

YouTube captures Aussie audiences' time and attention—here's why

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Nielsen's new Digital Content Ratings reflect what many marketers have seen: YouTube's reach and influence continues to grow. Here, we'll go behind the numbers with ethnographic research that gives a look at why Aussies are choosing to spend so much time on YouTube—and how brands can connect.

Twelve years since the first YouTube video was uploaded with the simple message, "broadcast yourself," it's difficult to imagine a world without it. Over the years, YouTube has increasingly captured the hearts, minds, and attention of millions of Australians.

Now with [Nielsen's new Digital Content Ratings](#) measurement product (endorsed by the IAB), agencies and brands can get an even better idea of just how many Australians turn to YouTube—and how long they stay.

The first report shows that in May 2017, 14.7 million Aussies (18+) spent an average of 19 hours and 12 minutes per person on YouTube.¹ That's the equivalent of bingeing on two whole seasons of Game of Thrones!

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YouTube's wide reach and [influence on culture at large](#) have made it a crucial component for any brand plan. With that in mind, we wanted to go beyond the numbers and share some insights from our ethnographic research into why Aussies are giving YouTube so much of their attention.

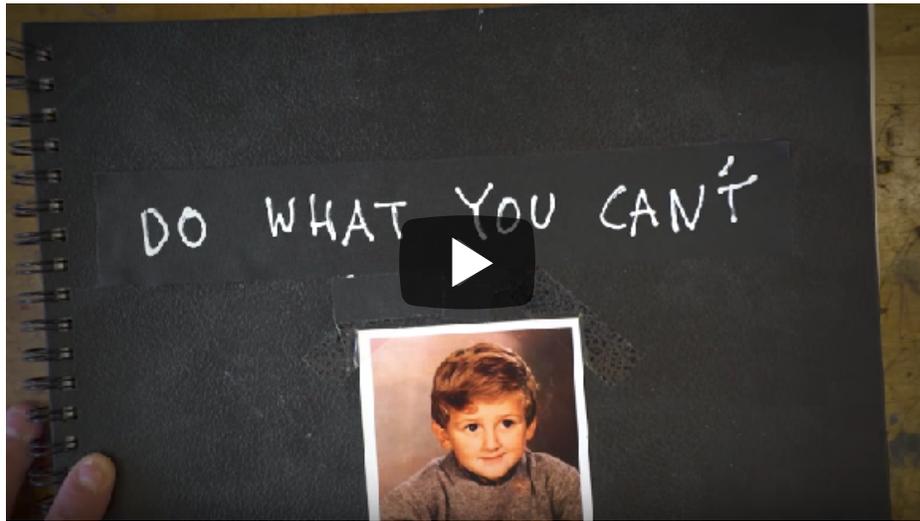
What we've seen is that viewers want three things from their video-viewing experiences: possibility, authenticity, and freedom.

YouTube opens up a world of possibility

Want to learn how to throw a javelin? Change a tyre? Speak Latin? Chances are, if viewers have a need, YouTube has a video that can teach them everything they need to know. [YouTube has democratised knowledge](#), providing a place where people can watch and learn just about anything they can think of.

One parent we spoke to, Melinda, age 37, shared how she went to YouTube looking for advice on sleep training her infant: "We had a look and were able to get instant success from something we watched."² Another respondent, Geoff, age 47, said, "YouTube is entertainment and knowledge. It's an online encyclopaedia. It's a 'how-to-do-things' guide. It's visual online help. It's an instruction manual. It's the world around us."²

Few creators embody this spirit of endless possibility quite like YouTuber [Casey Neistat](#). In his rousing anthem video, "[Do What You Can't](#)," Casey champions the dreamers, rule breakers, and video makers who have found a home on YouTube:



YouTube plays an incredibly important role in people's lives, helping inform, empower, entertain, and inspire. How can your brand enhance their experience?

