

LEARNING MADE EASY



2nd Edition

# YouTube<sup>®</sup> Channels

for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
A Wiley Brand



Establish a channel  
and create content

Monetize your channel  
and build an audience

Make a name for yourself  
or your business

**Rob Ciampa**  
**Theresa Go**  
**Matt Ciampa**  
**Rich Murphy**



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for  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
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2nd Edition

**by Rob Ciampa, Theresa Go,  
Matt Ciampa, and Rich Murphy**

**for  
dummies<sup>®</sup>**  
A Wiley Brand

## YouTube® Channels For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

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# Introduction

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**M**aybe you're looking to become a YouTube sensation with your next video or you simply want to share your insights or your particular expertise with the world. Perhaps you'd even like to use YouTube and video to help your business, which could be a local coffee shop or a Fortune 500 company. No matter how you plan to make use of your video-making skills, YouTube has made sharing the results of those skills easy. And with the tips and techniques included within the pages of this second edition of *YouTube Channels For Dummies*, you'll be ready to take full advantage of YouTube's user-friendly platform when creating your very own YouTube channel.

To get a better sense of how YouTube has changed the entertainment playing field, cast your mind back to ten or so years before the turn of the millennium — if you can remember back that far. Despite an explosion of ever better and ever cheaper video equipment for consumers, sharing a video still meant gathering family and friends around your giant 70-inch, LED television screen so that every-one could watch your latest video masterpiece. Back in those days, someone who wasn't in the room watching along was clean out of luck.

YouTube changed all that. It globalized the viewing experience, reinventing how people show videos by making it possible to share with audiences considerably larger than that bunch of friends and family gathered around the TV set eating popcorn. Any viewer who wanted to see any video anywhere in the world only had to type `www.youtube.com` into their favorite browser, search for the video they wanted to see, and click the Play button — and there it was.

As easy as it is for a viewer to take full advantage of YouTube, it's almost as easy for a contributor to become part of the YouTube mix. After setting up an account, it's a snap to start uploading video. And, if the video you're uploading takes off, you could become famous and even earn a good chunk of change from your YouTube exploits.

Notice that we said "if the video you're uploading takes off." That can be a very big *if*. Not just any video will do. The truth of the matter is that the low-quality, badly shot videos that were still popular a few years ago no longer cut the

mustard. Viewers expect higher quality these days, which is why you need to step up your game and produce the best possible content. This book can help show you the way.

## About This Book

In some ways, reading a book to find out all about YouTube channels seems a bit odd. Isn't YouTube the place that specializes in videos designed to teach you about any topic on earth? Why not just stick with the YouTube videos that are all about YouTube?

First off, it's a bit self-referential and incestuous to get all your information about YouTube channels from YouTube videos. Second, that video purporting to tell you how to strike it rich on YouTube may have been shot and edited by the neighbor kid down the street who has never made a dime from YouTube and who may never move out of Mom and Dad's basement. In other words, just as you shouldn't believe everything you read on the Internet, you shouldn't believe everything you see on YouTube. Sometimes it pays to listen to the true experts (like us) who have a track record in advising folks how to put their best foot forward on YouTube.

We also know that there are only so many hours in a day and that everyone's schedules seem to be getting more and more hectic each day. That's why we've written a book that doesn't beat around the bush — in other words, it gets straight to the point so that you can get in and get out with the information you need. In that sense, *YouTube Channels For Dummies* is the exact opposite of all those wordy instructional manuals that spell out a hundred ways to do something but never get around to telling you the best way. No matter if you're looking to set up a channel, create an effective header, or figure out ways to maximize your monetization potential, we show you the quickest, most effective way to get the job done.

Preparing the 2nd Edition of *YouTube Channels For Dummies* was quite involved. Since the 1st Edition, the YouTube community has grown by leaps and bounds. There are many more creators putting out great videos. And when it comes to major brands and agencies, being on YouTube is no longer an option; it's a necessity. We can go on for pages. Regardless, YouTube has continued to evolve as much as its community. For this edition, we made sure to make our way through all parts of the platform, checking out the new things, such as YouTube Studio, but also noting which stuff has been removed. The YouTube advertising world has also changed considerably, including full integration into the Google Ads suite. Want to make money? You'll find that Google AdSense has improved too.

# Foolish Assumptions

Whether you're an experienced videographer or you just bought your first camcorder, you should treat YouTube with an open mind. Just because it's easy to make a video and upload it to YouTube doesn't mean that you won't hit the occasional bump in the road, so don't fool yourself into thinking you don't need help from time to time.

