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## Introduction

This PDF is designed to give you a great resource of excellent tips, best practices, and strategies to help you build your audience on YouTube. It's my hope that you find the information helpful to your process so you can not only take your YouTube channel, but your whole business to the next level.

Before we begin, you need to understand that there aren't any hard and fast rules about making content that appeals to your audience.

I strongly recommend that as you implement the techniques in this guide, you keep an eye on your competition and channel related to your niche. Note how they communicate with their audience. You'd be surprised with how much you learn by looking at what else is happening in your market.

## Create a Channel Strategy

If you are expecting to upload one video, get millions of views, and walk away from your YouTube channel, never to login again, then you've picked up the wrong guide. YouTube has changed, and you need to change your strategy.

Thinking in the long term will not only help your channel succeed in grabbing your audiences attention, but it will also help your business in more areas than you are aware of.

## So What's First?

You need a plan. You need to create a cohesive viewing experience for your audience across videos on your channel where each video fits into a bigger picture vision for your channel. This plan begins with captivating your audience.

## Captivating your audience

Hook your viewer from the start of your video to keep them watching longer

Videos and channels that retain their viewers create the best viewing experience, and YouTube optimizes search for videos that increase watch-time on the site.

The process goes like this:

- ⤴ *Capture Attention*
- ⤴ *Brief Branding (optional)*
- ⤴ *Keep Them Watching with Great Content*
- ⤴ *Watch More...*

## Hook the Viewer with a Compelling Video Open

This is crucial. Most viewers decide in the first few seconds if they are going to watch the whole video or not. "*What am I watching?*" Should be crystal clear in the first few seconds of your video, which will give them a reason to stick around.

## Compelling Content First

Making your content compelling isn't as hard as you may think. Here are some best practices that many YouTubers found success with:

Engage by asking a question, or spark their curiosity with something they've been wondering about. You can take it a step further by having a 'teaser' content at the beginning of the video that will later be brought to light later. This is very compelling, and many video creators do it.

## Brand and Package Later

Branding, or flashy intros, and packaging can create a professional quality to your content, but they are not the star of the video. Let the content or your personality be the star upfront. That way viewers have a reason to watch past the intro.

