to access the Internet (3)
❍ I use almost equally my tablet/iPad and computer to access the Internet (4)
❍ I use primarily computer to access the Internet (5)
❍ I use only computer to access the Internet (6)
❍ Other methods, please specify below (7) ____________________

Which of the following best describe your Internet access? Check all that apply.

❍ Other than my cell phone, I have a limited number of ways to get online (1)
❍ I often use my smartphone for school related work in addition to checking e-mails or messages (2)
❍ I have an unlimited data plan on my smartphone (4)

Do you know that YouTube now has a membership option called YouTube Red that allows you watch YouTube videos without commercials, while also letting you save videos to watch offline on your phone or tablet and play videos in the background for $9.99/month?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Do you plan to be a member of the YouTube Red program?

- ❍ Yes, I plan to be a member. (1)
- ❍ Yes, I am already a member (3)
- ❍ No (2)

Which videos will make you remember the brand name more? Those with brand logo visuals or those without brand logo visuals?

❍ Those with brand logo visuals (1)
❍ Those without brand logo visuals (2)

Which of the following way do you prefer to get information about product reviews?

	Always (1)	*Most of the Time (2)*	*Sometimes (3)*	*Rarely (4)*	*Never (5)*
My friend, families or colleagues (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Product reviews on e-commerce sites such as Amazon or eBay (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Professional product review sites such as CNET, ConsumerSearch, or TestFreaks. (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, or blogs. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online videos on websites such as YouTube (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Online forums (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

[Answer If Which of the following way do you prefer to get information about product reviews? Product reviews on e-commerce sites such as Amazon or eBay—Never Is Not Selected And Which of the following way do you prefer to get information about product reviews? Professional product review sites such as CNET, ConsumerSearch, or TestFreaks—Never Is Not Selected And Which of the following way do you prefer to get information about product reviews? Online forums—Never Is Not Selected]

Can you write down the names of three common sites on which you get product review information?

Review Site Name 1 (1)
Review Site Name 2 (2)
Review site Name 3 (3)

[Answer If What devices do you use to watch online videos? Smartphones—Don't own the device Is Not Selected And What devices do you use to watch online videos? Tablets/iPads—Don't own the device Is Not Selected]

Do you have other product review/price comparison mobile apps?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Now we are close to the end of the survey. We need some basic information about you to complete our analysis.

What is your gender?

- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)
- ❍ I prefer not to disclose (3)

How old are you? Write NA if you prefer not to disclose or just give us an age range.

What is your class standing in BGSU?

- ❍ Freshman (1)
- ❍ Sophomore (2)
- ❍ Junior (3)
- ❍ Senior (4)
- ❍ Graduate (5)
- ❍ Others (6) ____________________

What is your race?

- ❍ White (1)
- ❍ Black or African American (2)
- ❍ Asian (3)
- ❍ Hispanic (4)
- ❍ Others (5)
- ❍ I prefer not to disclose (6)

What is your personal monthly income including allowance, stipend, scholarship, salary, and other sources?

- ❍ Under $500 (1)
- ❍ $500–1,000 (2)
- ❍ $1,000–1,500 (3)
- ❍ $1,500–2,000 (4)
- ❍ $2,000–3,000 (5)
- ❍ Over $3,000 (6)
- ❍ I prefer not to disclose (7)

How do you usually come from your residence to campus?

- ❍ Drive to campus by car (1)
- ❍ Take campus shuttle/apartment shuttle (2)
- ❍ Walk to campus (3)
- ❍ Drive to campus by bike/motor bike (4)

What is your major or college?

- ❍ Communication-related majors such as School of Media and Communication (TCOM, JOUR, COMM), Depaertment of Theatre & Film, Visual Communication Technology (1)
- ❍ Sciences in College of Arts & Science (2)
- ❍ Art, Humanities, and Social Sciences in College of Arts and Science (but not Communication-related majors) (3)
- ❍ College of Business Administration (4)
- ❍ College of Technology, Architecture, and Applied Engineering (not in VCT) (5)
- ❍ College of Education and Human Development (6)
- ❍ College of Musical Arts (7)
- ❍ College of Health & Human Services (8)
- ❍ Honors College (10)
- ❍ Undecided major with no college affiliation (9)

This study includes two parts including a questionnaire survey and an in-depth interview. Would you like to participate in a follow-up 30-minute interview after the survey at a convenient location and time to you before Thanksgiving?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

[Answer If Would you like to participate in a follow-up 30-minute interview at a convenient location and time to you before Thanksgiving? Yes Is Selected]

Can you provide us your contact information so that we can reach you after the survey next week? Please provide name, e-mail, and phone number such as John Doe, johndoe@bgsu.edu, 419-1113333.

Thank you very much. Please click arrow button below to submit the survey.

Appendix B

In-Depth Interview Protocol

BGSU Students' Online Video Use Study

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (30 MINUTES)

This is the second part of our study on BGSU students' use of online videos and in particular YouTube videos for our TCOM4610/5610 Audience Research class service-learning project. The benefits of participating in the study is that the results we obtain will be reported to YouTube without personal identification so that they can serve you better. Research articles may be published based on the results on college students' use of online videos.

