

The State of The Creator Economy

Assessing the Economic, Societal, and Cultural Impact of YouTube in the US in 2021



Foreword

YouTube is redefining the cultural, entertainment, and educational landscape across the United States. Enabled by the ongoing evolution of smartphones, connectivity, and YouTube itself, the platform has become a ubiquitous hub of creativity and driver of economic growth.

Perhaps no development is more notable than the creator economy, in which creative artists and entrepreneurs can bypass the traditional gatekeepers of media to produce content that reaches potentially large audiences across the country and around the world—allowing passionate individuals to create economic opportunity, cultural change, and community action.

Oxford Economics worked closely with YouTube to develop a rigorous approach to measuring the video platform's impact across the United States, quantifying

jobs and GDP outcomes while explaining the ripple effects on adjacent industries and individuals' quality of life. In addition to surveying more than 6,000 YouTube users, creators, and businesses across the country, we interviewed experts to glean insights into how the platform is contributing to American society and culture. With the country tackling COVID-19 as well as major shifts in the way people work, YouTube is becoming an essential part of modern American life.

The video platform is a critical instrument for creators who want to share their passions and voices with the world—to the extent that many believe their businesses would not be as successful, or even exist, absent their YouTube channels. As a New York-based creator said to us: “I was able to quit my full-time job of 23 years because of the financial freedom YouTube has helped me to obtain.”

Consumers are integral to the creator economy as well, and YouTube users express significant value gained from the free content on the platform. It helps homeowners fix plumbing problems, high school students master calculus, and dancers access the latest popular music from Nigeria to Spain. YouTube has even helped users in the United States manage their health and well-being during the COVID-19 lockdowns, explore various viewpoints and communities, and keep up with national and global news. As a woman from Georgia pointed out: “I think it is an excellent platform for people of diverse backgrounds—whether political, racial, educational, religious, or gender—to find anything they need in a personal way to solve their problems or just unwind.”

At the same time, US businesses across industries have relied on YouTube to train their employees, survive disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, grow their

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revenue, and reach audiences locally and abroad. In our survey of businesses who use YouTube, one small retail/wholesale company emphasized their reliance on the platform for survival: “My company uses YouTube every day. I’m not sure the company would exist without it.”

The following report presents the results of our economic analysis along with a series of personalized case studies of American YouTube creators who describe how YouTube has shaped their lives and careers.



Hamilton Galloway
 Head of Consultancy,
 Americas
 Oxford Economics

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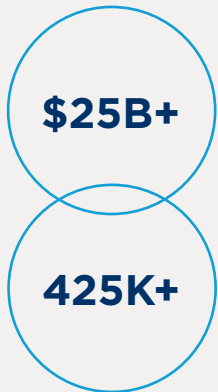
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

YouTube's Impact in the US

Every day, YouTube helps Americans build businesses, learn new skills, and discover content that's meaningful to them. From teaching dance to documenting farm life, YouTube gives its community of content creators the opportunity to earn revenue from their videos, and provides a platform for diverse creators and content. The following report illustrates how YouTube benefits Americans from all walks of life.



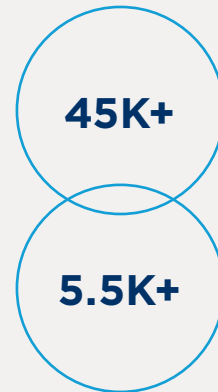
Economic Contribution



More than \$25 billion was contributed by YouTube's creative ecosystem to US GDP in 2021.

More than 425,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs were supported by YouTube's creative ecosystem in the US in 2021.

A Platform for Creators



More than 45,000 US channels had at least 100,000 subscribers as of December 2021.†

More than 5,500 US channels had at least 1 million subscribers as of December 2021.†

† Source: YouTube data as of December 30, 2021.

A Wealth of Benefits



Economic Impact

YouTube provides economic benefits for business owners, staff members, and individual creators alike.

Many businesses use YouTube as a free means of sharing training and informational content with staff.

Creative entrepreneurs also benefit from YouTube by sharing content and growing revenue streams, both on and off the platform.

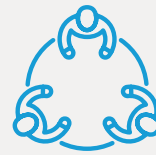


Societal Impact

Americans look to YouTube for information and educational resources to enrich their lives.

Individuals discover informational resources on topics like sustainability, as well as authoritative health content.

Parents use YouTube to access relevant educational content, making learning more fun and engaging for their children.