That goes for pretty much everyone, from pros who make a living producing video to ambitious students looking to showcase edgy movie shorts to absolute beginners looking to upload their first video. Regardless of whether you identify with one of these situations or you have a truly unique one, you'll find content in these pages just for you. See whether you can see yourself in one of these categories:

» **Newbies:** You shoot lots of videos but have never uploaded one to YouTube. But then the feeling overtook you to upload your best ones and share them with the world. No problem: This book can answer some of your most basic questions.

You want your movies to look really cool so that you can post them on YouTube and all your other favorite social media haunts, and if you use this book to answer your most basic questions, trust us — your movies will be awesome.

This book doesn't require your fluency in technospeak. Instead, it's written using a down-to-earth tone. Through clearly written explanations, lists, illustrations, and tips, you'll find out how to best use your equipment, set up video shoots, and navigate the YouTube upload process.

» **Creators:** There's never been a better place for independent creators to build their brands. It doesn't matter if you're a budding fashion and beauty expert or a seasoned small-engine repair technician; YouTube is where you can showcase your expertise and connect with people who care about what you do, no matter if they're next door or in another part of the world. Even if you've been doing this for some time, you'll find that there are now more capabilities that will make you even better.

» **Students:** If making movies is what you do and you're interested in sharing your work, this book can get you started by helping you set up your own YouTube channel as your stage. Since you already understand the fundamentals of making a movie, you can concentrate on creating and maintaining your channel. Before long, you'll be uploading videos, building a following, and transforming yourself into the next Steven Spielberg.

- » **Videographers:** You're already comfortable making movies, you know all about effective editing practices, and you're ready to share your professional work with the world. You'll find tons of info in this book to help set up your channel and grow your audience so that you can transform your video page into a moneymaking endeavor. Ripe with tips, this guide puts you in the easy chair, filling in the blanks with the best ways to showcase your videos and effectively monetize your content.
- » **Business professionals:** YouTube is great for business because it can help drive awareness and increase sales. These days, consumers turn to YouTube to learn more about the products or services they're considering. YouTube creators have become trusted advisors for viewers and more frequently collaborate with many of the world's most famous brands to give buyers (or potential buyers) all the information they need to enhance their product choices.
- » **Entrepreneurs:** You may already have a moderate following on YouTube, whereas others are new to the game. Regardless of your level of success, you share the same goal, and that's to use YouTube as a business tool. Whether you're looking for the best ways to earn money with your channel or looking at the bigger picture to promote your business or service, this book has much to offer to find the most effective strategy.

## How This Book Is Organized

This new edition of *YouTube Channels For Dummies* is divided into five sections, with each section detailing the various phases of setting up and mastering your channel. Each reader will no doubt prefer a particular area. Some may relish the section that pertains to making a home on YouTube, for example, whereas others may skip ahead to the section on growing and knowing your audience or the cool ways you can build a following. Think of it as a smorgasbord of information.

### Part 1: Getting Started with YouTube Channels

This section provides a swift overview of YouTube and how to set up your channel. Whether you're a beginner looking to share videos with a global audience, a working video professional looking to take advantage of monetization, a business owner looking to close the distance, or anyone in between, this group of chapters covers all you need to know to get started.

## **Part 2: Making Good Videos and Not Making Bad Videos**

Regardless of the device or camera used, the language of cinema remains the most important aspect of making good videos — and not making bad ones. The chapters in this part cover fundamental moviemaking for YouTube channels, from using the right tools to putting all the pieces together in postproduction.

## **Part 3: Growing and Knowing Your Audience**

After understanding how to build your channel and fill it with great content, it's time to concentrate on building your audience. The chapters in this part can help you find your way to building a healthy following.

## **Part 4: YouTube Channels Are Serious Business**

This part covers what you need to get started with the business side of YouTube. Whether you're looking to raise brand awareness or considering collaboration with your fellow YouTubers, the chapters in this part can help you get the job done.

## **Part 5: The Part of Tens**

The *For Dummies* version of a top ten list found in this part of the book provides insight into the common and not-so-common aspects of mastering your YouTube channel. More specifically, you'll find out all about the steps you can take to improve your YouTube search results so that viewers are better able to track down your masterpiece. You'll also find out ten things everyone should know about copyright so that you can keep the lawyers off your back.

## **Icons Used in This Book**

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What's a *For Dummies* book without icons pointing you in the direction of truly helpful information that's sure to help you along your way? In this section, we briefly describe each icon used in this book.



TIP

This icon points out helpful suggestions and useful nuggets of information.



