

3 Reasons Why Canadians Watch Gaming Videos on YouTube

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Gaming isn't just a thing gamers do; it's a thing they watch. Actually, it's a thing they love to watch. As gamers' massive YouTube presence is well-documented, here's a look at what videos they choose to watch. Once you understand why they watch, your brand will be ready to play.

In Canada, gaming has gone mainstream. The people who regularly watch gaming content on YouTube ("YouTube Gamers") look like, well, everybody. In Canada, 79% of YouTube Gamers are between the ages of 18 and 54.¹ Nearly one in five YouTube Gamers are parents—and more than one in four are women.¹

It's time to [put the stereotype of the "typical gamer" to rest](#) once and for all. Consider this: 65% of online Canadians watch gaming videos at least once a month.² That means chances are quite a few of your coworkers, friends, and family members regularly watch YouTube gaming videos. If you aren't part of that 65%, you've probably asked, "Wait, why would people watch videos of other people playing a game?"

think with 

Through new qualitative and quantitative research, we peeled back the onion to get a better understanding of Canadian gamers, including [what they love about YouTube](#) and gaming videos. Brands looking to reach the huge numbers of passionate Canadian gaming fans can take cues from the kinds of content and experiences that resonate with this valuable audience.

YouTube helps gamers connect to a community

Gaming is as much about conquering obstacles and getting to the next level as it is about the community surrounding it. Among YouTube Gamers, 48% watch YouTube videos when they want to connect with their gaming community.²

YouTube gaming channels like [Rooster Teeth](#) and [Markiplier](#) are places where people can come together to watch videos, comment, and bond over the things they love. “When I’m watching YouTubers, I feel like I’m connected to a larger community. [CoryxKenshin](#) actually brings up comments on the screen so he can respond and connect them to what he’s doing,” shared Azhurah, female, 17.

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Over half of YouTube Gamers watch gaming videos when they want to hear from people they can relate to.¹ And many of the gamers we talked to brought up [YouTubers](#) they love. “[Mumbo Jumbo](#) is my favourite Minecraft YouTuber. His personality, energy level, commitment, and love for playing make me feel that we have a real relationship. I feel like I know him,” said Adam, male, 29.

Live events are also hugely popular with gamers, as 69% of YouTube Gamers turn to YouTube in the days around a major video gaming event.² The power of online video means that live events can reach more people than before, reaching gamers in their living rooms, bedrooms, and mobile phones.

Multiplayer games clearly aren't the only way gamers team up; just by watching gaming videos, they find people who are like them—and find their own voices.

Gamers watch to be entertained by the best

Another reason gamers watch these videos? The same reason people watch highlights of Kyle Lowry darting through the lane and making a perfect pass: it's fun to watch the best. Among YouTube Gamers, 63% watch videos when they want to enjoy the best players playing games they like.¹

In gaming videos, the best can be someone who's beating difficult levels, or that fun player who can pull off crazy trick moves. "I love [SkyRim](#) trick shot videos where players pick up cabbage rolls with telekinetic powers and shoot them into baskets 150 meters away. It's super entertaining," said Alex, male, 31.



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YouTube is a way for people to get more out of the games they already love. Good creators—and brands—find ways to expand that experience.

YouTube videos help gamers level up their skills

Lastly, 50% of YouTube Gamers say they often play video games while watching YouTube videos of someone else playing the same game.² That's because watching videos isn't all fun and games. It's also about learning more, discovering Easter eggs, and finding ways to beat tough parts of the game. And it's a huge reason YouTube Gamers watch videos: 71% go to YouTube to learn how to get better at a game.²

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For many viewers, YouTube keeps the game going: “If YouTube didn't exist, I'd probably get stuck on games. Without YouTube I'd have to search for how to complete levels, and that would take way longer than simply watching a video of someone completing it perfectly,” said Azhurah, female, 17.

For others, it's about getting cool ideas: “I watch a lot of the [‘Let's Play’](#) series for Minecraft: I like to see what they're trying to do and how they play it. Watching helps me get ideas for things that I want to learn or that I want to do of my own accord,” said Adam, male, 29.

How Canadian marketers can connect with gamers

Importantly for marketers, 94% of YouTube Gamers who have made video game-related purchases in the past year watched a related YouTube video beforehand.³

So what will capture the imagination and attention of gamers in your brand ads? The same things that capture their attention in the videos they love to watch! For example, while watching gaming videos on YouTube, 68% of YouTube Gamers prefer ads to be entertaining.² So take a spin through gamers' shoes (or... controllers) and consider reflecting community, entertainment, self-improvement, and timely events in your content and advertising.

Methodology

We spent a few months conducting research about our YouTube audience, garnering insights through qualitative groups in Toronto and Vancouver and quantitative research with over 1,379 online Canadians, including over 580 gamers.

Sources

- 1 Google/Ipsos, "YouTube Human Stories 2017—Canada," 2017, n= 580 online Canadians who watch gaming content on YouTube monthly.
- 2 Google/Ipsos, "YouTube Human Stories 2017—Canada," 2017, n=1,379 online Canadians who watch genre monthly.
- 3 Google/Ipsos, "YouTube Human Stories 2017—Canada," 2017, n=506 online Canadians who watch gaming content on YouTube monthly and have made a related purchase.