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YouTube as a Career and a Marketing Tool

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Abstract

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The purpose of this thesis is to research the use of YouTube as both a career and as a tool. It addresses topics such as what drives viewers to watch content, what kind of content might be successful and how YouTube can be best used to maximize these efforts.

The research methods include empiric knowledge in conjunction with recent news and articles, YouTube's own information and channels. Analysis tools will also be used and researched.

The findings of the research are vast and open up questions and answers. They open a few major topics. YouTube as a site is among the most popular sites in the world with around two billion users monthly. The site runs with content creators making content. Being a creator can be a challenge. The requirement for success when being a great YouTube creator is consistency and knowledge of one's audience. Content creation is subject to sudden changes and difficult, but with monetization options such as sponsorships, advertisements and donation platforms, it can be a job.

Marketers get quite a lot of popularity and exposure when they associate with creators. The creators' audience then might buy their product. Marketers may also create their own channels which can be used as an effective method of advertising. Creators and marketers alike may make use of analytical tools, which can be used to collect important data about improving their content.

YouTube has been criticized over the use of algorithms, which are necessary for the operations of the site, but also cause problems for the users of the site. The algorithm is programmed to work in a specific way, but sometimes makes mistakes. These mistakes may cause damage that cannot be repaired. These mistakes and oversights in programming may lower the quality of the site for both creators and viewers and even drive away marketers in the worst-case scenario.

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Tiivistelmä

Tekijä: Jakupovic Robert

Työn nimi: YouTube elinkeinona ja markkinoinnin työkaluna

Tutkintonimike: Tradenomi – tietojenkäsittely

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoitus on tutkia YouTubea sekä ammattina että työkaluna. Työssä tutkitaan, mikä ajaa katsojia katsomaan sisältöä, millainen sisältö onnistuu parhaiten, ja kuinka YouTubea voidaan parhaiten käyttää näiden tavoitteiden saavuttamiseen.

Tutkimusmenetelminä toimivat empiirinen tietopohja yhdistettynä viimeaikaisiin uutisiin, artikkeleihin ja YouTuben omiin materiaaleihin sekä kanaviin. Analyysityökaluja tutkitaan ja kokeillaan tarvittaessa.

Opinnäytetyön tulokset ovat vaihtelevia ja nostavat esiin kysymyksiä ja vastauksia. Ne avaavat muutamia isoja pääaiheita. YouTube sivustona on yksi suurimmista maailmassa, keräten noin kaksi miljardia käyttäjää kuussa. Sivusto pyörii sisällöntuottajien tuottamalla sisällöllä. Sisällöntuottajana onnistuminen voi olla hankalaa. Vaatimus onnistumiselle on tuottaa tasaista sisältöä ja tuntea yleisönsä. Sisällöntuotto on hankalaa ja muutoksille altista, mutta hyödyntämällä mainoksia, sponsoreita ja lahjoitusalustoja siitä voi saada ammatin.

Markkinoijat saavat näkyvyyttä ja suosiota tekemällä yhteistyötä sisällöntuottajien kanssa. Sisällöntuottajien yleisö puolestaan voi kiinnostua markkinoijien tuotteista. Markkinoijat voivat myös luoda omia kanavia, jotka toimivat tehokkaina mainostuksen keinoina. Sisällöntuottajat ja markkinoijat voivat käyttää hyväkseen analysointityökaluja, joiden avulla he saavat arvokasta dataa sisällön parantamiseen.

YouTubea on kritisoitu algoritmien käytöstä, jotka ovat tarpeellisia sivuston ylläpitämiseen mutta aiheuttavat myös sivuston käyttäjillä ongelmia. Algoritmi on ohjelmoitu toimimaan tietyllä tavalla, ja tekee joskus virheitä. Virheet voivat aiheuttaa peruuttamatonta tuhoa. Ohjelmointivirheet voivat heikentää katsojien ja sisällöntekijöiden käyttökokemusta ja pahimmassa tapauksessa karkottaa markkinoijat.

Sisällys

1 Overview

This study consists of a proper YouTube income analysis. The first part is the introduction section, which explains YouTube's main terminology and builds the foundation for the rest of the text. The analysis explains some difficult YouTube terminology and gives a better understanding of YouTube and the creators who use the platform. Then the study explains the process of monetization. It also explains the way YouTube is used as a means of making a living or marketing one's products, as well as other revenue streams for YouTube creators. These above points then come together in a large analysis segment. This segment focuses on creating a marketable video, both from the perspective of a YouTube creator as well as a marketer.

Since the study is mainly analytical, there is a segment for analysis tools as well. These tools can be used to enhance the YouTube experience and are essential for marketing purposes as well as creators to analyze their own content. The last thing covered is YouTube scandals and related issues. These are issues that directly affect creators and, in some cases, they also may have affected advertisers and marketers. This should give insight into how fragile the system can be at times.

2   YouTube for Dummies: Statistics

YouTube is the biggest and most well-known video sharing website of the modern world. Monthly, it has a whopping 1.9 billion active users, reaching out to a third of the entire Internet. Today, people from young children all the way to the elderly use it to view content they like. The majority of users are males at about 60% of all users. The majority age group on YouTube today is ages 18-49. Looking at the future, however, people aged 35-55 are actually the fastest growing demographic. [1.] [2.]

About 300 hours of video content is uploaded on YouTube per minute. In comparison, over a hundred million hours is watched per day, reaching over 3 billion a month. In a single day these days, up to 5 billion videos are watched. Notice that this doesn't mean watched from end to finish. A surprisingly high 20% of the people watching a video will leave within 10 seconds of watching it. This means that a strong start that makes an impression is very important. The watch time – that is the time people spend watching videos – is also experiencing a fantastic 60% yearly growth. [1.] [2.]

YouTube is the second largest search engine in the world. The largest is, of course, YouTube's parent company Google. YouTube currently has around 50 million content creators and more than five billion combined videos. The annual cost for Google to upkeep YouTube is currently over six billion dollars, but the revenue of Google is 13 billion. YouTube also has quite a bit of drama and problems. Many of these have something to do with YouTube's algorithms and automated processes. Some of these have to do with advertisers; others have to do with incorrect claims against videos, causing de-monetization. Sometimes the algorithms can even cause incorrect channel shutdowns. [1.] [2.]

YouTube is very widely-used in Finland, to the extent where it may be found surprising. It's the sixth most visited site in Finland. It has about 2.3 million individual Finnish users a month, and 581,000 non-individual visitors a day. Each visitor spends around 14 minutes in YouTube per visit. The content Finns like does not differ from the norm too much. The exceptions are, of course, portions of Finnish culture as well as Finnish content creators. For example, Darude and the Dudesons are popular worldwide, but especially amongst Finns. Finnish people doing well in sports or racing will probably also attract more Finnish viewers. [3.]