Cultural Impact

YouTube provides American creators a platform to share their unique talents and passions with a global audience.

Viewers can access content from anywhere, giving diverse talent opportunities to thrive.

YouTube helps people around the world to connect, encouraging a sense of belonging and understanding.



Diversity & Inclusion Impact

YouTube encourages connection and inclusion by helping people from underrepresented groups find community.

Americans can discover new and diverse music and media content, and new artists have an opportunity to stand out.

Creators have access to YouTube, encouraging unique voices, talents, and passions to be shared.

INTRODUCTION

The Creator Economy

YouTube supports an ecosystem of creators who earn revenues both on and off the YouTube platform. This ecosystem also encompasses creators' direct employees, as well as businesses and freelancers in those creators' supply chains who earn a substantial portion of their revenue from creators.

WIDE-RANGING IMPACTS

YouTube empowers millions of content creators and global viewers to come together and share ideas, skills, and passions, and to build connections across countries and cultures. Whether it is farming or filmmaking, dance fitness or cake decorating, the platform lowers the barriers to entry so that more Americans can share their videos and build thriving businesses. The platform's global reach also helps Americans find wider audiences and promotes diverse creators and content.

These benefits serve as a solid base for sustaining jobs and income within the creative ecosystem while supporting economic activity far beyond the platform. YouTube's creative ecosystem contributed more than \$25 billion to the American economy and supported more than 425,000 full-time equivalent jobs in 2021. That economic impact shows up in four ways: **direct**, **indirect**, **induced**, and **catalytic**.

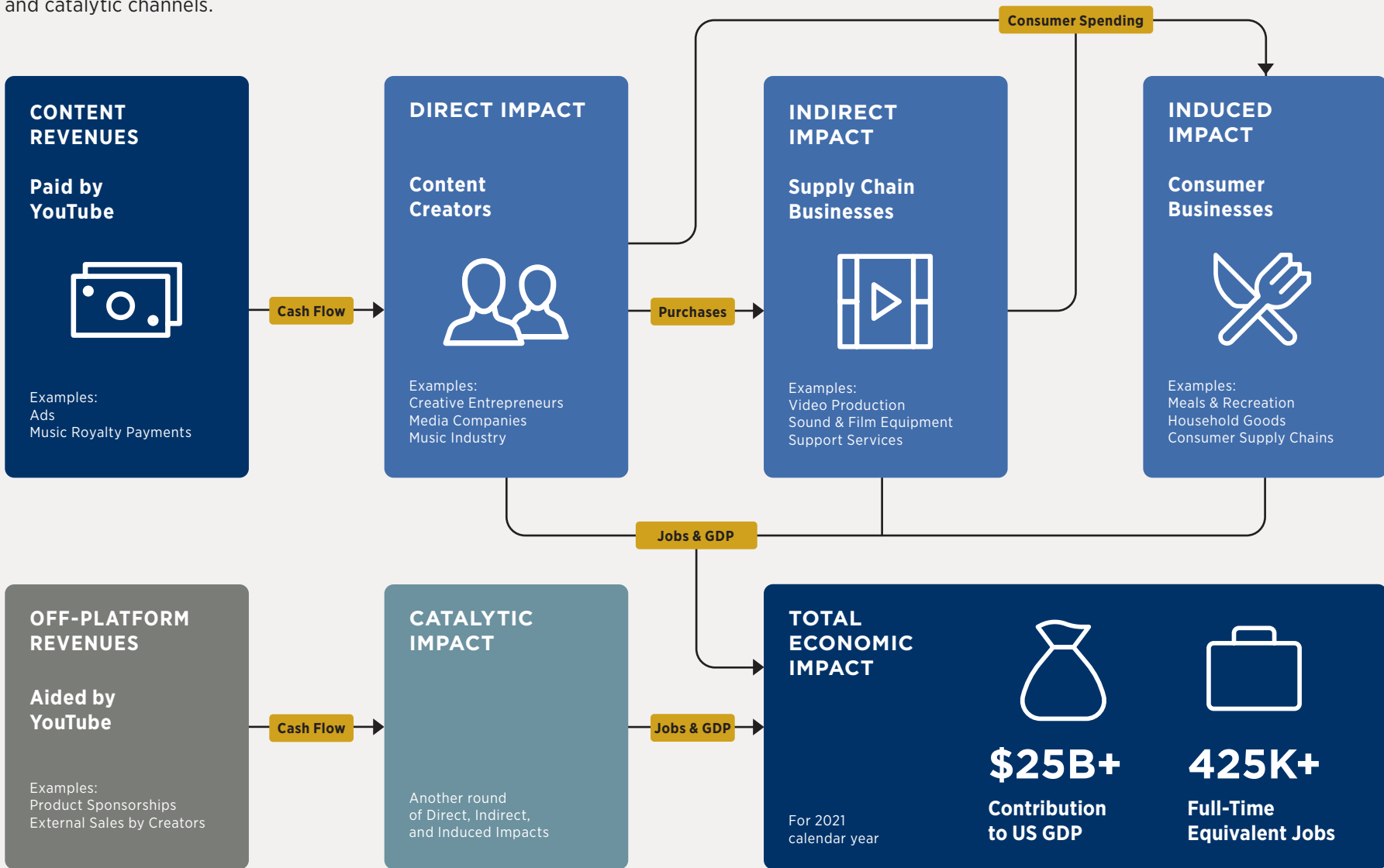
YouTube helps American creators reach large domestic and international audiences. This reach supports substantial economic value for creators who receive income from the platform, for example as they are paid a share of the revenues from advertising placed alongside their videos. YouTube's **direct economic impact** includes the GDP and jobs this income supports amongst creators.