Thank you very much for willing to participate in this follow-up interview from your online video survey to help us understand your use of YouTube video better. Your participation is voluntary and the interview is expected to last about 30 minutes. You can withdraw your participation consent at any time and your participation will not affect your relationship with BGSU. There are no risks involved in participating in this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life.

We would like to video-record this session to have an accurate record and transcription of our discussion. Your information will be kept confidential. No personal identification information will be released in the report and the recorded video will be deleted permanently after the transcription is complete. Would you be willing to accept the recording? (If yes, continue. If not, ask the participant if they are willing to just let you write notes and observe what they show you on their YouTube account.) Please sign the form below to indicate your consent. Feel free to ask the interviewer if you have any concerns about the study.

This study is approved by BGSU Human Subject Review Board. Approval #819652-1. You may call my professor Dr. Ha (419-372-9103) or e-mail louisah@bgsu.edu with questions about the study. You may also contact the Human Subjects Review Board at BGSU (419-372-7716) with questions or concerns about participant rights. Let me know if you have other question about the study.

INFORMED CONSENT

___ I read the above explanation of the project and understand my right as a participant and agree to the recording of my interview today with the conditions listed.
___ I read the above explanation of the project and understand my right as a participant. I don't agree to the video recording of my interview today but I agree to let the interviewer take notes of our interview with the conditions listed.

Name: ______________________________ (in print)

__________________________ (Signature) date: _______________

Interviewer note: (Interviewer should read the participant's survey response prior to meeting the individual.)

INTERVIEWER NAME: ________________________

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you think are the most and least attractive features of YouTube?

2. Why do you watch YouTube videos? Is it related more to learning, career building, entertainment, etc.?

3. When and where do you usually watch YouTube videos?

4. What kind of YouTube or online videos do you watch? Can you show us your recent YouTube view history?

5. Why do you watch these videos?

   Record the device the respondent brings with him/her: ______________

6. Why do you use this platform/device the most to watch YouTube videos?

7. Can you show me one of your favorite YouTube videos as you watch it normally using your device for five minutes?

   (Record the reaction of the individual toward the commercial shown in that video from the point the individual search/retrieve that video to the completion of the video. Note the eye movement and attention to the screen when the commercial is shown and whether the participant tries to skip the commercial or play the skippable commercial.)

   Note if the participant pays attention to any ancillary info such as comments and other information on the video.)

8. Approximately how many times have you watched this video? Do you watch a lot of similar types of videos to this on YouTube? How many and how often?

9. What do you think about those skippable ads on YouTube (if the video he/she show has skippable ads)? or What do you think about commercials that run their course and cannot be avoided during a video (if the video has mandatory full-length commercial)?

   Now I have a short YouTube video for you to watch (one with skippable ad if the participant only showed you one without skippable ads; or one with mandatory ad if the participant only showed you one with skippable ad). Use your own computer to show it.

   (Record the reaction of the individual toward the commercial shown in that video from the point the individual search/retrieve that video to the completion of the video. Note the eye movement and attention to the screen when the commercial is shown and whether the participant tries to skip the commercial or play the skippable commercial.)

Note if the participant pays attention to any ancillary info such as comments and other information on the video.)

10. What do you think about those skippable ads on YouTube (if the video you show has skippable ads)? or What do you think about commercials that run their course and cannot be avoided during a video (if the video you show has mandatory full-length commercial)?

11. Have you tried any products due to watching the online video ads? (If yes), can you give me some examples.

12. Can you describe any ads that you can recall from the past experiences of YouTube watching?

13. Have you ever talked with your friends or coworkers offline or online regarding ads posted in YouTube? If you answered yes, what was the ad? Why is that the ad discussed in the conversation?

14. Do you think ads posted on YouTube are different from traditional 30-second ads for television? If you answered yes, what made you think that way? If you answered no, why?

15. Would you be interested in watching YouTube ads, which are personalized according to your preferences? For instance, options such as particular products and length can be given for personalized ads. If you answered yes, what types of personalization are you interested in?

16. Is there anything you would like YouTube to improve in the way such video commercials are presented to you as a user or in the way that you engage with the videos?

17. If you don't like commercials on YouTube (those who answer negatively on the survey), what do you think YouTube should do to generate revenue to run the site?

18. What do you think about the company-made product promotion videos on YouTube? Do you find them beneficial to you (ask for examples)?

19. What do you think about the user-generated consumer experience video on YouTube? Do you find them beneficial to you? (ask for examples)

20. Do you read other users' comments and additional information about the video posted next to the videos in YouTube? If yes, do the comments affect the way you view the video or the product featured in the video?

21. Do you often not watch a video in its entirety? If yes, why you don't complete watching the video?

22. Usually after you complete watching video, will you rate the video or add other comments? Do you usually rate the video or add comments when you are on your phone or laptop?

THE END. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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About the Editor

Louisa Ha (Ph.D., Michigan State University) is Editor in Chief of *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*. She is Professor in the School of Media and Communication at Bowling Green State University, Ohio, U.S.A. and founder and leader of Emerging Media Research Cluster, Bowling Green State University. She received the 2007 AEJMC Robert Picard Award for Books and Monographs on Media Management and Economics for her co-edited book and pioneering work on online videos, *Webcasting Worldwide: Business Models of an Emerging Global Medium*. She has published more than 100 articles and book chapters. Her research interests are audience behavior, media business models, emerging media technologies, social media and mobile media, international advertising, and research methods.

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