REMEMBER

This icon marks a generally interesting and useful fact — something you might want to remember for later use.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

When you see this icon, you know that there's techie stuff nearby. If you're not feeling techie, feel free to skip it.



WARNING

The Warning icon highlights lurking danger. With this icon, we're telling you to pay attention and proceed with caution.

## Beyond the Book

In addition to the pages you're reading right now, this book comes with a free access-anywhere cheat sheet that offers a number of YouTube-related pearls of wisdom. To get this cheat sheet, visit [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and type **youtube for dummies cheat sheet** in the Search box.

## Where to Go from Here

You can either read this book straight through or skip from chapter to chapter. If you need to brush up on some of the YouTube basics, turn the page. If tips on producing that great YouTube video is what you're looking for, go straight to Part 2. Use this book to find out how you, too, can create and manage great content on the YouTube platform.

# 1

## Getting Started with YouTube

## **IN THIS PART . . .**

Find out how to set up a home on YouTube.

Master all the YouTube basics.

See what's involved in building your own YouTube channel.



- » Understanding the importance of being on YouTube
- » Becoming a viral video star
- » Making your channel unique
- » Producing video for fun and profit

## Chapter **1**

# Making a Home on YouTube

**Y**ouTube is the new business-and-entertainment frontier, which means there's as much excitement and creativity associated with creating and managing a YouTube channel these days as was the case during the early days of television, when the sky seemed the limit. YouTube — like television before it — is caught up in the same adventure that comes from defining its target audience as well as finding out what audiences are willing to watch.

For television, the adventurous nature of its early endeavors could be traced to the fact that TV was so new that audiences really didn't know what they wanted. For YouTube, working in today's market, it's much more about meeting the diverse interests and needs of an audience that attracts more than a billion people from all over the planet.

Anyone who wants to show off their video prowess or share their vision with the world can hang a virtual shingle on YouTube by starting their own channel. Of course, when television began, we humans had more toes than the TV had channels. These days, YouTube has billions of users. That makes running a successful YouTube channel seem a bit more daunting.

Having more than 2 billion monthly active users can make getting noticed on your channel feel like searching for a virtual needle in an online haystack. Yet regardless of the steep increase in competition, the intention has always been the same — get people to watch your channel. But it's not all bad news: You also have an advantage over your counterpart in the 1940s. Back then, it took a great deal of capital to get started on television. Today? Not so much. In fact, if you just want a platform for presenting some of your video work, YouTube can make that possible without your having to fork over one thin dime.

Knowing that YouTube is free to use should reduce some of your worries — at least from a financial perspective. Couple that with the size and diversity of the YouTube audience — and the endless number of topics that interest them — and it's easy to believe that you have a fair chance of success for your channel. That's true, up to a point — if the point is you want your channel to thrive, you need to provide your viewers with compelling content.

Saying that your channel needs to host solid content that people actually want to see seems as glaringly obvious as saying a hamburger joint must make a good burger in order to survive. But content merely makes up the first part of the equation. The rest depends on how you bring viewers to that content: While YouTube is free, video production certainly is not. Unless you want to shell out money from your own pocket, you need to generate some funds to produce high quality content for your channel. In the world of YouTube, one major way to generate such funds is with advertising revenue — and it should come as no surprise that the more viewers you can attract, the greater your potential to generate advertising revenue. How much depends on your needs and ambitions, but increased revenue can lead to better production values, which brings it all back to more revenue.

But before you start worrying about all that money you're going to make, let's take a look at what it takes to get started on a YouTube channel for you or your business.

## The YouTube Phenomenon: Why You Need to Be on YouTube

Like snowflakes on a winter day, or episodes of *The Simpsons*, YouTube has more topics that viewers can appreciate than any human can count. And because you already love making videos and most likely exhibit some expertise or viewpoint to share with the world, YouTube may be your best creative outlet.

On the downside, you're not the only one hoping to get noticed on YouTube. Many others with the very same intention are looking to build an audience for their YouTube channels, too. ("How many?" you may ask. The number exceeds the number of those preapproved credit card applications that plague your mailbox, so we're talking *lots*.)

Your journey on YouTube begins with knowing your strengths. Some users relish documenting the quirks of their existence to the gentle amusement of others. Others have some type of expertise to share. Then you have performers who regard the video hosting site as their personal stage — the list goes on and on. Even businesses realize it's a great place to inform consumers about their products or provide a great level of customer service. Regardless of your passion, a potential audience is waiting for you.

## Audience, audience, audience

Have you ever noticed the repetitive way people describe the most important aspect of a piece of real estate? Yes, we know it's all about location, so much so that real estate agents, among others, feel compelled to say it three times, as though saying it once doesn't get the point across.

