



Playbook for Media Companies Guide

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Playbook for Media Companies Guide

The Playbook for Media Companies Guide identifies and anticipates specific challenges for partners through four introductory sections: Launching a Channel, Branding, Organizing and Uploading, and Celebrity on YouTube. Through these four introductory sections (and by referencing the **guide page** at the end of each section), partners can quickly identify which sub-sections of the Playbook are most relevant to their particular challenges.

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Guide Structure

- The **overview page** describes the partner challenge and presents a quick reference to find best-practices for that challenge in the Playbook.
- The **details page** provides further context on how to implement strategies across pre-production, production, publishing, and post-publishing (where applicable).
- The **guide page** provides an easily digestible list of best-practices and where to find those best-practices in the Playbook. Strategies are split into two groups: one that provides best practices for repurposed content and another for new content.

Repurposed

New

In this context, repurposed content is defined as content that was originally produced for television, or a partner owned and operated site. New content is produced for the web and can be tailored for YouTube's audience and platform.

Launching a Channel



Playbook Guide

Challenge:

At what point is it smart to launch a new channel? How can I “move” content from a large channel to a more targeted spin-off channel? How do I leverage my existing audience to drive viewership to a new channel?

Details:

Learn when to launch a new channel and how to leverage existing channels and videos to launch a new channel and build a new audience base.

Playbook Guide:

Calls to Action	11
Regular Schedule and Frequency	15
Cross-promotion and Collaboration	21
Annotations	42
Channel Page Optimizations	51

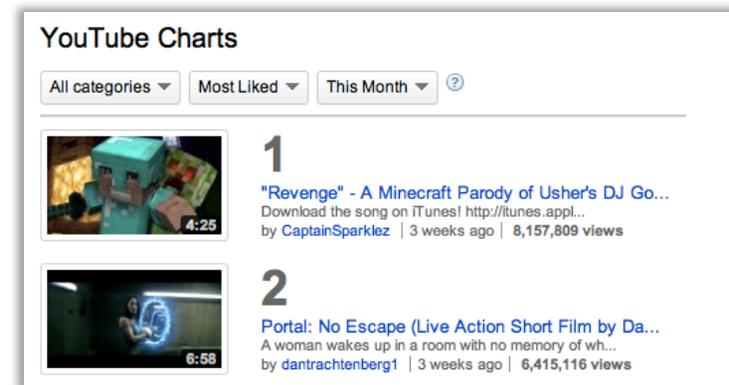
Launching a Channel



Before setting off to create a new channel, understand the creator and audience landscape on YouTube. It's possible that through collaborations there are easier ways to reach the intended audience and build your brand than launching a channel from scratch. Understand previous models for brand building and audience acquisition as you determine your strategy.



Get to know YouTube by browsing most viewed, discussed, and liked by category at [YouTube.com/charts](https://www.youtube.com/charts)



Know the Landscape

- Who are your competitors?
- What are other channels doing to acquire audience?
 - What features or tactics are they using to acquire audience?
- Who do you want to reach and what are they already watching?
 - Browse top YouTube channels by category, see what channels link together with subscription boxes, annotations, and collaborations.
 - Use information to understand who to partner with for collaboration and cross-promotion.

Launching a Channel



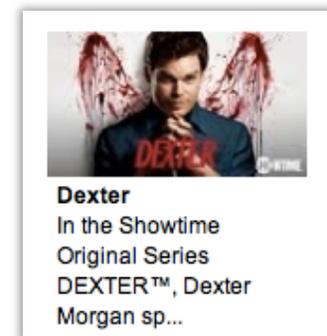
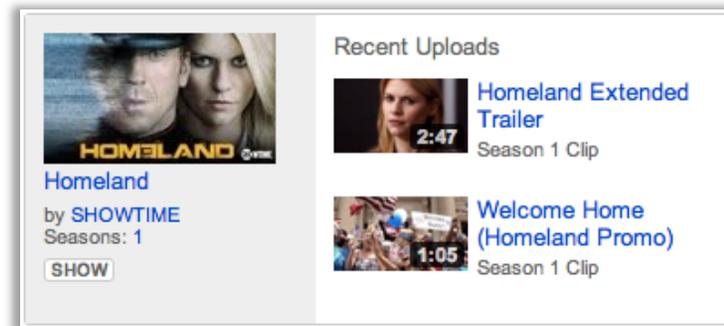
Before launching a new channel, maximize your current presence on YouTube. Launch a new to serve a new audience that your current channel cannot fulfill. Remember: a new channel needs a new subscriber base to ensure consistent viewership.