2.1   Basic terminology about categories

YouTube has categorized its videos into multiple different categories. Understanding said categories will also help understand what type of content is popular. It will also determine the type of marketing or ad that will work. These range from gaming to auto & vehicles to education to people and blogs. The most popular universal categories between all people are gaming, music, vlog content and comedy. These are all for rather obvious reasons, as they apply to all genders and ages. Gaming has massive popularity among males in particular which is why it's still amongst the most popular categories.

Categories like beauty and style are more popular among women. Categories like sports and auto are more popular among men, respectively. Gaming is far more popular among men, while music is slightly more popular among women. These days there are also new types of popular videos that don't entirely make up their own category but are worth a mention. These are review and unboxing-type videos that are used as suggestive material for, e.g, making a purchase. Another video type on the rise is memes, which have virally expanded all over the internet.

Other new types of content on the rise are, for example, best of- or how-to type of videos. How-to videos are often tutorials or showcases for completing a certain action. Best-of is a format for making one's own list for something; it could be related to gaming, food or another area of interest. This format is also growing in popularity. Another popular video type is negativity, callouts and drama. Though it sounds negative on paper, these videos gain views very quickly and have become a whole category of content. These videos gain popularity from peoples' curiosity and hunger for this type of confrontation, though they're not so good for monetization or advertisements. They are, however, rather certain view magnets. [4.]

2.2   Content creators, viewers, likes and subscriptions

Content creators create content, that viewers watch. This generates views, dislikes, likes and even potentially subscriptions. This is YouTube's cycle. A content creator is anyone who creates content. This term is usually associated with at least some manner of professionalism or success. It is also often associated with creating a constant, flowing stream of content at regular intervals. Content creators bring their own unique talents, personality or lifestyle to the table. Some even make their living on YouTube.

Views are counted by YouTube and displayed on the side of the video. Views use one of YouTube's many algorithms in order to be counted. Each click on a video should count as a view, although this may not always be the case. YouTube has not communicated on this very much. As for subscriptions, they are done by people who enjoy the entire channel and are the ultimate sign of success or failure in YouTube, alongside with views.

Subscriber and view counts increase and decrease constantly. However, the view count has its own oddities in place because of YouTube's algorithms. The viewer count should always update when the video is loaded – however, nowadays, this is only the case if the video has below 300 views. After this, a different algorithm comes to play. [5.] [6.]

The view count is frozen at this mark. These view count freezes can happen at other view counts too, but the 301 mark is especially infamous. The algorithm doing this only means that the views are being validated. YouTube takes problems such as spam botting and malware seriously. They won't allow people to obtain views using them – this is the reason for the freeze, and also the reason why all views are not always counted with 100% accuracy. [5.] [6.]

However, the true nature of how views are counted after the 300 mark **and otherwise as well** is still not quite known. Perhaps YouTube wants to keep this information for themselves, as it could be used by these malware users or spam bot makers to get past the algorithm. In any case, since view count is used to pay money to the creators, such an algorithm is needed. [5.] [6.]

3   Monetization in YouTube

Money is, obviously, very important to YouTube itself, as well as the content creators there. It's the main factor and driving force behind the whole site. To monetize content, it must meet certain requirements and criteria. The content must not contain shocking or disturbing content like nudity or extreme violence – this is one of the more obvious requirements. The content must also be advertiser-friendly and generally speaking, created by the creator. The creator must also follow YouTube guidelines. [7.]

3.1   How it works

To create anything or think about monetization one needs to create a channel. Depending on the needs of the creator and size of operations, a **brand channel** may be needed**.** One Google account may have multiple channels under it. As for brand channels, one brand channel can be accessed through multiple different google accounts.

Brand channels also have functionality that regular channels do not. One of these is channel customization. Through customizing the layout of one's channel, one can make it look unique or even integrate it with a brand. Special widgets may be added and the channel can be to the brand's own web page. One also gains the access to things such as YouTube Analytics, and has the option to add a third-party analytic tool. Chapter 4 of this thesis will cover the creation of a marketable channel further. [8.]

The very first thing that a creator has to do is to enable monetization. This can be done from one's own channel -> Creator Studio -> Channel -> Status and features -> under monetization, clicking "Enable." One must also follow the YouTube terms of service, which have guidelines on things like copyrights and YouTube having certain rights to do things, like all ToS (Terms of Conditions) have. In addition, to start earning money it is required to have a certain subscriber count first. [7.] [9.]

In order to make any money on YouTube, any user must be a part of YouTube partner program. The program is available in most countries. All the policies of the program must be followed, which is a constant with all YouTube monetization-related matters. 1,000 subscribers and 4,000

public watch hours in the last 12 months are also required. Lastly, an Adsense account is required. [10.]

Earning money works in a few ways: Ads, which are managed by AdSense and have their own rules. These will be explained in more detail in sub-chapter 3.2. Secondly, it is possible to show-case one's own personal merchandise on their channel, which will also be mentioned later. Thirdly, there is Super Chat, which is used in YouTube livestreams. This feature allows viewers to donate live and leave a message that is highlighted in the chat. The messages are limited to this live chat, which isn't used in regular video uploading, however. [8.]

Amongst the last options are channel memberships, which are used by subscribers who want extra perks and are willing to take the support to the next level beyond subscribing. The final choice is revenue gained through YouTube Premium. People who are a part of YouTube Premium and watch the content will net the creator extra revenue on top of the regular ad revenue. [8.] [11.]

It's also not uncommon for companies or organizations to have their own YouTube channels. They can be used to showcase new products, advertise them or have discussions with the maker or developer of the product. These are obviously different from creators, as they aren't exactly in-dividuals creating original content for a living. However, these kinds of channels are very im-portant to understand the meaning of YouTube marketing.

3.2   AdSense

Adsense is the primary means to monetize content. An Adsense account must be made and linked to a YouTube channel or multiple channels. The same Adsense account can be linked to multiple YouTube accounts, but only one Adsense account is permitted. It's also possible to make the website's ad spaces available and paste ad code there, meaning that AdSense can work out-side of YouTube. In this case, advertisers bid on the ad space and the highest bidder wins. Notice that Ad blocking software will always block the earning of revenue for that person using the soft-ware. [14.]