Maybe that need for the special emphasis that comes with repetition is justified because, when it comes to success on your YouTube channel, we're of the opinion that saying the word *audience* just once doesn't do justice to its importance. In paying homage to our real estate buddies, we can agree that success for your YouTube channel depends on [drum roll, please] audience, audience, audience!

What's a YouTube audience actually like? You'll find people from all walks of life, and you'll soon discover that they can spend a great deal of time meandering through YouTube's seemingly endless virtual walls, sometimes just entertaining themselves, sometimes educating themselves, sometimes engaging quite passionately with what they see, sometimes letting it all just wash over them. Given the amount of time folks spend on the site, there's a good chance that someone ends up seeing your video. Not a great chance, of course, given that the site has so much content and only so many viewers to watch that content — but still a good chance.

So, how do you move from "good chance" to "great chance"? First and foremost, your success depends on the strength of your content. Right behind strong content, though, you'll find that you need to be a virtual wrangler, capable of bringing to your channel people who may not know anything about you. To do that, you need to know what excites your viewers, what they're looking for in video content, and how they consume what they like. With that information in hand, you can fine-tune your content to better serve your (current or potential) audience.



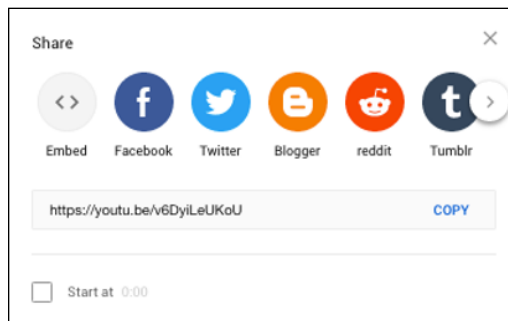
REMEMBER

Gathering information on the viewing habits of your audience is a crucial first step in determining what they want to see and how long they're willing to watch your videos. YouTube makes it easy to gather lots of information about your viewers — YouTube Analytics, covered in Chapter 11, is a big help here — but consulting friends and family about their viewing preferences is sometimes a good place to start.

## Incorporating YouTube into your business and marketing plans

Just like cool sheets on a summer evening, YouTube goes perfectly with social media when it comes to your business and marketing needs. Why not? You already know that your presence on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter keeps you connected with all the right people. Guess what? YouTube can help raise your social media profile as well. (See Figure 1-1.)

**FIGURE 1-1:** Using social media can let people not on YouTube know there's something for them to check out.



By integrating your video content with social media, you can drive interested parties to your channel; your channel, in turn, can point them back to your social media platforms and your contact information. This synergy helps build a strong following, because you can inform potential customers about your business via multiple avenues.



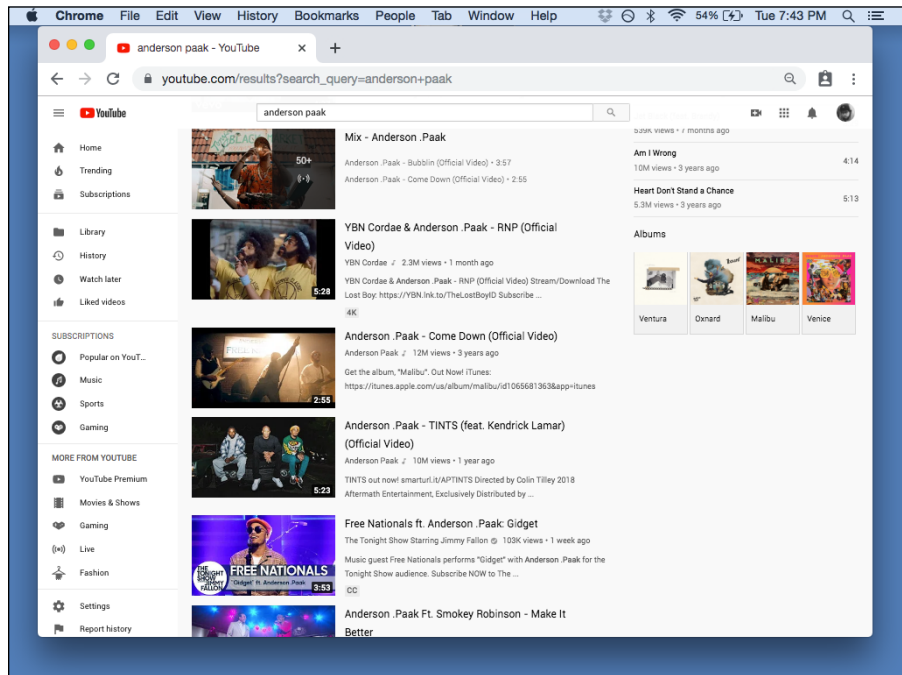
REMEMBER

Video is the perfect partner when it comes to showing products, giving demonstrations, providing tutorials, or showcasing other features designed to increase awareness of your brand. And YouTube is the perfect partner to host your videos.

