

Pride Year Round: The Benefits of LGBT-Inclusive Messaging in Online Video Advertising

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Every June, YouTube sees an uptick in LGBT content and interest—and an uptick in LGBT brand messaging, too. But research shows that a highly engaged online LGBT community, as well as millennial women more broadly, are eager for a year-round approach.

Every year, we see a spike in LGBT content uploads in June on YouTube.¹ June is, after all, LGBT Pride Month, an occasion for remembrance and celebration. It not only marks the anniversary of the devastating Stonewall Riots of 1969, but is also a milestone in the Pride movement: The Supreme Court decided in favor of gay marriage in June 2015.

Brands interested in connecting with LGBT consumers often share Pride-centric messages in June. But it turns out that LGBT content provides opportunities well beyond June and beyond this key demographic.

YouTube's latest research shows a global increase in interest in LGBT content throughout the year. Searches for phrases containing "LGBT" on YouTube doubled from 2015 to 2016.² Annual viewership of LGBT content on YouTube grew 76% in 2016, and is expected to reach nearly 5B views in 2017.³

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Annual viewership of **LGBT-themed content on YouTube grew 76%** in 2016, and is expected to reach nearly **5B views** in 2017.

Source: Pixability, "Purpose-Driven Marketing," May 2017.

What else should brands consider as they make their messaging more LGBT-inclusive?

The LGBT community wants to be seen

LGBT viewers specifically want to see brands take a stand on LGBT issues. Nearly two-thirds of YouTube viewers surveyed who self-identified as LGBT said they are more likely to buy from a brand that takes a stand on LGBT issues.⁴

The mere act of including LGBT people in messaging carries a lot of weight as well. In fact, nearly two-thirds of YouTube viewers surveyed who self-identified as LGBT said they're more likely to buy from a brand that includes LGBT people and messages in their ads.⁵



Nearly two-thirds (64%) of YouTube viewers surveyed who self-identified as LGBT said they are more likely to buy from a brand that includes **LGBT people and messages** in their ads.

Source: Google Survey, U.S., May 2017.

One example: Dove recently [released a video](#) as part of its Baby Dove launch. This spot isn't the story of an LGBT family, but rather includes an LGBT family in the ad alongside other families.

Baby Dove | Real
Moms | Created by
SapientRazorfish



Brand progress, but room for improvement

LGBT viewers also acknowledge that they're seeing more LGBT-friendly advertising than ever. Nearly eight in 10 self-identified LGBT viewers said that brands are doing a better job today than five years ago at representing LGBT people in their ads.⁶

That said, there's still room for improvement: Four in 10 still feel brands aren't fairly representing LGBT people in their ads.⁷



4 in 10

self-identified LGBT YouTube viewers
still feel brands **aren't fairly representing
LGBT people** in their ads.

Source: Google Survey, U.S., May 2017.

Online video leads the way

In our surveys, we asked LGBT viewers if they'd seen positive changes in media. Interestingly, 60% of self-identified LGBT respondents see positive change for their community on YouTube in a way they don't in traditional media.⁸



60% of self-identified LGBT respondents see **positive change for LGBT people on YouTube** in a way they don't in traditional media.

Source: Google Survey, U.S., May 2017.

If the majority of LGBT viewers see a positive change on YouTube that they don't in traditional media, it's in part because of LGBT creators giving voice to these communities. Take the [Chosen Family](#) series that YouTube creator Tyler Oakley is sharing with his 8M YouTube fans this Pride Month. As Tyler says in the trailer, "For 10 years I've been sharing my story, but now I want to share ours."

(TRAILER) Chosen
Family: Stories of Queer
Resilience



There are more of these stories than ever on YouTube—and more demand than ever for them. The number of LGBT channels globally has more than doubled over the past two years.⁹ All-time viewership of LGBT content has reached over 7B views across nearly 30,000 channels.¹⁰ Even more important to brands, these creators are highly engaging: Shares of videos by LGBT creators have tripled over the past two years globally.¹¹



Shares of videos by LGBT creators **have tripled** over the past two years globally.

Source: YouTube Internal Data, Global, Jan.–Dec. 2014 and 2016.

The halo effect: millennial women

LGBT-friendly ads aren't just resonating with LGBT viewers; women of all sexual orientations on YouTube prefer LGBT-friendly ads. Nearly 60% of millennial women on YouTube say they are more likely to remember a brand that's LGBT-friendly.¹² Women are also more likely to engage with a brand that's LGBT-friendly in their ads.¹³

Millennial women on YouTube are more likely to remember and more likely to engage with a brand that's LGBT-friendly in their ads.

Moving forward

An engaged audience eager for more content is clearly an opportunity for progressive brands that can align with the LGBT community—and do so respectfully and authentically.

As the data shows, the approach will not only grow the LGBT consumer base but is likely to garner the attention of wider audiences.

See how other brands take a stand on LGBT issues with this playlist: [Ads That ... Are #ProudToBe](#)

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Sources

- 1** YouTube Data, Global, classification as LGBT video was based on public data such as headlines, tags, etc., and may not account for every such video available on YouTube, Jan. 2014–Mar. 2017.
- 2** YouTube Data, Global, Jan.–Dec. 2015 and 2016.
- 3,10** Pixability, Global, "Purpose-Driven Marketing," May 2017.
- 4,5,6,7,8** Google Survey, "How YouTube Audience Views LGBT-Inclusive Advertising," U.S., n=361 YouTube viewers 18+ who identify themselves as LGBT (YouTube viewers defined as adults who visit YouTube at least once a month), May 2017.
- 9,11,13** YouTube Data, Global, classification as LGBT channel was based on public data such as headlines, tags, etc., and may not account for every such channel available on YouTube, Jan.–Dec. 2014 and 2016.
- 12** Google Survey, "How YouTube Audience Views LGBT-Inclusive Advertising," U.S., n=187 YouTube male viewers 18–34 and n=189 YouTube female viewers 18–34 (YouTube viewers defined as adults who visit YouTube at least once a month), May 2016.