 Adsense also has its own terms and conditions. First, it prohibits the creator to view their own ads. It also prohibits "stimulated" or non-authentic views, such as ones obtained from constantly clicking the ad or use of bots. It is prohibited to have things like nudity or racism in any content.

It is also prohibited to offer compensation for viewers in exchange for their view. Sites shouldn't contain malware, redirect users to other weird sites or have popups. They must also not have anything to do with counterfeit goods. Note that not complying by these standards means that the Adsense account will be disabled, and with that, so is the monetization of any video content. [15.]

3.3 Advertiser-friendliness

When discussing YouTube marketing, this is one of the key points. Advertisers themselves always choose what content they want their adverts to appear in. Any content, then, has to apply to these guidelines. Advertiser-friendly content must not be graphic, contain nudity, have overly racial context or association with drugs. But it's not always so black and white; for example, educational videos on drugs may be eligible for advertising. On the other hand, even if the video is not inappropriate or overly graphic, but focuses on a very recent tragedy or issue, it may be ineligible. [16.]

Violence and inappropriate language are also accepted depending on the context: video games that contain violence may be eligible, as well as small amounts of profanity meant for humour's sake. On the other hand, recent events of violence or tragedy may be ineligible even if there is appropriate context, such as news.

Hateful content is almost always ineligible, with very few exceptions where it is purely satire such as a comedy show. Also, demeaning content or (cyber)bullying may be ineligible. However, on that note it should be said that drama-related, callout content IS on the increase. Sexual content is mostly only allowed for educational purposes. Use of family entertainment characters in inappropriate context is always ineligible, even in the case of satire. Basically, look at every situation differently, and look for these criteria. Then look at the context that is being presented.

3.4   Content ID System

YouTube protects copyrights using a Content ID-system. Creators have to prove their executive ownership of certain content. This information then is put into a database that is used to as a place for comparison to the content in all YouTube videos. Automated algorithms make the connection, and then issue the claims. [12.]

Even in the case of a gaming video uploader, videos may violate a copyright in some way. The most common type is music or intros inside a game. Some publishers may also have limitations on what can be shared by content creators. This can affect monetization greatly, as the affected video may be blocked, or the revenue shared by the maker of the claim. However, many types of content, such as gameplay or "best-of" compilations usually cannot be blocked. [12.]

Claims can be resolved by simply agreeing with them. Other methods include muting the audio, which is rather common because the reason is often the music. The claim may also be disputed if one deems it was unjustified or was given in error. In some cases, the revenue may also be shared with the claimer. Sometimes issuing false or erroneous claims can even make the company itself look bad, but these occurrences are very rare. [13.]

The content ID system serves to protect the copyright holders, which innately is a good thing. However, the system has also had some major backlash. The content ID system is often criticized for being inaccurate or claiming a large number of videos from nowhere for seemingly stupid reasons. Since these videos can be what puts food on the table for some creators, having this happen can be serious. YouTube has gotten a lot of criticism for using algorithms, particularly lately in 2018 and 2019. Perhaps YouTube should consider moderating the system more with humans than robots, though this obviously takes up valuable resources. Sometimes the blame has also been directed towards the company that issued the claim. Let us not forget that many claims are still legitimate and correct.

3.5   De-monetization

Demonetization occurs when video content does not comply with the rules or has too many advertiser-unfriendly elements. In all simplicity, demonetized content does not make any money. Sometimes demonetization may also occur simply because advertisers don't want to associate

with the type of content that is being put out. Some demonetization issues are covered later on in chapter six.

3.6 Other revenue streams

There are a few other means to get revenue. These methods are used by content creators who have already made a name for themselves and require more effort, but have greater payoff in the end. These are sponsorships, donation platforms and the selling of themed merch. They are listed below in the mentioned order.

3.6.1 Sponsorships

One of the most prominent, but also the most difficult ways to gain revenue is to get sponsors. Sponsorships are things offered by companies that want a creator to promote a product of some sort. Common examples are new game releases or gaming chairs. For sponsored videos, a few things apply.

The video must also have information in the description saying it is an ad. The ad may also be played as a separate outro, for example, with links to the advertiser's page in the description. The YouTuber will be paid in different ways: how many people visited the website, or just how many people watched the video and saw the ad. The money earned from the advertiser alone can be worth the same as half a million views, so these videos will make significantly more revenue.

Sponsorships for things considered controversial, such as betting, may end up backfiring as well. An example of this is a Lithuanian content creator by the name of Dovydas, known in the internet as "A Friend." He accepted a sponsorship worth a great deal in order to advertise a betting site with games such as dice and slots. The site was involved in BitCoin as well, causing the fan base to react harshly. The effects are still remembered – and felt – today.

Otherwise, having an audience that a sponsor is interested in may have an influence in obtaining a sponsor. Uploading consistent, quality content also helps. Aside from getting sponsorship

money, smaller creators may also receive the sponsor's item free of charge if they promote it. This is especially often true with gaming chairs and headphones.

Finding sponsors can be demanding. Emailing is one way to attract sponsors. One place to get access to sponsors is creator marketplaces and networks. These include places such as Channelpages, Famebit and Grapevine logic. Grapevine is meant for bigger creators. The requirement to use it is 10,000 subscribers. It allows an account to be created, which is used to pitch content to a list of potential sponsors. If this is successful, a deal may then be created, and the creator should start creating the content. The process ends by posting through the Grapevine platform. The other two are similar, only available to people with less subscribers. [17.] [18.]

3.6.2 Donation platforms

Other means of revenue are donation platforms, mainly Patreon. They may be simple tips or donations. Patreon has perks that the content creator offers for those who participate by pledging. There are often multiple reward or perk levels at different monetary tiers – five dollars, ten and so on. Because pledges are paid monthly, Patreon can be a rather stable source of income. However, in order to achieve this, the perks must be interesting. They must incentivize people to continue pledging and offer something meaningful to the audience. Patreon takes 5% of the pledges, while another 5% goes into transaction fees. The creator, then, keeps around 90% of all the pledges. [19.]
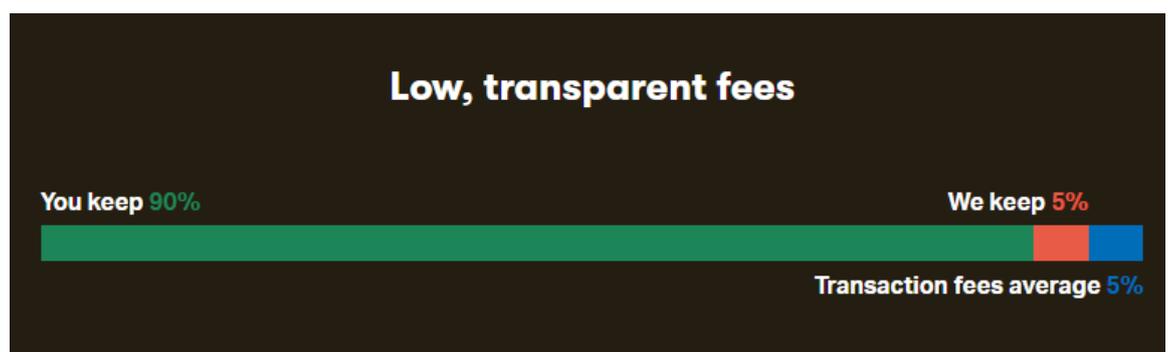

Image 1.

