

Measurement for YouTube



Be part of the conversation

It seems like everyone has an opinion on what makes a 'good' ad, but sentiment should be reserved for those familiar with the objectives. The most significant improvements in campaign results occur when the makers know what they're aiming for. So if it's your job driving engagement, take the wheel. Get to know best practice and apply it. Develop a scorecard up front so everyone involved is clear on objectives and the goalposts won't shift. You'll soon see it's a remarkably effective solution to unsolicited feedback.

But first, how Measurement works

In addition to industry measurement standards, you can assess the performance of your video advertising in real-time with YouTube Studio, Brand Lift Surveys, and Video Experiments. Having a solid understanding of metrics gives you a louder voice when analysing and evaluating work. Plus, knowing how work will be measured provides a clear roadmap from the start.

YouTube Studio (formerly YouTube Analytics)

YouTube Studio is the place to monitor the performance of your ads with up-to-date metrics, reports, and insights. You can easily access loads of data, like Watch time, Traffic sources, and Demographics reports.

Types of metrics on YouTube Studio

View Through Rate: The number of completed views of a skippable ad (like Skippable in-stream), divided by the number of initial impressions. So if you had five views and 1000 impressions, your VTR would be 0.5%.

Average View Duration: The average time spent watching. If your video is one minute long, but viewers are averaging 30 seconds, your Average View Duration is 50%.

Organic View Count: Views that didn't come directly from paid advertising, or put simply, a potential viral video. Organic Views are brilliant to have but you can't buy them or create for them. While not a KPI in themselves, they're a potential indicator of getting traction.

Audience Retention Reports: The overall measure of how well your video keeps its audience watching, and this can be compared to your other videos as well as YouTube averages.

For Skippable in-stream ads, Average View Duration and Audience Retention Reports most accurately represent the effectiveness of retaining your audience over time.

Brand Lift Surveys

Appearing as ads before YouTube videos, Brand Lift Surveys have the ability to uncover viewer insights fast, such as how well the idea is landing with your audience, or how the work could be improved. To do this, two groups are established based on those who have been exposed to your ad and those that haven't. Both groups complete a survey appearing before YouTube videos, and the results are compared against both groups and category benchmarks.

Brand Lift Surveys metrics

Brand Lift Surveys can measure a range of metrics, including ad recall, brand awareness, consideration, favorability, and purchase intent. Plus, they allow you to understand the overall impact and efficacy of different creatives. The results are obtained through questions, so it's important to ensure the question being asked is relevant to how your campaign will be measured.

Video Experiments

When creativity and experimentation mix, ideas can be viewed through the lens of data. YouTube gives you the option to run video experiments against creative hypotheses, to see which options perform statistically and significantly better.

Variables of Video Experiments

There are a number of things you can experiment with:

- Copy
- Ad length
- Pacing
- Framing
- Supers
- Brightness
- Brand Placement
- Audio
- Music
- Call to actions

The advantages of experiments are that you get results in days, not weeks, you can test in a real advertising environment, you get samples in the thousands, and it's methodologically sound.

Some things to consider:

Do your homework

As soon as you get the brief, discuss with stakeholders the specific KPIs relevant for YouTube. It's worth requesting past campaign YouTube performance data to get a baseline comparison. You should be able to form your own conclusions about what was working, and what could be applied to your next campaign. If it helps, you can also obtain category benchmarks from Google.

Build for YouTube

When creating assets, refer to the creative downloads for Skippable in-stream and six-second bumpers, as this will help you to better build for the platform. Also, identify any other data you may need to gather or monitor that is supported by your idea (awareness, recall etc). Once you've established where your results should land, the better chance you have of actually landing them.

Stay on top of results

Use YouTube Studio to assess detailed analytics or Google Brand Lift Surveys to measure creative while it's live, across desktop, mobile and tablet, for campaigns running either skippable and non-skippable formats. On top of that, Video Experiments allow you to test creative and audiences to see which options are performing better.

It's not just about measuring, it's about learning for next time

Understanding the overall impact and efficacy of different creative is incredibly powerful for both current and future creative. It can be particularly helpful in providing a solid foundation on which to build insights for future work.

Creative Juice

Some thought starters to get you going:

- What do you want to measure? Recall? Favorability? Purchase intent?
- What past campaigns can you use as a benchmark?
- Are there other metrics, aside from views, that you'd like to measure?
- At what stage in your campaign should you review metrics?
- Where could you include a Brand Lift Survey?
- How is your campaign measured? What question to viewers would help get the results?
- Is there creative you're not yet running but would like to test?