Maximize organization through YouTube Shows and Playlists on main channel first.



Why add an additional channel?

- If you already have an existing channel...
 - Is your content well-organized into Playlists and Shows?
 - Is your upload schedule at least every week?
 - If you answered **no** to any of these, it makes sense to first maximize your original channel before launching a second channel.
- Do you have one piece of serial content that could carry a separate subscriber base?
- Do you have thematically diverse content that appeals to multiple audiences?
- Is there a unique point of view for your new channel? Do you have enough supporting content (behind the scenes, outtakes, etc.) to populate a second channel?
- Is the point of view of the second channel consistent?



Launching a Channel



By utilizing best practices from Calls-to-Action (CTAs) (pg 11), Annotations (pg 42), Cross-promotion and Collaboration (pg 21), Regular Schedule and Frequency (pg 15), and Channel Page Optimizations (pg 51), you can successfully launch a channel. It is helpful to have an anchor channel from which you can funnel viewers to your new channel, but these techniques also apply for single channel launches.

Cross-Promotion Channel Page Optimization

Rhett and Link promoting their show on IFC



Collaboration

Sorted (Fremantle Media) and MysteryGuitarMan



Cross Promotion, Collaboration, and Channel Page Optimization

- Finding similar and/or popular channels (whether owned and operated or not) and creating content together is a great way to acquire new audience.
- Promoting the new channel through the subscription box and channel branding across your owned and operated channels and/or other channels increases exposure and better associated your channel with others in the community.
- The key is to maintain authenticity! Make sure that the cross-promotion and collaboration make sense for your audience – researching other partners' channels before collaborating is a key to success
- Along with CTAs within the Channel Page – make sure that the new channel communicated clearly when new content will be uploaded and why that new content is relevant to the audience.