Patreon also has guidelines in place. These do not differ much from the ones specified under "Advertiser-friendliness" but there are a few notable mentions worth making. First of all, Patreon may only be used by the original creator; it cannot be created for somebody else, nor linked to

somebody else's activity. So-called "non-activity", where **not doing** something is offered as a reward, is not allowed. [20.]

Bullying, harassment and hate speech are forbidden as well, with no tolerance towards them and especially if they have a physical, face-to-face element to them. A notable exception is feuds or arguments between two people where both sides are taking shots and it's not just about one person or group harassing another. Especially public feuds may be left alone by the Patreon team. But as always, if they escalate too far, they will be stopped. [20]

Adult content is often limited and always flagged as such. Content flagged as adult content does not appear in Patreon searches. Sexual or fetish content is almost always disallowed. Graphic violence is often disallowed, though for some purposes such as education, it may be allowed. Furthermore, special cases such as graphic content related to fictional matter, such as TV-shows, may be allowed. Having a World War survivor speak of their experiences, even in a graphic manner, may also be allowed. However, sexual content, even if only animated and fictional, is still not allowed. [20.]

Lastly, spamming is not allowed. This includes large numbers of personal messages asking for support, as well as promoting in other peoples' pages. Misleading patrons to grow the patronage numbers is also disallowed. A good perspective is to be respectful, be true to oneself and have common sense. [18.]

3.6.3   Themed merchandise

Lastly, some people may sell themed apparel and accessories in a shop environment. The products can also be showcased on a YouTube channel. One of the most popular places to put merchandise up for sale is Teespring. It allows for the creation of around twenty different categories of products. The most common product is t-shirts and mugs. But there are also stickers, posters, socks, pillows and all kinds of other things. Teespring is even used by actual entrepreneurs, but YouTube creators often have a relationship with it because of its simplicity. They may be associated with a logo or image that is easily printable on a shirt. [21.]

To begin selling products, research into the target market is needed. After this the design can be supplied. Teespring has a base cost for all products. This is subtracted from the selling price that is chosen, and the rest is profit. The service itself is also free to use. Teespring also can help with

driving sales with different tools. They have a marketplace where many people search for products. They can also offer to drive sales with listing ads, but this service costs money. For example, for a single t –shirt the base cost is 10 euro and the added cost per order for this service is 6.75€. This is quite a lot of money to give up on profits, though it can increase the sales numbers significantly. It's also good for big orders, as this cost is paid per order, not per product ordered. [21] [22.]

4   How to create a marketable video

So, how does one create a marketable presence? Here the study will go through some steps useful to both creators and those who use YouTube as a marketing tool themselves. All that was learned in the previous chapters is used here to make the analysis. First, YouTube should always be used with a brand account; this enables all the different options and customizations. It also enables multiple Google accounts to be used for channel upkeep, if this is necessary. This analysis should be read after the previous chapters, especially advertiser-friendliness parts. [23.]

4.1   Channel customization

Setup some channel art that highlights the unique personality behind the channel; this is very eye-catching and is always seen by people who want to check out the channel. A logo of the company could go here if this is a channel belonging to a business. Otherwise it could be anything; an emoji or some fanart associated with the channel. It should be noted that there are many mobile users. As such, the art should be the size that fits any screen. The same applies to the channel's icon, choosing one that suits the channel. [23.]

It is also worth setting up a channel trailer that tells people about all the basic information they might need about the channel or the person behind it. The trailer could even be changed period-ically to highlight the latest content. Next, sometimes it's good to request a custom YouTube URL; though the requirement is to have at least 100 subscribers, be at least 30 days old and have com-pleted some of the steps outlined here, mainly having uploaded channel art. The decision should be made with consideration as the custom URL cannot be changed. [23.] [24.]

4.2   Video customization: Metadata, description, title and thumbnail

Before moving on to the videos themselves, it is important to "play the algorithm." what this means is that it is in one's best interest to understand how YouTube's algorithm works. One of the ways to achieve this is by optimizing the metadata of videos. This will make the videos appear as search results more effectively. Appearing in search results is very important in what is the

world's second largest search engine. Playing the algorithm and metadata also includes researching keywords and continuing to create consistent, quality content. This only causes the videos to appear in search results even more often and more consistently. The content may be recommended for the viewer to be watched in the side bar as well. This metadata-based logic is applied into titles, descriptions and similar things. These things and the words included in them appear as search results. [25.]

The first point to make is titling. When creating a title, the important keywords of the video should be included in it. The title should also be drawing in the viewers. The truth often is that people are more likely to click on links that are in capital letters and full of exclamation marks and promise a great deal all at once. These are sometimes called clickbait titles. While using these tips may be handy, clickbait titles should be used carefully. They may come across as obnoxious and even drive people away if the behaviour is constant. People coming to see the video, then immediately leaving is also not a good thing. The title should also be no more than 60 characters long to avoid truncation. [23.] [25.]

The same logic applies to the thumbnail of the video. The user sees this image before they see the rest of the video. Most of YouTube's successful videos have a custom thumbnail; this is what the user sees before they see the rest of the video. Choosing a thumbnail is important. It would be wise to make a highlight of the video into the thumbnail. Again though, be careful with over-extensive clickbait behaviour. If the thumbnail's contents are not even in the video, people may be confused or annoyed by it. [23.] [25.]

The video description should have possible additional information about the things in the video, such as links to spreadsheets or other outside resources. If nothing else, at least it should have something witty to say. It can also be used to link to previous videos or content, indirectly being an advertisement to other content. It could also include shout-outs for other creators, allowing for collaboration opportunities. Furthermore, it should be noted that the description's two first lines are used by the search engine, allowing the channel to appear higher in search results with clever play. [23.] [25.]