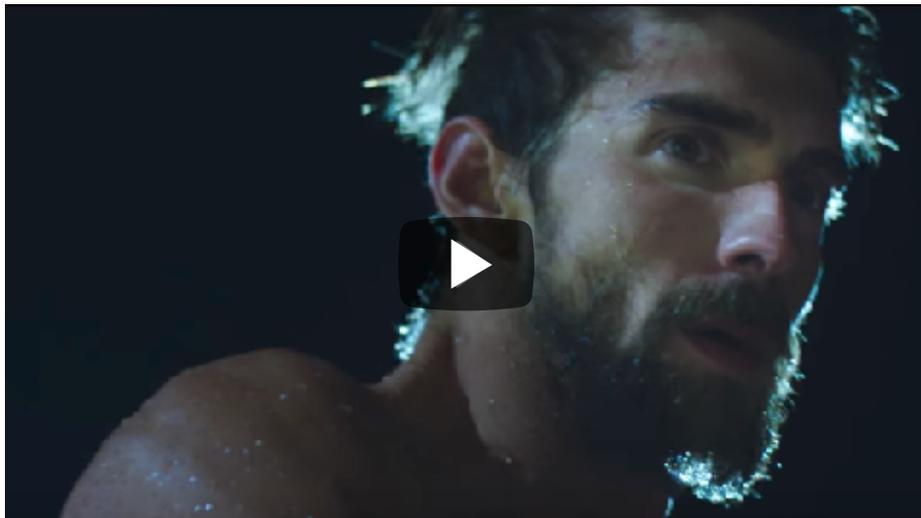
For some brands, it's about tapping into a trend that's taking off and bringing dreams to life. Earlier this year, online influencers (including [Jérôme Jarre](#)) [started a movement to get Turkish Airlines, the only airline that flies into Somalia, to send supplies to starving Somalis](#). Turkish Airlines was quick to jump on the opportunity to help, sending a cargo flight with 60 tons of food.

Authentic voices win over attentive viewers

Authenticity is a word that gets thrown around agencies and brands a lot, and for good reason. It's because consumers really care about it. Our research revealed that Australians are wary of content that feels forced or inauthentic; they're much more likely to listen to—and be won over by—[real voices and people who sound and feel like them](#). This is backed up by quantitative research: 7 out of 10 YouTube subscribers say they relate to YouTubers more than traditional celebrities.³

That's why YouTube creators like [Wengie](#) are so popular. To her 7M+ audience, she's raw, authentic, and trustworthy. She keeps it real. One of the study's participants, Charmaine, age 24, summed it up nicely: "I would rather buy Mac makeup from an everyday person than from some skinny person who is being paid thousands to wear it anyway."²

Under Armour's [stunning film](#) featuring Michael Phelps is a good example of a brand tapping into this YouTube ethos. Viewers got a small window into what Phelps' "real life" is like, which corresponded seamlessly with what Under Armour is all about. That kind of opportunity abounds on YouTube. Users want to know what brands stand for—and what it means to identify with a brand.



YouTube is your chance to tell your story, whether through [collaborations with creators](#) Australians love or through content you make and promote on the platform.

Aussies are free to choose what they want to watch

On YouTube, users can watch what they want, whenever they want—and skip everything else. For Australians, that translates to a hugely important feeling: freedom. They want content that can be worked around their lives, not the other way around. One respondent, Patrik, age 20, said he loves YouTube because, “I can change what I want to change, watch what I want to watch. I have that power.”² Chris, age 23, added, “I watch YouTube on my mobile when I’m on the way to work. And I’ll put it on the screen if I’m at home. It depends on where I am.”⁴

[James Corden](#) is an interesting example of a big TV star who used YouTube to reach people who may not tune in to his show at 11:30pm. Instead, fans can pull up the latest Carpool Karaoke video on their own time. Ben Winston, executive producer for “The Late Late Show with James Corden,” [says this new world has changed how they look at ratings](#) said: “The overnight ratings just tell us who managed to stay awake past midnight. The YouTube numbers tell us which bits flew.”

Aussies will only choose to watch things that resonate with them deeply, so making great creative is as important as ever. YouTube’s new six-second bumper ad format, for example, is providing a new canvas for agency creatives to [tell provocative, compelling stories](#) that catch people’s eye and earn their attention.



With more and more Aussies spending significant time on YouTube, there has never been a better time for [brands to experiment](#) with content that connects with what viewers are looking for on the platform: possibility, authenticity, and freedom.

Sources

- 1 [Nielsen Digital Content Ratings](#), May 2017, Australians 18+.
- 2 Google/Anthropate, "Ethnographic Research," 2015, Australia, n=28 adults ages 20–47.
- 3 Google/Ipsos, "Australian Video Landscape," August 2016, Australia, n=1525 adults ages 18–54.
- 4 Google/Flamingo, "Ethnographic Research," 2017, Australia, n=18 adults ages 21–54.



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