



The Best Strategy for Marketing to Women? Entrepreneurship, Education, and Empowerment

Written by

Kate Stanford

Published

March 2017

Topics

Video, Audience,

What women watch on YouTube goes well beyond the realms of beauty and parenting. In honor of International Women's Day, Kate Stanford, director of YouTube ads marketing, shares the top trending content among working-age women, and how that reflects the broader shift toward female empowerment.

think with **Google**

The World Economic Forum predicts the gender pay gap, which stands globally at 24%, won't close entirely until 2186. That's why the U.N. has made the theme of this year's International Women's Day "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030."

In keeping with that theme, we wanted to understand what women of working age are watching on YouTube and which ads resonate with them. We uncovered three key trends: a significant increase in watch time of business-focused content; a desire to continue learning outside of work through how-to videos; and a preference for advertising that empowers viewers.

Read on for the latest insights on what women are watching on YouTube.

Women on YouTube are watching more entrepreneurial content

To understand what types of content are increasingly resonating with women, we examined the top 50 content categories growing by female watch time. We found that the time women spent watching entrepreneurial videos on YouTube more than doubled year over year.¹



The time women spent watching **entrepreneurial videos** on YouTube more than doubled year over year.

Source: YouTube Data, Global; classification as Entrepreneurial videos were based on public data such as headlines and tags, and may not account for every such video available on YouTube, Jan.–Dec. 2015 and Jan.–Dec. 2016.

Relatedly, female watch time for content related to small business, business news, and business services more than tripled year over year on YouTube.² As the UN's International Women's Day theme asserts, "the world of work is changing"—and women are changing with it. They're using new media, like online video, to learn and grow in their careers.

Outside of work, women still want to learn—about way more than beauty and parenting

Women aren't just learning professionally on YouTube, they're using the platform to learn personally too—about everything from recipes to workouts. While women are often stereotyped as watchers of mostly beauty content, they're actually more likely to seek out a “how-to” video than a beauty video.³ And they're significantly more likely than men to seek out how-to content: Women are 50% more likely than men to regularly watch how-to videos on YouTube.⁴

“Women are more likely to seek a “how-to” video than a beauty video.”

So what is it that women want to learn how to do? You might assume, for example, that new moms focus all their attention on parenting tips. In fact, our recent research shows millennial moms prioritise their personhood, not just their parenthood. Sixty-seven percent of millennial moms say they have continued to pursue their personal passions since having their child(ren), which is significantly higher than Gen X moms.⁵ In fact, moms of all ages are less likely than dads to watch YouTube for parenting guidance.⁶

Follow the data, not the stereotypes. A woman might want to build a house, not build her beauty regimen. Moms might be seeking gaming tips, not parenting tips. Don't assume a millennial mom has the same priorities as a Gen X mom. This generation of women is asserting their right to preserve their personal passions online, and they certainly don't conform to stereotypes.

“Millennial moms prioritise their personhood, not just their parenthood.”

Empowering ads are resonating with women on YouTube

The time women have spent watching ads on YouTube has more than doubled year over year.⁷ One reason women are spending more time with ads could be the shift toward empowering messaging. From 2014 to 2015, we saw a significant increase in the number of empowering advertisements on our YouTube Ads Leaderboard, our monthly tracker of the most-watched ads on YouTube.⁸

Women are watching more ads. More ads are empowering. And more brands are likely to see impact. Research shows women aged 18–34 are twice as likely to think highly of a brand that made an empowering ad and nearly 80% more likely to like, share, comment, and subscribe after watching one.⁹

Working women are making online video work for them

The sudden boom in business-related video viewing among women on YouTube suggests we're looking at a generation of self-starting entrepreneurs. They know how to use online video not just for play, but for work. When they aren't focused on improving their careers with online video, women are more likely to focus on how-to videos than beauty videos. Moms are actually watching slightly less parenting content than dads. By bringing data like the above into media plans and creative brainstorming, brand marketers can reach women based on what they are watching, not what we *assume* they're watching.

Happy International Women's Day. Here's to giving working women a voice—and to brands that are taking up the cause.

On that note, check out our International Women's Day YouTube Ads Leaderboard, which ranks the most-watched empowering ads among women globally. Women have spent more than 1M hours watching these ads, which cover everything from equal emojis to the challenges of being transgender.

Sources

¹YouTube Data, Global; classification as Entrepreneurial videos were based on public data such as headlines and tags, and may not account for every such video available on YouTube, Jan.–Dec. 2015 and Jan.–Dec. 2016.

²YouTube Data, Global; classification as Small Business, Business News, and Business Services videos were based on public data such as headlines and tags, and may not account for every such video available on YouTube, Jan.–Dec. 2015 and Jan.–Dec. 2016.

³Google/Ipsos Connect, U.S., YouTube Cross Screen Survey, n=2,004 U.S. consumers aged 18–54 who watch videos at least once a month, Jul. 2016.

^{4,5}Google/Ipsos Connect, U.S., Human Stories: Gen X and Millennial Parents, n=3,206 U.S. respondents aged 18–54 who go online at least monthly, Sept. 2016.

⁶Google/Ipsos Connect, U.S., Human Stories: Gen X and Millennial Parents, n=3,206 U.S. respondents aged 18–54 who go online at least monthly, Sept. 2016.

⁷YouTube Data, Global, “ads” defined as “paid views,” Jan.–Dec. 2015 and Jan.–Dec. 2016.

⁸YouTube Data, U.S., 2014–2015.

⁹Google Consumer Survey, U.S., n=1,500 women aged 18-34, Feb. 2016.