4.3   Video customization: Intro, outro, annotations and links

The next thing to note is adding an intro and an outro. The intro is especially important to any kind of channel. About 20% of people leave the video during the first seconds, so making a strong

first impression is important. The intro can also be used as a showcase of what is to come later in the episode, leaving the viewer in a cliff-hanger situation. If the intro is not good enough, this will show in views and view time. The intro can also be used as a product showcase for brand channels that are based on a product. The intro can even be music or an animation that always plays for that content creator's video, making it sort of like the mark of that person.

The outro is next. Many videos have a repeating outro that is the same every time, or the outro is reserved for thanks and shout-outs. This is a smart way to go about it, as it makes the outro skippable but also interesting in some cases. The outro may also contain links to the creator's other content, explained better below.

There used to be a few methods used by YouTube in the past. Adding annotations, direct links to the video, used to be a method to incorporate links into the video. These were subscribe-links, cards for other videos for the channel or even more information about something discussed in the video. However, in May 2017 annotations were discontinued. The reason given was that one, the system was unfriendly to mobile users who were a growing demographic, and two, it was considered obnoxious. Existing annotations continued to exist until January 2019, where even they vanished, ending this feature once and for all. [26.]

Despite this, there is still a way to add a link to a video, and this is particularly used in the outro segments. This method is called cards. What it means is a card will show up at the end of the video, being a link directly to the channel's other video(s). This quickly became a great outro tactic to get people to watch more. cards and end screen can be added from the video manager, by choosing the small drop down arrow next to a video and choosing the end screen option. The same place is used to add cards. [23.]

4.4   Video customization: Transcripts, playlists, tags and categories

The next hint is to add subtitles and see transcripts. Transcripts are basically videos but in written form. They can be used for multiple things, such as searching for quotes within videos and creating subtitles automatically. The transcript may even help to find the video via search. This is because the search engine uses it the same way as the description and the title, though at a lower priority. Subtitles are useful for people with bad English, or those with bad hearing. They also help with optimizing the video for search results, just like transcripts. This is because metadata can be included in multiple languages, and translations are the way to do this. [23.] [25.]

It's also worth putting the videos into a playlist**.** This is a fantastic way to put videos with the same theme in one place. If someone watches a video and likes it, they can find all the related videos in the same playlist. This is used often for playthroughs of games. Someone who likes the first few parts may end up watching the whole list.

Lastly this analysis moves into tags and categories. Tags are, once again, a way to highlight main keywords. It also associates the video with other similar videos, which means it may appear if people watch these related videos. Always tag the most important words first. As for categories, you choose between many different categories, as I already specified in chapter 2.1. Howeverit would be wise to sort the video in the right category.

4.5   Tips for video script and shooting

When thinking about the all-important video script, it is important to have a clear goal. The idea could be to showcase a product, or it could be about giving hints on a new mechanic in a game. Usually, each video has only one goal, or at most two or three if it's a longer video. Once the goal is set, it is important to think about location and time skips. If the video is a vlog, how does the viewer understand changes in location? For example, a creative way of doing this could be placing the camera somewhere, then appearing in the shot from the side. There could also be a fade-in and fade-out edited into the video to signal a change in location or time.

Other important factors are camera position, motion and so forth. If showcasing a product, it should be shown from all angles. Putting something closer to the camera and placing another object behind it makes that object look bigger. This could be a tactic to use. Use of a tripod or another flat surface can prevent the camera from being wobbly. And as mentioned before, show-casing items should be done at multiple angles, distances and so forth. Also, it is always smart to film more than what is needed, so there is more material to choose from.

5   YouTube analytic tools

After researching how to make a marketable video, it is time to look how well the video did. And the best way to do this with channel analysis tools. There are specifically created tools that help with analysis content and channel livelihood. There are a multitude of tools for YouTube, aimed at the creators. These tools' main purpose is to offer user analysis. The tools can offer information about user viewing habits, monitor their traffic and the length they watch videos, and so on. One of the most prominent uses is for targeted marketing purposes. The tools also allow the creators to better match their content towards their users' preferences. They also allow the creators to scope out their competition, and perhaps even reel in new users. [27.]

5.1   YouTube Analytics

The most widely-used and well-known YouTube analytical tool is YouTube Analytics. Analytics can provide insight in many ways using its built-in tools and interfaces. This insight can be used for careful targeted marketing. Using this information correctly will be paramount for monetizing content as well. YouTube analytics has a few useful tools: Views tool, audience retention tool and subscriber shares tool. [28.]

5.1.1   Views Tool

The views tool is used to find out detailed information and reports about views. This could be the channel's total views, or the views for individual videos. The tool can also show unique amounts of viewers, if that information is required. There's also geographical analysis, giving an idea where the views originate from. Lastly, there is a date option, which is used to see what days got the most views. This can be useful for seasonal-type of content. Using this information will help the creator to direct their content better towards the targeted audience. Below you can see a simple views report. [28.]
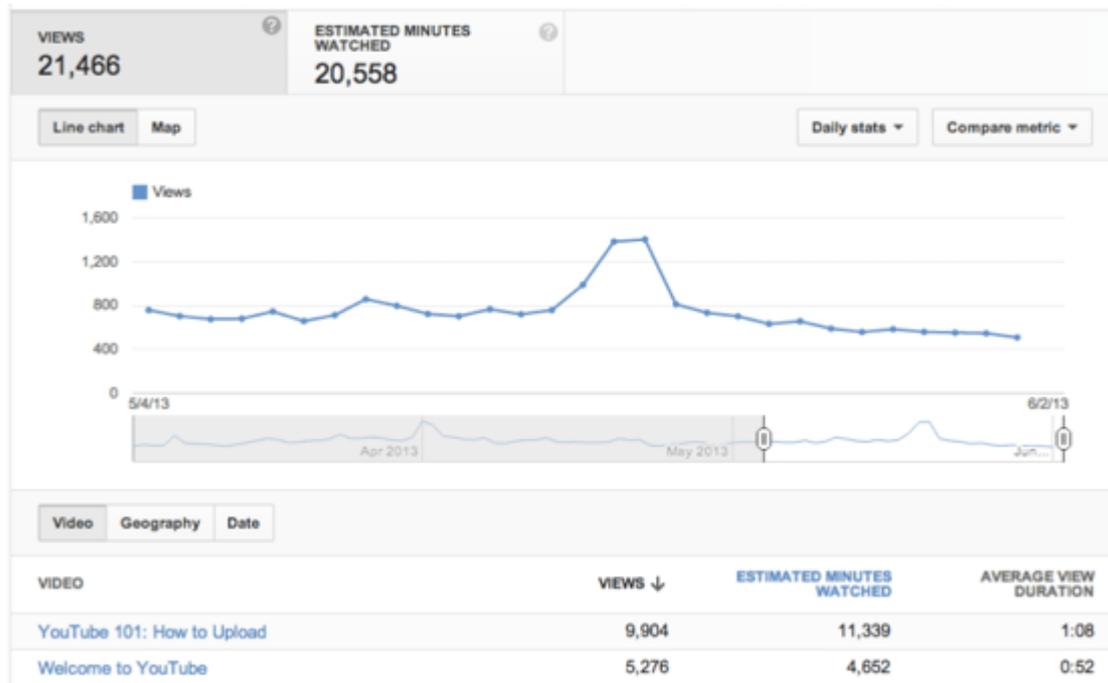
Image 2. Above is a simple views report. [28.]

