



# Mobile Drives Year-Round Popularity of SXSW Music Videos

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The growing impact of SXSW has made it a mainstay for brands keen to reach a vast audience. While brands can (and do) engage with fans onsite, opportunities to connect with specific audiences are limited. Consequently, they're turning to YouTube to reach SXSW fans beyond Austin's city limits.

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**M**usic, tech, film—and barbeque—fans are expected to descend on Austin, Texas, this week for the annual South by Southwest (SXSW) festival, pouring [\\$315 million](#) into the city's economy.

People are attending the event in higher numbers than ever: [In 2014](#), an estimated 55,000 visitors checked out music showcases, 72,035 attended film screenings, and 45,500 visited the gaming expo and arcade. With so many influencers, early adopters, and fans on site, the growing cultural impact of SXSW has made it a mainstay for [brands keen to reach](#) these audiences.

While brands can (and do) [engage with SXSW fans on site](#), they have limited opportunities to connect with specific audiences at the event. This is especially true for music fans, who step in and out of showcases at the event. But engagement doesn't have to end when the festival does. Driven by mobile, U.S. viewership of SXSW-related content on YouTube grew by 62% in 2014. This is creating opportunities to reach SXSW fans now beyond Austin's city limits.

## Rock on: SXSW music on YouTube

Every March, music fans head down to SXSW to discover new artists. Year-round, they do the same thing on YouTube. In fact, one in five U.S. adults (20.6%) say their favorite part of YouTube is “getting music they can't find anywhere else,” according to a recent Google Consumer Survey.<sup>1</sup> On top of that, the survey revealed that even more American adults (25.7%) call YouTube their “top source” for discovering new music.

So it's no wonder that SXSW music content—videos uploaded by the SXSW channel, footage from artists' performances, and various user-generated content—is increasingly popular on YouTube. It's also increasingly evergreen. Some of the most popular SXSW videos of all time include performances by Sia, Katy Perry, Foster the People, Amy Winehouse, and Imagine Dragons, all of whom were introduced to

the American mainstream at the festival. And their performances live on, individually fueling millions of video views:

## Views of Artists' SXSW Performances on YouTube



Source: Estimates based on YouTube/Google internal data.<sup>2</sup>

## Discovering new artists on mobile

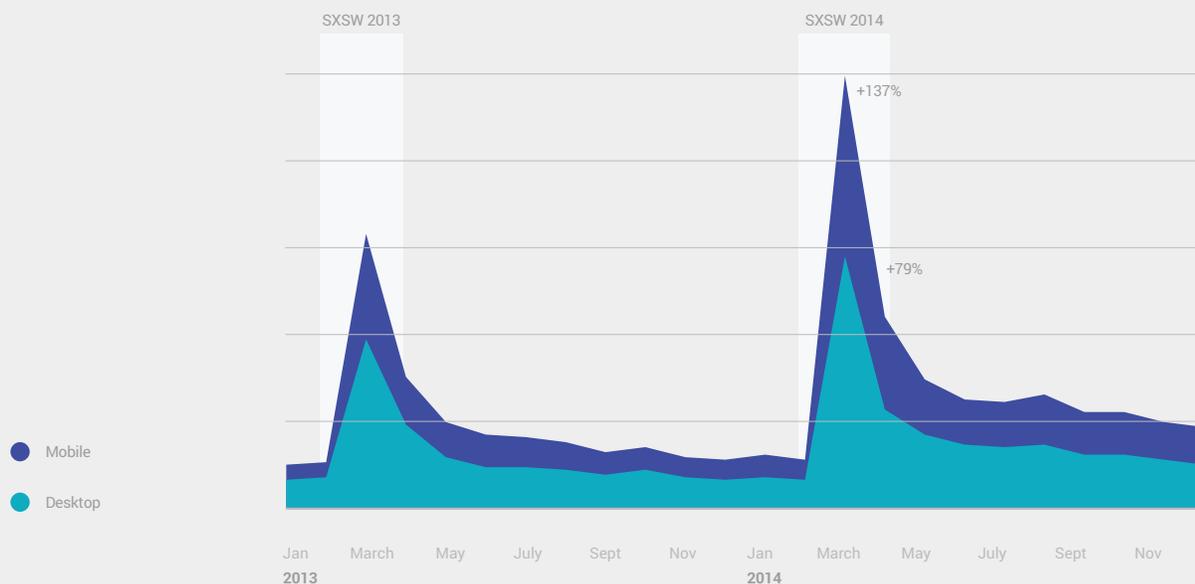
As soon as people hear the buzz from the festival—the most memorable performances, the hottest new artists—they look for content on YouTube. “As soon as” is not an exaggeration. They’re pulling out their smartphones in the moment, searching and watching. Compared with viewership immediately after SXSW in 2013, mobile watchtime of video content from the festival increased by 137% in March 2014 (versus a 79% rise on desktop).

Even months after the festival has ended, people are seeking out SXSW videos. In 2014, viewership outside of the festival showed a YoY increase in watchtime on mobile devices (+69%) and on desktop (+41%).

## SXSW videos, not just for millennials anymore

You might think the SXSW-on-YouTube audience means 20-somethings with 20-second attention spans. However, people are actually spending more time with these videos than ever before. The average watchtime per view has increased 21% since January 2013. At the same time, the age of viewers who watch SXSW content has broadened: 18–35-year-olds account for 75% of watchtime. But in the last year (2014), the 35–55-year-old group has more than doubled its watchtime of SXSW videos on YouTube.

### Watchtime of SXSW-Related Content



Source: Estimates based on Google/YouTube internal data (January 2013–December 2014).<sup>3</sup>

Free from the limitations of time or location, YouTube offers brands an additional opportunity to reach broad audiences who are drawn to the unique music vibe in Austin but cannot attend. This includes fans who are scoping out new music or exploring an artist's career on YouTube days, weeks, or even months after the event.

To connect with these increasingly mobile music fans and other audiences, find out how your brand can create experiences on YouTube that resonate before, during, and after a cultural event. For ideas, check out how brands such as [adidas](#), [Land Rover](#), and [Volkswagen](#) are paving the way with the [latest trends in video advertising](#), such as real-time ads and mobile video. And that's just the beginning.



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## Sources

- 1 Google Consumer Survey, February 2015, n=1804.
- 2 Classification of videos is based on public data (headline, tags, etc) and is not 100% scientifically accurate. Future results may differ.
- 3 Mobile devices include phones and tablets. Classification of videos is based on public data (headline, tags, etc.) and is not 100% scientifically accurate. Future results may differ.