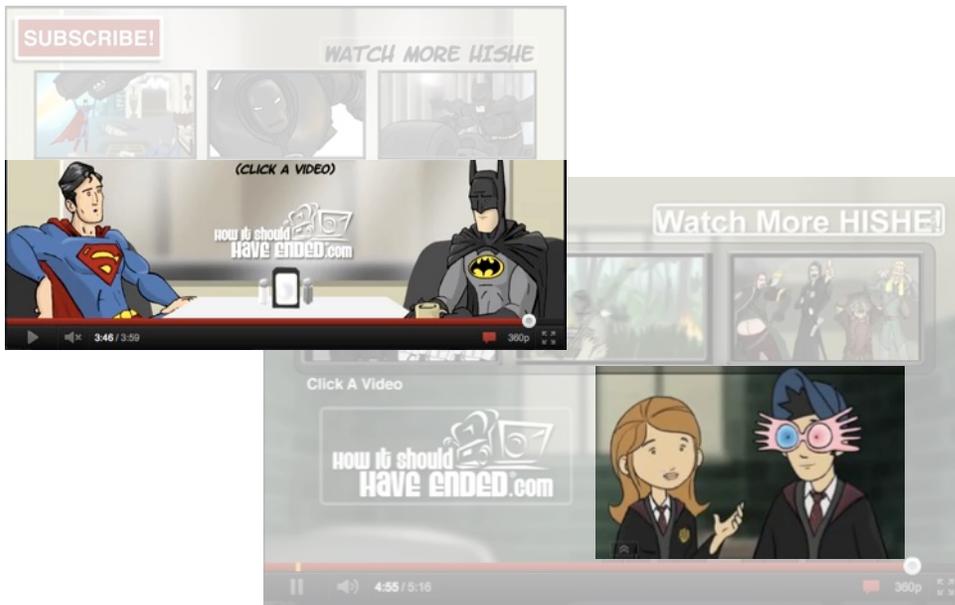
Launching a Channel



Playbook Guide

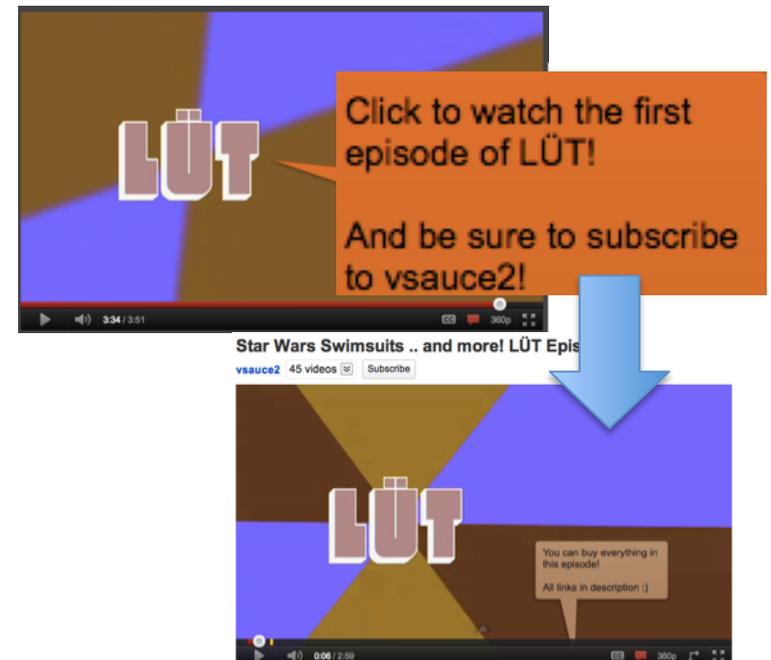
Scripted Calls to Action

HISHEdotcom (Starz)



Annotations

Vsauce and Vsauce2



Calls to Action (CTAs) and Annotations

- Scripted CTAs along with annotations can successfully funnel traffic from an established channel to one that has just launched. These CTAs should also ask viewers to subscribe!
- **You don't have to create new content to create CTAs!** Annotations can be used in lieu of a scripted CTA and added to both repurposed and new content
 - Use annotations when a scripted CTA would disrupt the content
 - The same annotation can be added across multiple videos, successfully leveraging back catalog views

Launching a Channel



Guide

Repurposed

Regular Schedule and Frequency (pg 15)

- Ensure that your main channel (if applicable) as well as your new channel have a regular upload schedule

Channel Page Optimizations (pg 51)

- Communicate your regular upload schedule through the channel branding on main (if applicable) and new channels
- Add relevant partners (because of similar content) to your subscription box on new channel

Calls to Action (pg 11) and Annotations (pg 42)

- Annotate your archive on main channel to point to content on new channel

Cross-promotion and Collaboration (pg 21)

- Accomplished through channel page optimization, annotated CTAs, and placement in the “Others Channel” module

New

In addition to repurposed content best practices, new content best practices include:

Calls to Action (pg 11)

- “Watch more” and “subscribe” scripted CTAs work as a segment in a video or as a standalone video

Regular Schedule and Frequency (pg 15)

- A standalone video or scripted CTA in a video segment that reiterates the upload schedule (“new content every Thursday!”)

Cross-promotion and Collaboration (pg 21)

- Collaborate on an original piece of content that links the main (or another partner’s) channel and the new channel with CTAs/Annotations

Annotations (pg 42)

- Where possible, every annotation should be given context through a CTA from the show’s host!



Challenge:

Make your branding compelling and catchy, without being overwhelming, to communicate to audiences that you are a trusted content source.

Details:

Channel Page Optimization, bugs, bumpers, metadata, and thumbnails are all branding on YouTube.

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Branding



Branding on YouTube is not limited to a graphics bumper at the beginning of a piece of content, but includes all elements of packaging such as channel page design and messaging, video titles and tags, thumbnails, *and* bumpers.