5.1.2   Subscriber shares and Audience retention tools

Subscriber shares tool is used for finding out information about how many viewers are sub-scribed. Its purpose is mostly to tell the user about the channel's target audience. However, it can also discover how they react. For example, it will show subscribers gained or even lost after a certain video. If a video resulted in a great backlash, the extent of this can be seen with Subscrib-ers and shares. Like with views, geographical information and dates can be seen, too. Below you can see a window depicting Subscriber shares. [28.]
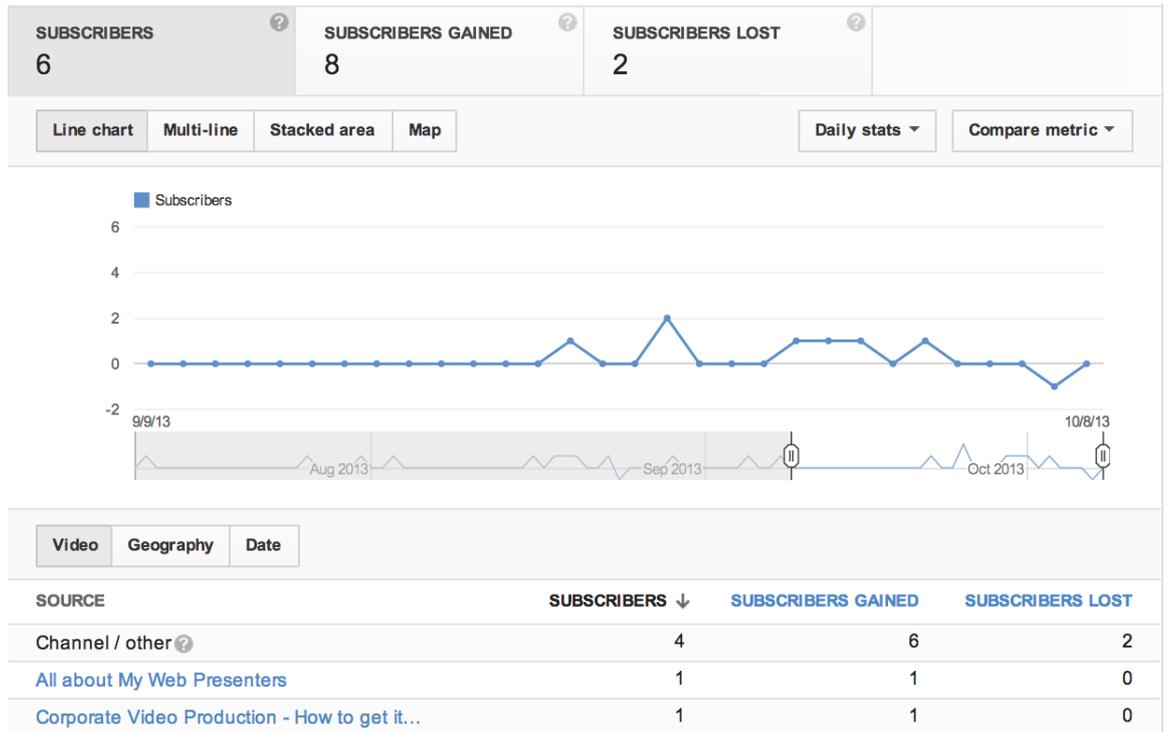
Image 3. A subscriber shares window. [28.]

Lastly there is the audience retention tool. It is used to discover how long one's viewers watched their videos. If this time is very short, the video may need a better intro or is just generally not up to par. Clickbait titles and thumbnails often also have a much shorter view time. Use this information to improve the videos where this figure is lowest.

5.2 3rd party analysis tools

There are also 3rd party tools for YouTube analysis. They can, in some cases, offer comprehensive social media analysis that extends beyond YouTube. They often have areas they focus on and claim to be better at than their competitors. They have more options and depth, but come with a cost.

5.2.1 Unmetric

Unmetric is a company offering tools and capabilities for large-term social media analyis. They offer AI-powered insights, powered by their own AI, Xia. Their special qualities include the creation of graphs and adding insights and highlights to them. This allows the user to gain information quickly, and in plain English. They can also help create, for example, better campaigns. [29.]

Unmetric is also popular for its comparison tool, allowing one to scope out their competition especially with social media. This feature is no different when used with YouTube. This may potentially allow the user to come on top and even be able to direct their content towards something their competitors' viewers like. The AI, Xia, can also send alerts and notifications if their competitor is doing something special. There's also the ability to even compare oneself to the field's biggest names included. This can be used to see what they did right – or what the user didn't. [29.]

Unmetric also offers a wide variety of other services, including the ability to quickly compile reports. But all of these great features come at a cost; plans are starting at 1,000 dollars a month, with customised pricing being available only through email. In all plans, unlimited users are included and there is no restrictions on audience size. [29.]

5.2.2 Openbridge

Another good tool for YouTube analysis and insights is Openbridge. Openbridge does many of the things the other tools did, such as obtaining information about views. Their specialty, however, is the YouTube Channel Insights data bridge. This is a very affordable package, starting at 79 euros a month. [30.] [31.]

The package allows a channel to be selected, then data insights can be collected from it. This includes subscriber reactions to new things and patterns or trends concerning its content. This information can be used to optimize it and make it even better. The data insight collection process is wholly automated. [31.]

By using Openbridge, access is gained into many data points (of geographic, performance and behavioural nature) about the channel. It also includes the ability to generate custom reports.

Furthermore, data from YouTube Analytics can be linked here and used in conjunction with Open-bridge's data. This is an exceedingly valuable feature if used correctly. [31.]