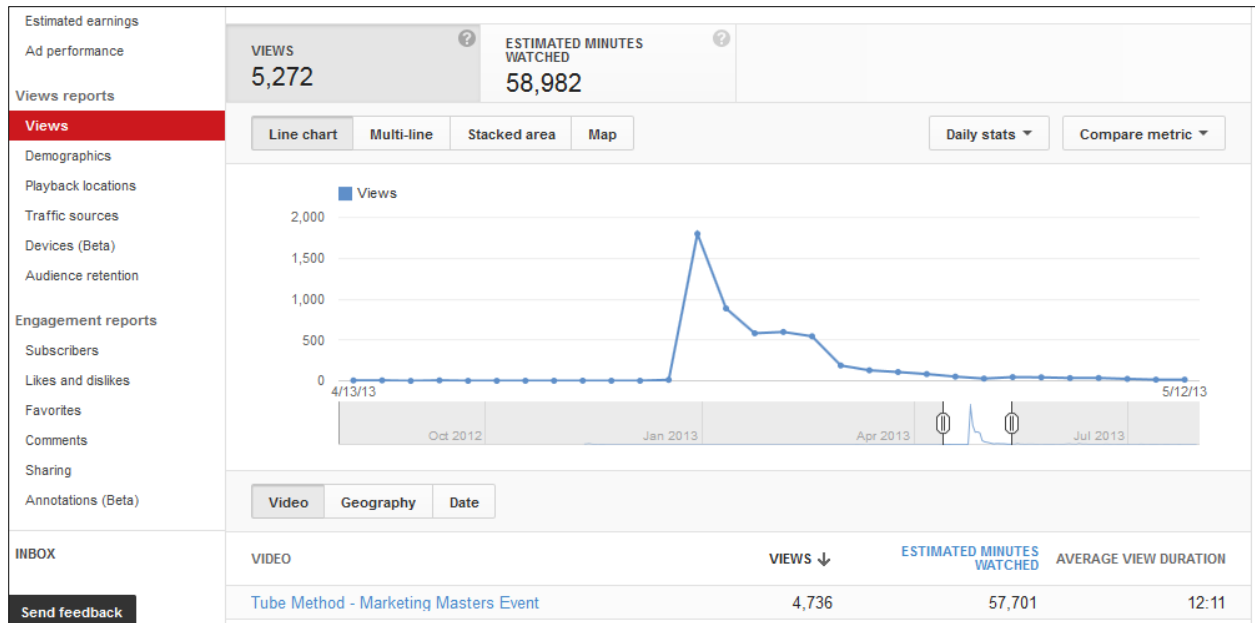


*If you are going to have some element of branding, make sure the it is no longer than **5 seconds**.*

## Structure Your Videos

No matter what kind of content you're making, you inevitably tell a story. Having a beginning, middle, and end is crucial to video structure.

Check your analytics, and review your audience retention graphs to track changes in how your audience is viewing your content. Optimizing the beginning of your videos should increase viewing time and attention spans as well as decrease drop-offs. Identify areas later in the video that result in viewer drop-off.



## Calls to Action

Direct viewers during the video to take actions that can help build your audience.

If you don't have a call to action in your video, all you're doing is having a one sided conversation. Online video is an interactive experience. Prompting your viewers to take action will lead to more activity and help you build engagement and audience.

Call to actions, or CTAs, should be minimal and simple. Too many prompts can cause confusion. The goal is to make it as easy as possible for viewers to perform an action.

You can do this through production and/or annotations.

## Important Actions to Direct Viewers to Take

While it's always important to drive viewers to your websites, it's important to direct your audience to take actions related to YouTube first.

## Subscribe

Videos should have CTAs for the viewer to subscribe to your channel.

Give them reasons to subscribe: more great videos every week, never miss an episode, etc.

## Visit Your Channel or Watch More Videos

- ✦ Finding effective strategies that lead viewers to watch more content, and extend their watch-time, is essential to help your videos show up in more places across the site. (see Channel Experience)
- ✦ Encourage the viewer to watch more content and direct them on how to do it. Tell viewers about your channel, its programming schedule, and everything it has to offer.
- ✦ Invite viewers to watch another video from your channel, view a playlist, or continue to the next episode in a series.
- ✦ Like / Add to Favorites / Share Asking viewers to Like, Favorite, or Share the video, helps your content appear in more places across the site.

***'Likes' and 'favorites' from your viewers get broadcast out to their community, which draws new viewers to your video.***

Viewers who share your video on social media broadcast it to all their friends and followers.

## Comments

Ask your viewers questions about your video and encourage them to leave a comment.

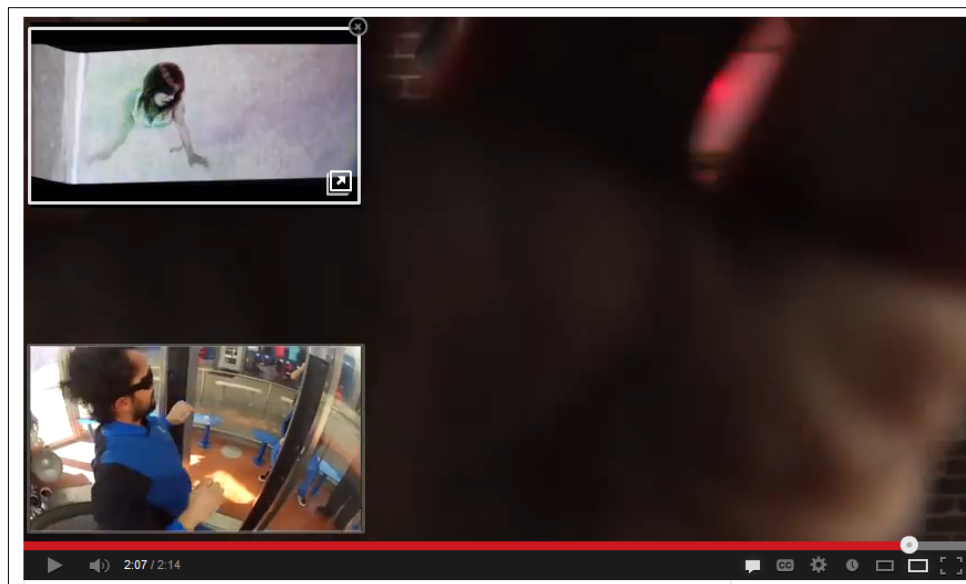
Comments also tell the search engines that your video is very engaging, and needs to be higher in the search engines. Here are some ways you can encourage comments:

- ✦ Asking a specific question or an 'A vs. B' choice will increase the comments.
- ✦ Types of Calls to Action in Your Videos
- ✦ Direct Host-Mentions

Talking directly to the camera in a genuine manner can get the audience to listen and act. Having the talent of the video, the host, or a character talking to their audience and prompting them to take some action is important to include in videos.

## Annotations

Use annotations when you don't want to have your characters *'break the fourth wall'* of your video.



Annotations are a great way to include CTAs in your video when they aren't part of the video's content. Here are some way you can use annotations:

- ✦ *Use annotations to update messaging and add new CTAs to older videos.*
- ✦ *Include click-able annotations at appropriate times, i.e., you shouldn't send a viewer to another video if they've just started watching.*
- ✦ *In-Video Graphics and 'End-Cards'*

You can use graphical overlays and other graphics in your videos to prompt for specific CTAs. Build in graphics for your videos to encourage subscribing, commenting, or sharing.

Create a video 'end-card' that appears at the end of a video. Use it to direct viewers to more content, encourage them to subscribe, or lead them to visit your channel page. You can create a template that builds consistency into the end of your videos by directing the audience to take specific actions.



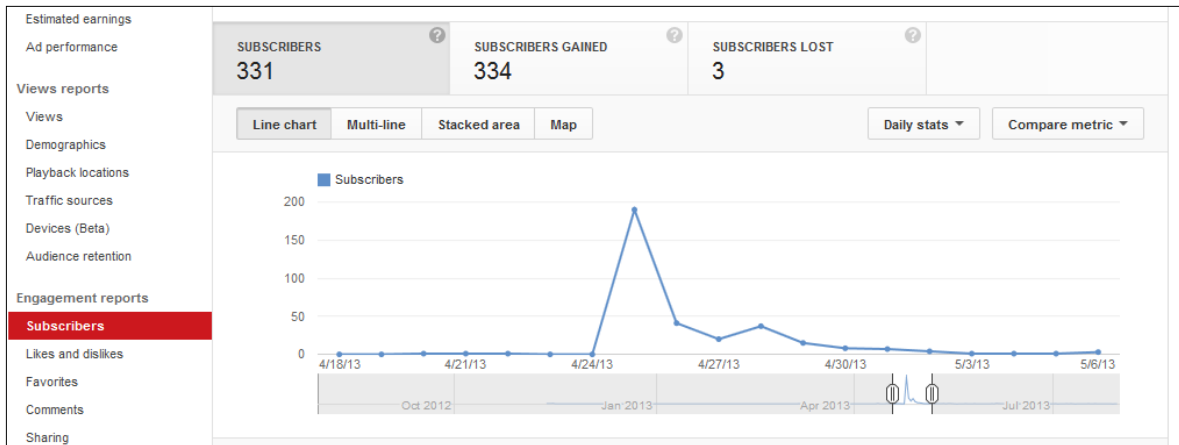
## Video Descriptions

Use space available in the video's description to include messaging and links for your viewers to act on. Use links to get your audience to subscribe, go to your channel page, start a playlist, or visit your site and social media.

## Analytics Tip

Use the Subscription graph, Annotation Report and Community Engagement graphs in Analytics to track changes in viewer actions in response to your CTAs.

Including CTAs in your video should lead to increased community actions taken by viewers including subscribing to your channel, favoriting, liking, and commenting.



By following these best practices and techniques you will see your views, subscribers, and traffic shoot through the roof. Even still, these strategies came from a lot of trial and error from many YouTubers over the last seven years. Don't be afraid to try some outside the box thinking with your next few videos. You might be surprise yourself with the results you get.

## Resource

For the greatest, cutting edge YouTube training, check out <http://tubemethod.com/details>