Branding gives context

- If someone lands on your channel page, how do they know the content comes from a trusted source?
- The majority of views on YouTube occur on watch pages which are discovered through video suggestions and search. In these instances thumbnails and metadata (titles and tags) become the most important branding piece.
- Bumpers and slick graphic packages denote quality, but they also give viewers the opportunity to click away. Keep branding to a minimum

How It Should Have Ended (Starz)

Let your audience know when new content is uploaded

Barely Political

If you have multiple shows or other channels, let your audience know about them



Reuters

Metadata and thumbnails provide context



Hurricane Irene brings chaos

ReutersVideo - 48,458 views

Note: 'Branding' refers to self-branding and use of third-party brands or logos is not permitted

Branding



In video bumpers provide consistency with existing metadata. Bumpers should be short and not detract from the content. In online video content is the first priority, branding second.

In-video Branding should not distract the viewer from the content

- Bumpers for repurposed content
 - For repurposed clip content, bumpers should ideally be no longer than five seconds.
 - If longer bumpers are necessary, make them part of the content: either by scripting new voiceovers for every bumper or linking the bumper to the content or placing them later in the intro/opening.
 - No branding: if your content is short and you are comfortable with the metadata and thumbnail being your sole branding, then you can forego a bumper or place the bumper at the end of the video.
- Bumpers for new content
 - Start with the content and place a bumper after an initial scene – this allows you to hook the audience and keep your branding within the video.
- If you choose to use a persistent bug/logo in your content make sure that it is “YouTube-safe” by placing them in the upper left or upper right corner.

No Branding

Harry Potter and the Steamy
Slow Jam / Barely Political



Branding is part of content

College Humor hosts Jake and Amir record a new
voiceover for every episode intro.



Branding

Guide



Repurposed

The First 15 Seconds (pg 7)

- Keep the branding minimal (less than 5 seconds)
- Don't use any bumpers
- Persistent bug in the top left/right of the video

Channel Page Optimizations (pg 51)

- Communicate your regular upload schedule through the channel branding
- State your brand promise in the channel branding
- Show off relevant shows in the top banner

New

In addition to repurposed content best practices, new content best practices include:

The First 15 Seconds (pg 7)

- Start with the content and run a graphical bumper after the initial hook
- Make the bumper part of the content

Organizing and Uploading



Playbook Guide

Challenge:

How to organize your content on YouTube and make content navigation easy for your viewers. Know when to upload, how much, and how to communicate your schedule.

Details:

Organizing content allows viewers to watch more relevant videos at a time. Understanding when to upload helps maximize your content's exposure.

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Organizing and Uploading



How to organize with Playlists and YouTube Shows

- Playlists are most often used as folders to group similar content pieces. Organizational playlists make it simpler for viewers to find the content they want to watch. They also promote multi-clip viewing by enabling auto-roll from video to video.
- Playlists can also be used for programming initiatives. A good example of a programming playlist would be to organize a news story – all the videos pertaining to one person or event can be strung together in a playlist.
- YouTube Shows are like Playlists that have more visibility in search, are subject to an editorial review, have a dedicated page (as well as visibility on a channel), and require that metadata for individual videos adhere to certain formatting rules.

Linking content with Annotations

- In some instances, it makes sense to cluster 2-3 videos or playlists into a group. An example of a content cluster would be one video of main content, behind-the-scenes content, and responses to viewer comments. Ways to link videos are by using video responses, annotations at the end of the video, and scripted CTAs.
- Groups of linked videos can also have their own playlists (ie, all behind-the-scenes videos, etc.).

Regular Schedule and Frequency and Channel Page Optimization

- If your audience expects a certain show on Tuesday afternoon, they will visit your channel on Tuesday afternoon to see that show. Don't confuse your audience.
- If you have multiple shows, give each show a time slot throughout the week.
- Organization through Playlists and Annotations is incredibly important for channels that upload multiple videos daily.
- Communicate your schedule in the top banner of your show page and link to your playlists.

Collaboration for Organizational Purposes

- Collaboration allows other established YouTube channels to curate and organize your clip library.
- Research the space for talented curators and partners who share a common interest with your type of content.
- Make your library available to these partners for them to create clip shows or playlists – leverage their subscriber base and audience for your content.

Organizing around Tentpole Programming

- Playlists, annotations, and metadata are simple ways of programming content for tent-pole events.
- Group videos in a playlist in response to a large cultural event (ie, breaking news), annotate clusters of videos that pertain to the same event, and upload archived videos with **relevant** tags that pertain to a large event.