Creators often need to spend money to produce content for YouTube. This creates an **indirect economic impact**, as they pay businesses in their supply chain for goods and services. In turn, creators and workers employed in YouTube's creative ecosystem or its supply chain go on to spend their earnings. This spending generates a further **induced economic impact**.

Aided by their YouTube presence, creators also earn revenue from other sources, including product sales, brand partnerships, or live performance engagements. These "off-platform" revenues have a **catalytic impact** on the economy, stimulating further direct, indirect, and induced impacts.

Total Economic Impact

This flowchart shows how YouTube's creative ecosystem makes an economic impact through direct, indirect, induced, and catalytic channels.



ECONOMIC IMPACT

The Home of Creative Entrepreneurs

Creative entrepreneurs, as defined in our study, are YouTube creators with at least 10,000 subscribers to their largest channel, or those with fewer subscribers who either earn money directly from YouTube, earn other income helped by their YouTube presence, or permanently employ others in support of their YouTube activities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

YouTube's creator economy supports incomes and careers for creators and their collaborators, such as crew members for audio and video production. The YouTube platform offers access to free support, resources, and an infrastructure that supports growth. Meanwhile, creators have the ability to generate income both on and off the platform. This opportunistic system enables creators to sustain viable careers and employ a network of collaborators, all while pursuing their passions.

When a creator releases a new video on YouTube, it is not just an advertisement for their product, the video is a product in itself. That can be a step-by-step dance tutorial, a vlog entry documenting a day on the farm, or a new, never-before-heard song release. In each case, the creative entrepreneur who uploaded the video has created a new product, and the viewers who subscribe, watch, and share are the consumers. From there, things like revenue sharing, brand deals, merchandising, and album sales provide opportunities for creators to earn and grow revenues.

YouTube is also a valuable tool for supporting the growth of SMBs that already existed outside of the platform, for example by providing a means to expand their customer base, by helping them adapt during COVID-19, and as a cost-effective source of staff training.



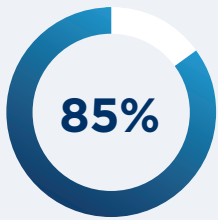
YouTube has completely changed my life for the better and I am forever grateful for it. I was able to quit my full-time job of 23 years because of the financial freedom YouTube has helped me to obtain.

— Creator, 10K+ Subscribers



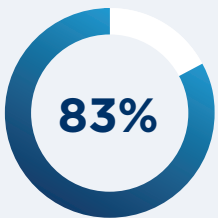
YouTube gives small businesses an equal opportunity to compete with big players as it is an open platform, making it easy for companies like us to create our own brand identity.

— Head of Brand Marketing, US small business



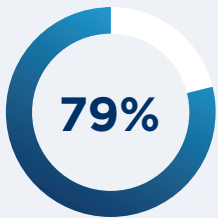
Reaching New Audiences

85% of SMBs with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube played a role in helping them grow their customer base by reaching new audiences.



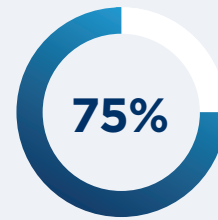
Adapting to New Challenges

83% of SMBs who use YouTube agree that their use of YouTube during the COVID-19 pandemic has helped their organization adapt.



