

YouTube Style Guide for Business

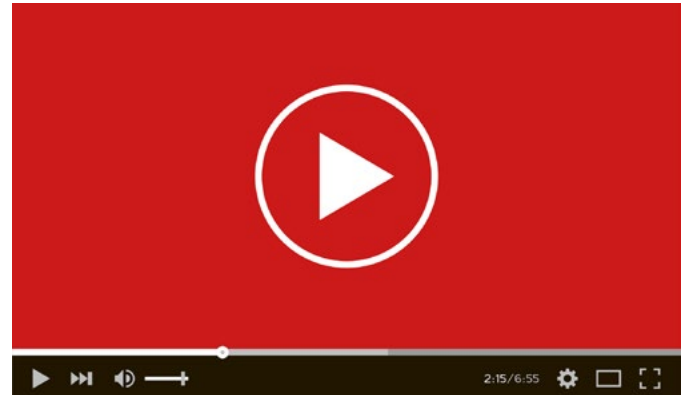
and other Best Practices for
YouTube Marketing Success

2017 Edition

While video marketing success is largely tied to production consistency, messaging and value, the platforms you use—and how effectively you manage them—can directly influence your play and click-through rates.

Social platforms like Instagram, native video players on Facebook/ Twitter, and private hosting options like Wistia are great options for video. However, **YouTube is a must** for its pure scope and SEO (Search Engine Optimization) power.

New customizations and link options have helped YouTube stay relevant for business. Still, there are several key things that companies overlook when publishing new video content on YouTube. To reach untapped audiences on YouTube and gain website traction through the platform, your videos, channels and playlists must be carefully curated for the best user experience.



With over 1 billion active users and 3.25 billion hours of video watched each month, YouTube is the world's second largest search engine and third most-viewed website.

Player Ratios and Resolutions

Player window sizes, resolutions and recording formats



16:9
(Modern standard)



4:3
(Traditional TV)



2.35:1
(Cinematic Widescreen)

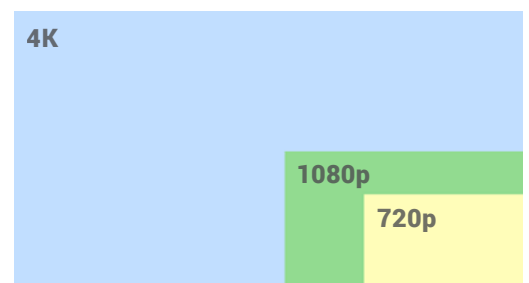
YouTube's fixed aspect ratio is 16:9 (width:height), which is the standard aspect ratio for most of today's consumer, pro and smartphone cameras.

Videos with the outdated 4:3 aspect ratio (or any other ratio besides 16:9, such as 1:1) will be automatically equipped with **pillarboxes** (left and right) and/or **letterboxes** (top and bottom) to accommodate for the additional space.

Videos uploaded to YouTube that are not 16:9 will be forced into a 16:9 player window, with black bars as buffers.

Fortunately, today's most common video resolutions (720p, 1080p and 4K) are all shot with a 16:9 aspect ratio.

You should only worry about ratio if you're repurposing a social media video or portrait-orientated (vertical) video.



YouTube Style Guide for Business (cont.)

File Type and Size



Videos In Unconventional Formats?
Check Out This Free Video Converter

As of 2017, the maximum video file size for YouTube is 128 GB. For unverified users, there's a **15 minute** duration limit for new uploads. To upload videos over 15 minutes long, users must [verify their account](#). Verification shows others that your account is linked to an established creator, brand or organization.



Keep this in mind: only verified users can link to external websites in video Cards and End Screens.

YouTube's recommended file formats are MP4 and MOV, although other video formats, like WMV, AVI and FLV are still supported.

Branding Your Channel



Logo/Background Image Not The Right Size?
Use Our Favorite Image Editor

The dimensions for YouTube account images are:

Profile icons: 800 x 800px (recommended); JPG, PNG or BMP

Channel art: 2560 x 1440px (recommended); JPG, PNG or BMP; files must be below 4 MB

For logo and title visibility across all devices, YouTube suggests a title-safe area in the center 1546 x 423px of your channel art:

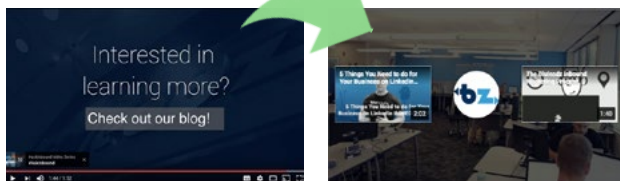
Recommended Channel Art Dimension
2560 x 1440px