Organizing and Uploading



Playbook Guide

Programming Playlists

National Geographic



Animal Attack!

1 week ago
[more info](#)

Organizational Playlists

College Humor



Hardly Working

5 days ago
[more info](#)



Jake and Amir

6 days ago
[more info](#)

Annotations

Break Originals



Collaboration

Fishbowl Worldwide Media / Toby Turner

CuteWinFail Channel packages a large clip library of UGC with a YouTube personality as the host.



Organizing and Uploading



Guide

Repurposed

Playlists, Shows, and Video Responses (pg 46)

- Every video should be associated with a Playlist
- Serial content should be added to YouTube Shows
- Use Video Responses to cluster relevant content together

Channel Page Optimizations (pg 51)

- Communicate your regular upload schedule through the channel branding
- Organize playlists and shows in top banner

Annotations (pg 42)

- Link relevant videos together with annotations

Calls to Action (pg 11)

- Annotate calls to action to playlists

Regular Schedule and Frequency (pg 15)

- A regular upload schedule adds context for viewers
- once a week is the bare minimum
- For multiple shows set aside one day a week to upload each show

Tent-pole Programming (pg 18)

- Repurpose content into playlists that focus on large events that are relevant to your audience

New

In addition to repurposed content best practices, new content best practices include:

Calls to Action (pg 11)

- Script calls to action that point to new playlists
- Script calls to action that link together clusters of relevant videos – these scripted CTAs should be at the end of every video

Cross-Promotion and Collaboration (pg 21)

- Work with established YouTubers to create new content utilizing your archive
- Create weekly shows and/or regularly-updated playlists that add context to your content library

Celebrity on YouTube



Playbook Guide

Challenge:

Maximize benefit and content-production from access to traditional celebrity.

Details:

TV, movies, and mainstream music dominate pop culture. Popular stars aid in the discovery of your content and channel(s) on YouTube.

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Celebrity on YouTube



YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world. Among the most-searched terms every year are celebrities. Some partners enjoy access to celebrity that is unique among most content creators. To maximize content which features celebrity, partners can follow these best-practices:

Promotional Videos and Calls to Action

- YouTube-specific celebrity promotional videos are evergreen and reusable as standalone videos and video bumpers for archived content.
- Scripted calls to action can be uploaded as standalone videos or appended to the end of regular programming.
- Use celebrities to call out user channels or super-commenters and engage with viewers by asking questions. Use the Moderator tool along with comments to allow viewers to interact.

Behind the Scenes

- For those brands where TV is their main business, challenge production crews to carry flip cams and record behind the scenes footage.
- YouTube is a social platform. Scripted content works, but seeing “real” people (un-scripted, in their day-to-day behind the scenes) is supplemental content that may have as much viewership potential than the big-budget full episodes and clips.

Metadata and Thumbnail Optimization

- Feature the celebrity’s name in the title and tags.
- Make sure to feature your celebrity in the thumbnail, faces work better than long-shots.

Playlists and Annotations

- Organizing playlists around mainstream celebrities allows your viewers to find more content easily.
- Linking similar celebrity-themed videos with annotations gives viewers options to view more of your content (you can also annotate to playlists).

Programming and Tent-pole Events

- Utilize archived celebrity videos on your channel. As new TV shows, movies, and albums get released think how archived content could be organized into playlists that align with these events.