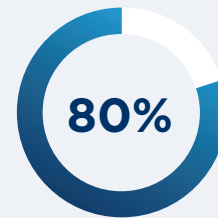
A Tool for Training

79% of SMBs who use YouTube agree that YouTube is a cost-effective way of providing staff training.



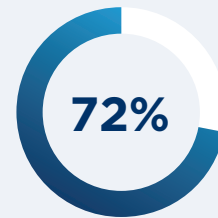
Overcoming Difficulty

75% of SMBs who use YouTube agree that YouTube has helped them sustain their business during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Creating Opportunity

80% of creative entrepreneurs agree that YouTube provides an opportunity to create content and earn money that they wouldn't get from traditional media.



Generating Income

72% of creative entrepreneurs agree that the revenue they receive from advertisements being placed on their YouTube content is an important source of income for them.

 / [Kukuwa Fitness](#)

Helping People Stay Fit Through African Dance

Kukuwa Kyereboah-Nuamah has often been asked how she stays so fit. As an immigrant originally from Ghana, a dance teacher of 40 years, and an ACE-certified trainer, the question gave her a golden opportunity. She realized she could help others achieve their fitness goals, while sharing the richness of her native African culture with her community here in the US. She created a high-energy fitness program using African dance to target muscles other dance programs did not.

The unique program was an instant success with American audiences. Kukuwa opened studios in Miami, Washington D.C., and New York City, often teaching up to seven classes a day. Unfortunately, when the pandemic hit, she had no choice but to close her studios and seek another avenue to pursue her passion. She first started posting classes on YouTube in 2015, but it was not immediately a source of revenue. With her studios closed in 2020, her channel surged from 100,000 subscribers to 300,000—many raving that her classes improved their mental health and well-being.

Half of her revenue in 2020 was generated from YouTube, and in 2021 that grew to up to 80% as viewers tuned in from across the US and around the world.

This success has given Kukuwa an opportunity to give back to the place where her journey began. She has established a non-profit, Africa With Us, which delivers resources to underserved communities, schools, and orphanages in Africa. Kukuwa's story as an immigrant has come full circle.



During the pandemic, when people couldn't go out, we were bringing sunshine into their lives. People were saying 'I don't feel as depressed when I turned you guys on. I feel a breath of fresh air.'

— Kukuwa Kyereboah-Nuamah, Miami, FL

 / [White House on the Hill](#)

A Family's Life on the Farm

Jake Grzenda grew up in the city but dreamed of life on a farm. Inspired by his wife Becky's childhood, he pictured the country as a place where they could raise their kids alongside animals and set an example of growing healthy, sustainable food. After 10 years of city life together, Jake and Becky left Kansas City for rural Missouri with their two kids in 2017.

The couple bought six chickens and soon realized they knew very little about farming. So, they turned to homesteading videos on YouTube for help. To share their journey, they also started posting videos of their own. Eventually, they would post weekly about raising their kids with animals, building the farm, and more. A year and a half later, the couple decided to pursue YouTube full-time after a viral video of an emu egg hatching earned 100 million views and a "Creator on the Rise" nod.

Today they earn 90% of their income from YouTube—with approximately 30% coming from AdSense and 60% coming from sponsorships with brands like Kiwi Co, Osmo, and Renogy. The remaining 10% of their income comes from product sales mostly from their more than 856,000 YouTube subscribers.

They credit YouTube for completely changing their lives. They paid off their student loan debt much earlier than they expected, and bought a larger farm instead of continuing to rent. Plus, they have 75 chickens, emus, and other animals. All told, their family and farm are thriving by a country mile.



YouTube really changed the course of our life. It enabled us to be at home with our family full time, develop the farm, and support our family's future dreams and goals.

— Jake Grzenda, Easton, MO

SOCIETAL IMPACT

A Useful Tool for Building Skills & Opportunities

YouTube provides unique value to countless Americans in a vast array of ways.

Every day, Americans look to YouTube for information and educational resources to enrich their lives. Some learn a new language or teach themselves to code. Others develop hobbies and interests like tackling home projects or following a new sport. Still others create new personal and professional opportunities for themselves.

Through the YouTube platform, Americans are able to access valuable content that may help to save them time, save them money, or empower them to be more savvy consumers.

Additionally, parents, students, and teachers alike recognize YouTube's benefit as a quick, easy, and useful educational resource—within the classroom and beyond.



