



Succeed with Social Media

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Social Media: YouTube

YouTube can be extremely useful when connecting with customers, prospective clients, industry experts, competitors and more. Unlike other social media sites such as Twitter or Facebook, YouTube is almost strictly visual. It allows users to share videos with one another and gives them the option to have a conversation on those video posts.

The YouTube website explains: 'YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small'.

YouTube has launched a new way of communicating via social media, much different from photo-based sites like Instagram and Pinterest. Follow the suggestions and best practices listed below to get started.

Definitions and examples

Understanding YouTube requires learning the language. Here are some of the basics:

- **Channel:** A channel is the public profile of a user or organisation. All of a user's uploaded videos are on that channel, and you can go to a certain channel to view that user's content.
- **Subscribe:** You can subscribe to a user's channel to get updates on when new content is added to that channel.
- **Playlist:** You can add videos to playlists to save and watch at a later time.
- **Post:** A post is an upload of a video, with the option of adding a caption.
- **Comment:** You can add comments to your own videos or to the videos that others post.
- **+Username:** This is the way YouTube users talk to (or about) other users. The '+' symbol ensures that you will be notified that you were mentioned. This increases your chances of getting a reply.
 - For example, your company YouTube username could be **XYZcompany**. If a customer wanted to reach out to you, she might comment on one of your videos by saying, **'+XYZcompany, please tell me more about your product'**.
- **Tag:** After uploading your video, you will be given the option to add relevant tags. Tags help categorise your post based on keywords you designate.

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**You can use
YouTube to
share
information,
gather market
intelligence and
build
relationships
through
posting your
videos and
searching
through the
videos of
others.**
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Social Media: YouTube

Users can find all posts with a particular tag by using the search tool to help filter results on a specific topic.

Getting Started

To post videos on YouTube, you must first create an account. Since Google purchased YouTube in 2006, you must either create a Google account or, if you already have one, sign in with your Google credentials in order to set up a YouTube account.

- **To upload a video:** You can upload a video by selecting a file from your computer.
 - After uploading your video, you will then add a title, description, a video thumbnail and any tags, and set settings for privacy. You will also be given the option of writing a message that will be sent to the users who have subscribed to you, and you can choose whether or not to share your video on your other social media networks.
 - These are the video formats YouTube allows:
 - .mov
 - .mpeg4
 - .avi
 - .wmv
 - .mpegps
 - .flv
 - 3GPP
 - WebM
- **To stream a live video of a Google+ hangout:** On the Upload page, you will see a 'Broadcast' button under *Google+ hangout*, which will begin a hangout with circles or individuals you choose—exactly like on Google+. The hangout will be posted to your YouTube Channel and your subscribers will be able to watch it.
- **To edit your video:** After uploading a video, you'll have the option of editing it with the video editor. You can enhance the brightness of the video, add annotations at any spot while the video plays and even blur faces in the video. You can also add audio, either over the entire video or just over certain parts.

Suggestions and best practices

Once you've mastered the basics, consider the following tips and best practices to get off to a strong start:

- Use the search bar to find clients, competitors and people in your industry to follow. Try various keywords related to your industry, niche or related topics.
- You can also use YouTube to look for leads. Search targeted phrases that match your location and product or service, and then reach out to people who have used tags about your topic by commenting on their posts.
- Remember to use meaningful tags to reach a broader audience than just those who subscribe to you, particularly when posting useful insights, information and expertise—this can attract people interested in your topic to your company, which can lead to later sales.
- Engage your followers. Don't just spit out information or advertise your products—post videos of your product in action or customer testimonials, make a video that explains your product or service, or post a video of the results of someone using your product or service. The possibilities are

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Make your content interesting to watch by captivating your audience.

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endless, and they all give something a little different to your customers. You can even ask customers to share videos of themselves using your product. Be sure to ask that customers use a corresponding tag, or to mention your username in their post, so that all posts are easy to find.

- If someone mentions your brand in a post, whether talking directly to you or not, respond. Answer a question, address a concern or find another way to continue the conversation. And always be timely with your comments! In today's digital world, people expect quick responses; you should ideally write back within a few hours of the post.
- Don't shy away from responding to negative comments. Your client base and others will see your company as responsive and willing to listen to clients and resolve issues.
- Have a system in place to pass comments, questions and criticism along to the appropriate people in your company so that you can gather the feedback you need to respond to a customer, or even just let the customer know that his or her input was given to the appropriate person in your company.
- Try to post a couple of times each week or each month to stay in front of your audience.
- Offer something of value in your posts, whether it is discounts, samples, promotions, advice or expertise, with videos of your product or even of customers using your product. One example could be offering exclusive deals to your subscribers and watchers to bring value to your YouTube relationship and make them feel special—and encourage them to share the deal by posting and mentioning your company and product.
- Pay attention to the ratings your videos receive. If a certain video received high ratings, try to find out why that post was so successful so you can recreate that success with another post.

Common mistakes

- Avoid broadcasting any private grievances or annoyances. Whether about a competitor, the government or your in-laws, YouTube is not the place for venting or complaints.
- Be careful not to offend your customers. This sounds obvious, but you could do so unintentionally. When sharing advice, for instance, take care not to make followers sound unintelligent.
- Don't use a company YouTube account to talk about your personal life.
- Don't over-promote your products or services. Instead, focus on your customers. Offer solutions, information and advice they will find valuable, rather than simply trying to sell.



YouTube should not be entirely about selling your products—it's also about engaging your followers.