5.2.3   Vidooly

The last 3rd party tool covered here is also the cheapest: Vidooly. Its normal version costs only 9 dollars and pro version 29 dollars a month per video channel. What is offers is mostly the same as other tools, but it does have some high points. First of all, there is tag analysis, which informs about successful tags on the video. Secondly is the Vidooly YouTube keyword tool, which works hand in hand with tag analysis by providing users with good choices to use as tags. This can then increase success with using these to gain an advantage. After all this study has been quite adamant about the importance of playing the search algorithm. [32.]

They also offer audience insights and competitor tracking, quite like the previous few tools. Audience insight tools help with understanding the channel's audience. It can even be used to build a new audience. There is also a centralized management interface that can be used to view all social media channels, useful since many creators have presences all around the social media. Vidooly's place as a jack of all trades-type of tool that is so cheap should not be underestimated. [32.] [33.]

6   Recent problems with YouTube

As of late, there have been multiple problems with YouTube. They either have caused friction between YouTube and the creators, or even threatened them. Many of these have affected monetization. They have often hurt creators, but may also have had an effect on advertisers or marketers.

6.1   The algorithm and child exploitation scandals

As the study has stated, different algorithms, also known as bots, determine many things in YouTube. Because of the lack of human touch, there have been major scandals or other issues that have to do with automated processes. Creators then become upset because their livelihood is under attack yet no human is reviewing the situation. There are several examples, both specific and general.

One big topic of controversy has been kid videos and child abuse material on both YouTube and Google's search engine. In 2013, Google made modifications to their search engine to reduce the amount of child abuse in the search results. While this is interesting in its own right, this study will focus on the scandals that arose around YouTube. These scandals have happened despite the efforts of Google in 2013.

In late 2017, there was a major scandal involving YouTube kids as well as just kid categories on YouTube itself. This crisis was about bizarre, inappropriate videos passing past the algorithm or even being pushed by it. These videos would be a mix of animation and fun characters, but also disturbing things like destruction, blood or even sexual acts. These were all kinds of absurd things from Spider-Man urinating on Frozen characters to a dead Mickey Mouse. This made many people feel like YouTube kids simply wasn't a safe place for kids to be in. The reason the videos were there was mostly due to lack of human moderation, as well as the algorithm pushing videos with shock value. [34.]

This caused some major backlash, having people criticize YouTube for over-use of algorithms. Josh Golin of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood even said the following quote: "Algorithms are not a substitute for human intervention, and when it comes to creating a safe environment for children, you need humans." What's even worse is that generally even today, after all these

scandals ended, many kids watch the same videos over and over again. And this meant they were exposed to that content multiple times. This was just one of the many examples where the algorithm went wrong. [34.] [35.]

YouTube claimed only a very small percentage of negative videos are getting through the algorithm. They also said that the massive number of videos the website sees is impossible to moderate. However, it is also quite obvious that the algorithm that is being used is pushing videos with shock value – these being the disturbing ones. Therefore, in the author's personal opinion, some level of adjustment would be necessary for the algorithm. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the algorithm also did many things right. But as usual with mistakes, people tend to focus on the negatives. As they should too, in this case.

A community named ElsaGate that is devoted to finding and reporting child videos that are inappropriate was involved in finding and reporting these videos. Prior to this, it was a conspiracy-filled subsection of the popular Reddit website. As a positive out of all this, the community got a lot of recognition and the whole incident became known as the "ElsaGate incident". Something positive that also came out of this was the fact that using cartoon and family friendly characters in inappropriate context is now harder. [36.]

There was another similar incident with content related to child exploitation in 2019, but this was different. There was a major problem with YouTube's algorithms once again where videos with children in provocative poses were being pushed and recommended to a group. This was a group of rather questionable individuals, which is to say, borderline pedophiles. The comment sections of these videos were used to spread this illegal content even further. [37.]

This discovery was made by Matt Watson, a former creator. He showed how linking together certain keywords would link to videos with this content that featured children. There were many people timestamping the videos for poses or other provocative situations. The videos themselves didn't contain nudity etc. but were being used as a pedophiles' playground. Watson made the following rather powerful statement: "Youtube's recommended algorithm is facilitating pedophiles' ability to connect with each-other, trade contact info, and link to actual child pornography in the comments". He also expressed how he could start brand-new accounts and get access to this predators' loop in just a few minutes and a few clicks. Needless to say, this was a big deal. [37.]

The problem here wasn't just the algorithm pushing the strange content. The video publishers were often suspicious themselves, and with a comment section full of even crazier material. It

was questioned why the videos were even allowed to stay for so long to begin with. People also questioned why the channel wasn't banned. It was simply very easy to see the warning signs. Many problematic users also got away without being banned, so the issue persists even if action happens to be taken. This is yet another problem that is created by the lack of human moderation.

Of course, there is another side of the story. Creators such as Daniel Keem, also known as Keem-star, agreed with the point Watson made but not the method. Eion, of the channel Nerd City, gave the same opinion. These people basically had a less critical opinion of YouTube's part in all of this. They said that YouTube is already doing what they can and that the issue is very wide-spread. Individual creators shouldn't be analyzing such a topic and the best thing to do about child abuse is to simply report it. These people wanted to express their worry over the advertisers disappearing as well. [37.]

In 2019, there was yet another issue related to child exploitation. And in the center of it all was, once again, the algorithm. This time it was different, however. This incident had nothing to do with actual child exploitation, but was instead a false positive. Multiple YouTubers had their entire channels taken down seemingly out of nowhere. These channels were playing the mobile game, Pokemon GO and were family-friendly. So what happened? [38.]

The reason for the takedowns was the word "CP", which referred to "Combat Power" in this context. However, it also stands for "child pornography", which is why the algorithm made the false connection. The same happened before as well, with the same "CP" abbreviation being the reason for the confusion. Other contexts where it happened included, but was not limited to, Club Penguin and even people in racing.

This sparked some heavy criticism that the issue escalated to the point of channel deletion, but nobody apparently reviewed the case to see the false positive. A YouTube representative later commented that they indeed made the wrong call, allowing the uploaders to appeal the decisions made and promised that YouTube would re-review the videos. The channels were also brought back up.

6.2   Copyright ransom and problems

There is another problem with YouTube's automatized processes. This is misuse of the content ID, copyright system. Some people have used the system's automatic nature for negative effect.

This abuse consists of people submitting fake copyright flags on videos. This is usually done in an attempt to harass or "troll" somebody maliciously. There are even rare cases on companies using this to block content that is under fair use, which is obviously not trolling behavior but is still questionable. This is what disputing content ID claims meant earlier; there are times this really happens.