My family and friends love my [YouTube] content and I love doing it because I get to display my positivity and creativity.

— Creator, 1K+ Subscribers



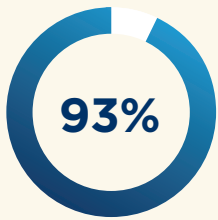
YouTube has given me a sense of accomplishment, a stronger voice, a sense of purpose, and has helped me to prioritize and better structure my day.

— Creator, 1K+ Subscribers



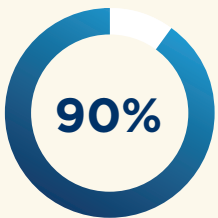
YouTube reaches the student that learns differently or learns at a different pace. It just really gives them another avenue besides the pen and paper and textbook and notes. It gives students just one more step to keep them engaged and give them a better opportunity to understand the information.

– Career Technology Education Teacher, US public school



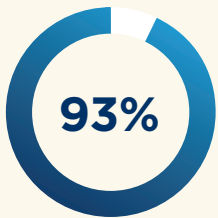
Practical Solutions

93% of users report they learn how to fix practical problems on YouTube.



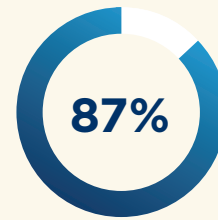
A Positive Impact

90% of creative entrepreneurs agree they want to use the influence they discovered on YouTube to make a positive impact on society.



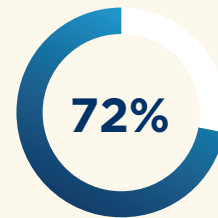
A Wealth of Knowledge

93% of users report using YouTube to gather information and knowledge.



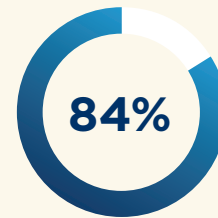
Helpful Information

87% of users who searched for sustainability content on YouTube say they found helpful information.



A Resource for Health

72% of users who searched for health content on YouTube agree that YouTube provides access to authoritative health information.



Making Education Fun

84% of parents who use YouTube (or YouTube Kids for children under 13) agree that YouTube makes learning more fun for their children.

 / Justin Ellen | Professional Baker & YouTube Learner

Learning the Art of Cake Decorating

Justin Ellen grew up baking with his mom and grandma. After watching a YouTube video of someone decorating a cake, Justin decided to create a three-tier cake for his grandma's birthday. The experience inspired him. Noticing that Black-owned bakeries and baking products were not widely represented, he thought he could use his passion to show others what was possible.

From the beginning, Justin turned to YouTube. As a visual learner, the in-depth videos helped him perfect intricate techniques like frosting methods and creating edible flowers. "YouTube really was a foundation for everything," he says. "I would watch a ton of videos so I could really nail it down." Channels like [How to Cook That](#) and [How to Cake It](#) introduced endless possibilities. He remembers, "How to Cake It was the first channel I learned from. It really just sparked my interest."

Justin also discovered channels like [Erin on Demand](#), [Janelle Copeland](#), and [Jay Shetty](#), to learn about marketing and operating a business. He started posting photos and videos on social media and soon had dozens of requests for custom cakes. His skills even earned him an appearance on the Netflix series, "Is It Cake?"

At just 16, Justin officially founded his company, "Everything Just Baked." In 2021, the business grossed \$100,000 in sales and it is on track to double that in 2022—through product sales, custom cake orders, and online and in-person classes.

Justin will be moving his operation to a 1,250-square-foot space. He plans to hire employees and hopes to see his products in stores soon. Justin's business is a huge success, and he credits YouTube for helping him to get started.



A lot of YouTubers are very detailed and teach techniques you'd have to pay thousands of dollars for, or spend hours in the kitchen. I'm very visual, so YouTube's just a great way for me to learn. I like to say YouTube University.

— Justin Ellen, Passaic, NJ

“

YouTube is an important discovery mechanism. For the people who want to learn about niche topics, there's really good content on those topics. For the creators, keep working on your niche, and if you keep going, you'll probably have something that could at minimum support you. There's real potential there.

— Sal Khan, Founder & CEO, Khan Academy

CULTURAL IMPACT

Access to Cultures & Communities

YouTube provides creators with a free, open, and equitable platform that reduces or removes many of the barriers to entry associated with traditional media and helps creators reach a global audience.