When coming up with a plan to incorporate your YouTube-based video content into your business and marketing plans, here are some areas to consider:

- » **Give your videos effective titles:** Your video should have clear and succinct titles. The titles should get to the point about your product or service so that people can easily find your video.
- » **Create eye-catching thumbnails:** Make your videos stand out from the crowd. Thumbnails are a great way to catch viewers' attention and compel them to click through.
- » **Add more metadata:** On YouTube, metadata is comprised of the title, video tags, and description of your videos. Coming up with a strong title is a good place to start, but it doesn't end there. You should also add a detailed description of the video, as shown in Figure 1-2, and use as many *keywords* — specific words that are representative of your video's subject matter — as are appropriate for the content. The more information that's included with each video, the easier it is for viewers to find exactly what you have to offer in a Google search.
- » **Include your contact info on the video:** Always add your business or personal information to the video and its description fields, such as email address and social media sites.

**FIGURE 1-2:**  
The strong metadata of these videos allow them to show up on the first page of the search results for this popular artist.



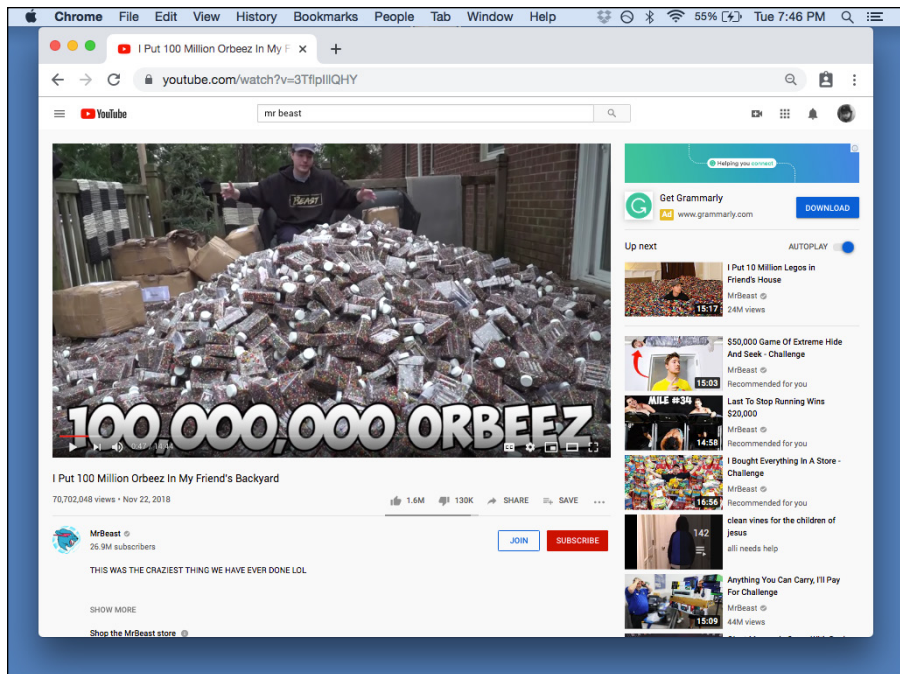
## Becoming a star!

Are you ready for your close-up? Or maybe framing one is your thing. It doesn't matter, because YouTube gives you a platform right up there with radio, film, and television as yet another means of achieving stardom. By doing so, YouTube has created a dedicated community that offers one more way for the world to notice you.

The thought of stardom often leans toward actors and musicians — and the creators behind them. Many have found great success after being discovered on YouTube. (Can you say “Shawn Mendes”?) The rock band Journey found its current lead singer on YouTube. Aerosmith guitarist Joe Perry also found a singer for his other band, The Joe Perry Project.

Actors have also found work by showcasing their clip reels, performances, and auditions. YouTube has made many stars of its own — personalities offering everything from rap parodies to lip-synching to video game analysis and commentary have made a name for themselves on YouTube. MrBeast, to take one example, has been watched by hundreds of millions of viewers. (See Figure 1-3.)

So, proof positive that YouTube can provide a stage big enough to start, and perhaps sustain, a career.



**FIGURE 1-3:** One of MrBeast's more popular videos.