Celebrity on YouTube



Playbook Guide

CTAs

Nathan Fillion and Zachary Levi, Break Originals



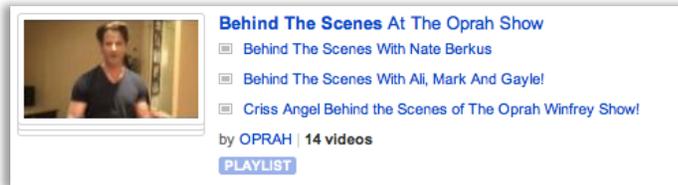
Playlists

Justin Bieber Playlist, TMZ



Behind the Scenes

Behind the Scenes Playlist, OPRAH



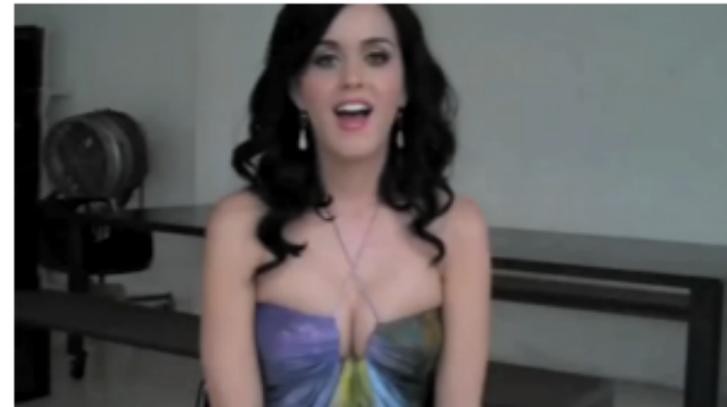
Metadata and Thumbnails

Freddie W featuring Jon Favreau



Involving Your Audience

Katy Perry answers questions, KatyPerryMusic



Celebrity on YouTube

Guide



Repurposed

Calls-to-Action (pg 11) and Annotations (pg 42)

- Use Annotations to link together 2-3 videos with the same celebrity, if possible

Tentpole Programming (pg 18)

- Repurpose celebrity videos into playlists that align with big cultural or entertainment events

Metadata (pg 33)

- Title should feature the celebrity's name first
- Tags should feature the celebrity's name in quotes (to capture full name plus first and last)

Thumbnails (pg 39)

- Thumbnails should feature celebrity faces and scale to small sizes

Playlists, Shows, and Video Responses (pg 46)

- Organize Celebrity content into playlist either for organizational purposes or programming purposes (to align with a big event)

Involve Your Audience (pg 57)

- Use the Moderator tool on your channel to interact with your audience and ask them specific questions.

New

In addition to repurposed content best practices, new content best practices include:

Calls-to-Action (pg 11) and Annotations (pg 18)

- Script annotated calls to action to subscribe and watch more in standalone videos
- Script bumper videos to subscribe and watch more (use playlist or single video annotations) that are added to the end of uploads
- Script calls to action that link together clusters of relevant videos – these scripted CTAs should be at the end of every video

Involve Your Audience (pg 57)

- Answer questions you receive in the Moderator tool in standalone videos.

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Example Links

Playbook Guide

Launching a Channel

5	Showtime	http://www.youtube.com/Showtime
6	Rhett & Link on IFC	http://www.youtube.com/ifc
6	Sorted (Fremantle) and Mystery Guitar Man	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSUzzwRZPGY
7	How it Should Have Ended (Starz)	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruMO9SXto0Q&t=220s
7	Vsauce launching VSauce2	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zo1Hd3tozKs&t=189s

Branding

10	How it Should Have Ended (Starz)	http://www.youtube.com/HISHEdotcom
10	Barely Political	http://www.youtube.com/barelypolitical
10	Reuters	http://www.youtube.com/Reuters
11	Harry Potter & the Sexy Hallows	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vt2egiZDoZw
11	College Humor Originals: Jake & Amir	http://www.youtube.com/show?p=7pKlnNFPvLU

Organizing and Uploading

15	National Geographic Playlists	http://www.youtube.com/NationalGeographic
15	College Humor Playlists	http://www.youtube.com/CollegeHumor
15	Break Originals	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewMNRzJy2xo&t=176s
15	CuteWinFail	http://www.youtube.com/CuteWinFail

Celebrity on YouTube

19	Nathan Fillion, Zachary Levi on Break Originals	http://goo.gl/9LYuh
19	Justin Bieber Playlist on TMZ	http://goo.gl/IUpLP
19	Behind the Scenes on Oprah	http://goo.gl/4uBtS
19	Cowboys & FreddieW	http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71YsRO6G7Ks
19	Katy Perry	http://www.youtube.com/KatyPerryMusic

Thanks!

Feedback

Is this document helpful? Does it help you how to quickly understand the Playbook for Media Companies? Are we missing anything?

Let your YouTube contact know how we are doing!