As the world's largest video-sharing platform, over time, YouTube is also cultivating a living video archive of modern human society. From a captured candid moment that becomes the latest viral sensation, to important historical events like the fall of the Berlin Wall, countless hours of video footage make up a unique content library that is accessible to all.

A major emphasis of YouTube's mission is to help Americans from all backgrounds, at home and around the world, to engage with local culture. That includes everything from discovering content produced by American artists to building connections and community, preserving and celebrating their heritage, or sharing their skills and passions.



I love that I am able to express myself on my channel and build a community of like-minded individuals.

— Creator, 500 Subscribers



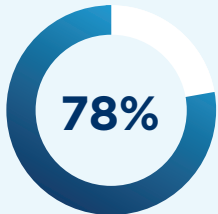
YouTube gives me a significant confidence boost knowing I'm creating things people enjoy.

— Creator, 1K+ Subscribers



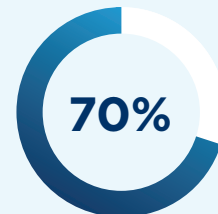
Being a local artist myself, I cannot help but praise YouTube for giving me the hope and motivation to keep on going with my passion even if in small bits.

— User, 25-34, OR



A Global Platform

78% of creative entrepreneurs agree that YouTube is an essential platform to earn a global presence.



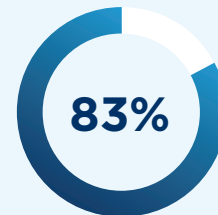
A Place to Belong

70% of creative entrepreneurs agree that they identify and feel like they have a place to belong on YouTube.



Worldwide Viewership

Over 55% of time spent watching content produced by US channels came from viewers outside the US in 2021.[†]



Content in Many Languages

83% of users agree they can easily find content on YouTube in their preferred language.

[†] Source: YouTube data as of December 30, 2021.

 / [Rhett Price](#)

The Hip-Hop Violinist

Rhett Price has always been drawn to music. His parents bought him a violin after seeing his natural ability from a young age. Inspired by his father's painting career, Rhett knew he wanted to be a musician and to share his passion with the world. He studied briefly at Berklee College of Music in Boston, then began playing gigs, but struggled to earn a living. He sometimes even struggled to find places to stay.

Rhett started posting his music on YouTube in 2011. One day he paid a film student his last \$300 to record him performing a cover of a Taylor Swift song. The video went viral and he was dubbed a "YouTube Sensation."

Previously, YouTube had accounted for around 5% of Rhett's bookings. After his video went viral in 2013, that figure swelled to 90%. Rhett has now booked nearly 1,000 gigs as a result of his YouTube presence, performing for audiences around the world. He has appeared on front pages of Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, and others, played at parties for celebrities including Matt Damon and Stanley Tucci, and played with or opened for Chris Brown, Machine Gun Kelly, Amanda Palmer, and many others.

Through all of his success, Rhett makes an effort to give back. He plays school assemblies—often resulting in huge influxes of students wanting to play the violin. He even collaborated with Ben & Jerry's to create a sundae, donating proceeds to a non-profit serving Boston's homeless community.

Rhett's income has increased by roughly 700% since that first viral video. He has an all-original EP set for release in the summer of 2022, and he is kicking off a US-tour in July. Rhett still considers YouTube foundational to his career, and regularly uses it as a source of inspiration and creativity.



Without YouTube, I don't really know how I would do what I do. The shows, events and ticket sales wouldn't be there without YouTube.

— Rhett Price, Boston, MA

“

YouTube enhances the cultural output. The audience can learn about the culture through the videos or content created by the creators. Simultaneously, the artists could create awareness by sharing their cultural aspects.

– Promotion Specialist, US media company

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IMPACT

Helping Underrepresented Audiences Find Their Voice

As an international platform, YouTube enables creators and users from all over the globe to develop, share, and view content.

Every day, creators of differing cultures, backgrounds, genders, races, and financial positions take to YouTube to share their skills and talents and connect with new audiences.

At the same time, young artists who otherwise may go undiscovered use YouTube as an opportunity to contribute fresh energy, enthusiasm, passion, and perspective to the music and media industries. This also helps them to build their audiences and develop their creative voices.



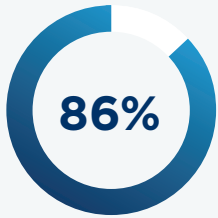
YouTube in my opinion is an excellent platform that provides me and my family not only entertainment, but safe and accurate content that has improved our lives. YouTube has been vital during the COVID-19 pandemic and I see it as a critical platform for years to come.