Title Safe Area (all devices)
1546 x 423px

Player Link Options

End Screens, Cards and the end of Annotations

If you've been customizing your business's video projects with YouTube annotation links, get ready for some changes. YouTube has dropped the feature for mobile-friendly, streamlined **End Screens** and **Cards**. Existing annotations will stay put, but the tool is no more. Here's what you need to know:



YouTube End Screens:

Essentially CTAs, YouTube End Screens sacrifice customization in favor of responsiveness. End screens run for a set duration at the end of videos (up to 20 seconds) and can be equipped with up to 4 linking options.

These options include: channel links, other videos or playlists, subscribe buttons and external links to a verified website.

So Long, Annotations:

"As adoption of End Screens and Cards has grown, the use of annotations has decreased by over 70 percent. For this reason, the time has come to discontinue Annotations Editor."

Muli Salem, YouTube Product Manager
(March 2017)



YouTube Cards:

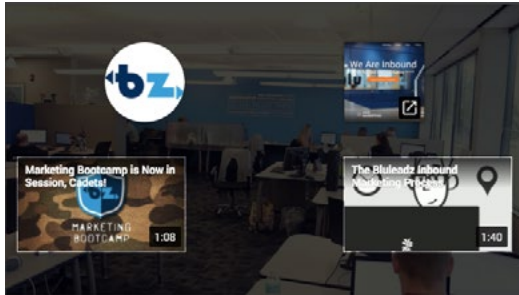
The YouTube Card tool is a simple, nonintrusive way to add interactivity to your videos, whether it's in the form of a poll, donation button, external link or merchandise link. There are plans to optimize how viewers see and access cards based on device and relevance in the near future.

Just like End Screens, Cards are also responsive across devices.

YouTube Style Guide for Business (cont.)

How End Screens and Cards Affect Video Editing

Timing and Video Closing Segments

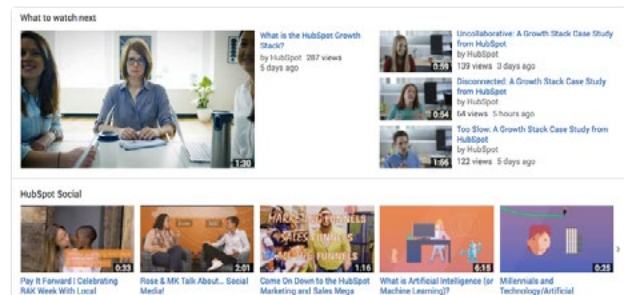
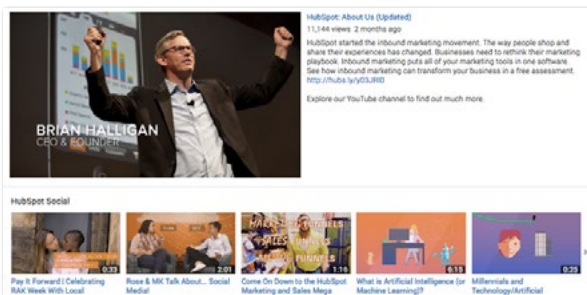


YouTube's End Screen feature requires that businesses change how they end videos for the platform. Videos that cut to a quick company logo or title screen before ending are not optimized for the End Screen feature.

A video's End Screen can be displayed for 20 seconds max. As most logos and on-screen contact information would interfere with End Screen options (links, Subscribe buttons, related videos), we suggest businesses leave 20 seconds open at the end of their videos (in the actual video file), and feature little beyond a dim background or cover photo that matches their brand's color scheme.

Fine-Tuning Your Channel

Playlists, sections and channel trailers



You should build your company's channel page with user experience in mind. Businesses have direct control in what both new and returning visitors see when their channel is opened. For new visitors, the first video they should see is a company overview or "trailer" video; **30-60 seconds of who you are and what you do.**

Returning visitors, on the other hand, should see videos that offer next steps or more informative videos about your industry and services. A simple way to segment this is to create and curate playlists based on video type, services/topics covered and, particularly, if you have a video series (such as a weekly vlog) to promote. With these playlists, you can very easily organize your channel page based on what videos your believe your buyers want to see and in which order.

Want More?

Amplify your video marketing strategy



Video is changing how businesses communicate with new audiences and close more deals. Check out some powerful video marketing strategies in our guide, [5 Ways to Use Video in the Marketing and Sales Funnel](#), or access our other video resources [here](#).



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