— User, 35-44, MS



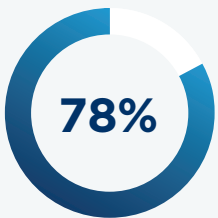
Watching female farmers do farming has made me want to help and learn more, possibly become one myself so I can have an impact on young women.

— User, 35-44, AZ



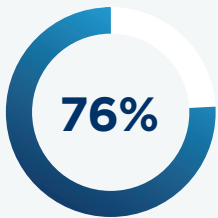
A Place to Share

86% of female creators agree that YouTube helps them share their passions and ideas.



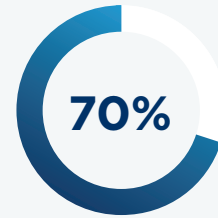
A Creative Outlet

78% of female creators agree that YouTube helps them be creative.



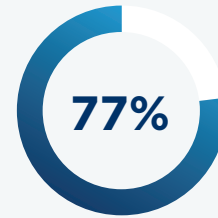
A Lifetime of Resources

76% of female users agree that YouTube is a helpful platform for lifelong learning.



An Avenue for Talent

70% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube has increased the supply of creative talent in the industry.



A Place to be Discovered

77% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube is critical to breaking new artists and/or music.

 / Dawn Jones Redstone | Filmmaker & YouTube Learner

Film Enthusiast to Filmmaker

Growing up, Dawn Jones Redstone loved watching art house movies with her dad. Unable to afford film school, she set aside her passion and pursued carpentry and nonprofit work.

Eventually, she turned to YouTube to feed her curiosity and love for film. She learned everything from lighting setup to storytelling watching channels like [Philip Bloom](#), [Film Riot](#), [Aputure](#), and others, and she found inspiration. “YouTube has been a way to watch interviews with other queer or women-of-color directors like Dee Rees or Chloe Zhao,” she says. “These women inspire me!”

Dawn quit her job in 2012. She founded a company called Hearts + Sparks and, in 2015, released a short film called “Sista in the Brotherhood” documenting her experience with discrimination in carpentry. The film won multiple awards and that year Dawn’s filmmaking earned as much as previous jobs, allowing her to continue pursuing her dream.

Dawn’s first feature-length film, “Mother of Color,” is set to release in the fall of 2022—produced with a crew of mostly women of color. Dawn says, “When I look at who gets this privilege of making films, nine times out of 10 they don’t look like me. That’s why I like to talk about my identity as a Mexican-American and queer woman. My visibility for others like me is a beacon. That drives me.”

Dawn continues to use YouTube as an educational tool. She says the platform gave her insights and training she couldn’t afford through film school, and believes it can do the same for others as well.



YouTube gave me access, because I didn’t have the ability to go to film school. I use YouTube all the time to learn about all things filmmaking and I’m striving to have more women and people of color be involved in the film community.

— Dawn Jones Redstone, Portland, OR

“

YouTube has provided me a cost-effective way to build my brand. This site makes our market a level playing field in terms of advertising and marketing.

— Creator, 1K+ Subscribers

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By the Numbers

Economic Impact

More than \$25 billion was contributed by YouTube's creative ecosystem to US GDP in 2021.

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79% of SMBs who use YouTube agree that YouTube is a cost-effective way of providing staff training.

75% of SMBs who use YouTube agree that YouTube has helped them sustain their business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

80% of creative entrepreneurs agree that YouTube provides an opportunity to create content and earn money that they wouldn't get from traditional media.

72% of creative entrepreneurs agree that the revenue they receive from advertisements being placed on their YouTube content is an important source of income for them.

71% of SMBs with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube played a role in helping them grow their revenue.

64% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube helps them reach new audiences across the world.

64% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube is an important source of revenue for their company.

Societal Impact

93% of users report they learn how to fix practical problems on YouTube.

93% of users report using YouTube to gather information and knowledge.

90% of creative entrepreneurs agree they want to use the influence they discovered on YouTube to make a positive impact on society.

^{††} The survey findings presented in this report are based on three surveys of US-based respondents, comprising 4,022 users, 1,510 creators, and 502 businesses.

[†] Source: YouTube data as of December 30, 2021

87% of users who searched for sustainability content on YouTube say they found helpful information.

72% of users who searched for health content on YouTube agree that YouTube provides access to authoritative health information.

84% of parents who use YouTube (or YouTube Kids, for children under 13) agree that YouTube makes learning more fun for their children.

85% of parents who use YouTube agree that YouTube (or YouTube Kids, for children under 13) helps their children learn.

78% of teachers who use YouTube agree that YouTube helps students learn.

Cultural Impact

78% of creative entrepreneurs agree that YouTube is an essential platform to earn a global presence.

Over 55% of time spent watching content produced by US channels came from viewers outside the US in 2021.

70% of creative entrepreneurs agree that they identify and feel like they have a place to belong on YouTube.

83% of users agree they can easily find content on YouTube in their preferred language.

81% of creative entrepreneurs agree that YouTube helps them export their content to international audiences they wouldn't otherwise have access to.

Diversity & Inclusion Impact

86% of female creators agree that YouTube helps them share their passions and ideas.

78% of female creators agree that YouTube helps them be creative.

76% of female users agree that YouTube is a helpful platform for lifelong learning.

70% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube has increased the supply of creative talent in the industry.

77% of media and music companies with a YouTube channel agree that YouTube is critical to breaking new artists and/or music.

71% of users who searched for political content on YouTube agree that YouTube is a source of diverse political content.

Glossary of Terms

YouTube's Creative Ecosystem

YouTube supports an ecosystem of creators who earn revenues both on and off the YouTube platform. This ecosystem also encompasses creators' employees, as well as businesses and freelancers in their supply chains that earn a substantial portion of their revenue from creators.

Creator

Anyone who uploads one or more videos of any subject matter to YouTube, whether they earn revenue or not as a result.

Creative Entrepreneur

YouTube creators with at least 10,000 subscribers to their largest channel, and those with fewer subscribers who either earn money directly from YouTube, earn money through their YouTube videos from other sources, or permanently employ others in support of their YouTube activities.

User

Anyone who views video content on YouTube for any purpose, at least once a month.

Business

The types of businesses included in the analysis vary according to claim. Our business survey gathered insights from businesses that own a YouTube channel; those that advertise on YouTube; and those that use YouTube for other reasons, such as staff training. Note that these groups are not mutually exclusive and a business may fall into two or more of these categories.

Small & Medium Business (SMB)

A business with less than 500 employees.

Methodology Q&A

How did we estimate the GDP contribution of YouTube’s creative ecosystem?

The total pay-out from YouTube in 2021 was estimated using results from our survey of US-based YouTube content creators and published information on music industry revenues.

Off-platform revenues for creative entrepreneurs were estimated from the survey of US creators, and off-platform revenues for music and media companies were estimated from business survey responses.

We estimated the direct GDP contribution of creative entrepreneurs by subtracting intermediate costs from revenue associated with YouTube activity (the “production” approach). The direct GDP contribution of music and media companies was estimated by applying a standard GDP:output ratio to the revenue estimates.

We then used an “input-output” model—in essence, a table showing who buys what, and from whom, in the US economy—to estimate both the supply chain (indirect) and worker spending (induced) impacts. In line with standard practice for these types of study in the US, we used the IMPLAN model for this purpose.

Our results are presented on a gross basis: in other words, they do not consider what the resources used by content creators or stimulated by their expenditure could alternatively have been deployed to do.

Do the results exclude any activity connected with YouTube?

Our estimates exclude the economic contribution of YouTube’s own operations, and the benefits that businesses receive from increased sales as a result of advertising on YouTube.

How did we estimate the total jobs supported by YouTube?

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs supported amongst creative entrepreneurs were estimated from survey responses relating to the weekly hours spent working on YouTube. We only included responses from creative entrepreneurs who spend at least eight hours per week working on YouTube. Jobs supported amongst creative entrepreneurs’ permanent employees were also estimated from survey responses.

Jobs supported by media and music companies, and through indirect and induced impacts for all types of creators, were estimated by applying productivity assumptions to the GDP results.

Note: The case studies presented in this document were provided by YouTube.

About Oxford Economics

Founded in 1981, Oxford Economics has become one of the world's foremost independent global advisory firms, providing reports, forecasts, and analytical tools on more than 100 industries, 200 countries, and 7,000 cities and regions. Headquartered in Oxford, England, with regional centers in New York, London, Frankfurt, and Singapore, Oxford Economics employs 450 staff, including 300 professional economists, industry experts, and business editors. As a key adviser to corporate, financial, and government decision-makers and thought leaders, our client base comprises over 2,000 international organizations, including leading companies, financial institutions, government bodies, trade associations, top universities, consultancies, and think tanks.



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