These malicious, trolling methods of sending copyright flags even escalated to the point of ransom. Getting multiple strikes can cause great problems for the creator as the blocked videos won't generate revenue. Three strikes would see the channel removed. A few malicious individuals then demanded money or BitCoin as a ransom, or they would give another strike. If the money or BitCoin or other ransom was paid, they would cancel the strikes, or not give the third final strike. [39.]

This has resulted in some rather ridiculous claims, such as a video filled with only white noise being claimed by four sources. There are a number of reasons for this. One, the system is rather easy to abuse. It's not particularly hard to issue the claims and the automated process does its thing. Two, the system is rather easy for the claimants but hard for the creators. The claims are easy enough to issue. There is no real drawback to issuing claims nor any consequence for issuing false claims most of the time. The creator side, on the other hand, has to provide proof to dispute the claims. [40.]

In USA, the DMCA (Stands for the Digital Millennium Copyright Act) also makes it easy for bigger companies to issue these claims. Then the creator is faced with the prospect of providing enough information for a lawsuit. Having the fear of a lawsuit with a big company makes it difficult for the creators to dispute the claim, allowing the bigger companies to sometimes abuse their standing a bit. YouTube replied to this by saying that the systems can only be as good as the accuracy of what the copyright holders submit. They also say they have review teams on the case that work to catch inaccurate claims. This is true, of course, but a few situations like this slip past. [40.]

6.3   YouTube Ad-pocalypses and demonetization

YouTube has had multiple events referred to as adpocalypses. These are events where advertisers no longer want to be involved with YouTube as a whole or certain content on the site. When the advertisers pull out, this then threatens the creators' revenue as this makes monetization harder or even temporarily impossible.

Adpocalypses are involved with scandals such as the child exploitation saga I already covered. This was a major example that caused advertisers such as Lidl, Mars and Epic Games to pull their ads. Some other companies also asked YouTube to review the situation, such as Grammarly. this scandal obviously went on for long and had more effects than these listed, but it is a good example of one of the adpocalypses. [41.] [42.]

A few adpocalypses were caused by drama surrounding the creators as well. YouTube's biggest creator at the time, PewdiePie, caused big controversy with racial slurs and anti-semitic jokes in 2017. He was doing a series called Scare PewDiePie, where he incorporated references to the Nazis into his videos. This is what caused the controversy. Disney pulled their ads from him first, ending a deal he had with Disney. [43.]

After this, YouTube ended their relationship with PewDiePie for some time in a way: they removed him from the Preferred advertising program, which meant a direct hit to revenue. The Scare PewDiePie video was also a part of a series YouTube paid to produce, and they ended this as well. He later apologized and said he wants nothing to do with this questionable content, but also said he was doing it in the context of a joke. [44.]

Another problem happened with a creator by the name of Logan Paul, who shot a highly controversial video in Aokigahara Forest, known as the "suicide forest" in Japan, being infamous for being a place where people went to commit suicide. He came across a dead body in the forest and filmed it. This once again caused massive uproar, causing Paul to also have his YouTube Red series cancelled and removed from YouTube Preferred advertising program. [42.]

However, this Logan Paul incident had another effect. YouTube decided that creators now need 100 subscribers and 4000 hours of watch time in the last 12 months to be able to monetize any content. This was a big hit for small creators and a problem situation since it meant that starting fresh became harder. On the other hand, it made moderating ad revenue-related situations easier, as the amount of people being paid went significantly down. Many creators who are actually serious about YouTube should also reach those numbers at some point. [42.]

There was also another major problem with advertisers, this time over hate speech. This was an incident where many companies such as Pepsi, Wal-mart and others once again pulled all advertisements from the site. The reason was hate speech and negative content that was associated with their brand. This included anti-Semitic views again, similar to the case with PewDiePie. YouTube gave an apology and promised a change of policy, but the companies still pulled the ads away. [45.]

YouTube was also criticized for allowing advertisers to have too much power over deciding the videos they put their advertisements in, causing certain types of videos be ineligible all the time. However, despite these claims, the advertisers really only choose the type of content they want to be associated with; not necessarily the creator or video. This excludes sponsors of course, who decide this on a more personal level. Even with all the negativity surrounding this ordeal, YouTube, the creators and advertisers are still all getting along somehow. Moreover, the system, with its flaws, is still functional. Many people also resonate with this thought, saying that YouTube is trying. There's no denying both sides of this argument.

6.4   Article 13: The bane of creators?

When talking about threats, problems and issues with YouTube, at least there IS a YouTube and there IS a way ahead. Then there is Article 13, Europe's new copyright law. The basis of the law is fair: Protecting artists and giving them more protection of whatever copyrighted content they may have created. One must have the ownership or the rights to all the content on the video. Essentially, the tech platform, in this example being YouTube, would now be responsible for ensuring that there is no copyrighted content uploaded to it. Think of a YouTube video with posters or figurines in the background, or a music track in the background. One would have to be able to prove the ownership **or** rights to use any of those. Even if they own the figurine, the likeness is copyrighted.

The job is so massive that YouTube has said that they cannot filter all videos. Even with the massive hits to their own profits and the potential to change the internet for Europeans, the job is just too big. Because YouTube would hold liability for copyright infringement in so many occasions, taking this massive Europe-sized hit is still smaller in comparison. What this would mean is that anybody in Europe could not stream or create content that is seen anywhere else in the world. In addition, Europeans could not view any videos from outside Europe; not even any old, existing content. YouTube would simply have to block it.

This would mean that a curtain would surround Europe. This would have massive consequences. For companies, they'd have a harder time to market globally. Creators outside Europe would lose their European audience, facing the prospect of going out of business or taking a huge revenue hit. Likewise European creators would lose the audience outside Europe. YouTube itself would take massive losses in profit. [46.]

Article 13 was later changed to be slightly more reasonable, now stating that YouTube would not be responsible if neither it nor the owner of the rights has knowledge of the true owner of the content. However, this leaves questions and the new text Is rather vague, forcing tech platforms to still block content in order to avoid these jurisdictional risks. [47.]

Even the CEO of YouTube, Susan Wojcicki, has warned video makers, encouraging them to protest to the law and take action. She said the following quote: "This legislation poses a threat to both your livelihood and your ability to share your voice with the world." She even made a sizeable blog post about this, really showing the concern for the article. In the blog she makes rather powerful statements, saying how EU visitors watched videos over 90 billion times that may now end up being blocked. She says the financial risk of the responsibility of all copyrights is too much. She also says that YouTube already has addressed some issues related to copyright infringement, namely with the Content ID system. [48.]

Whether YouTube really would block all content or not is still questionable. It seems like such an absurd idea for the company to surrender all their European profits and money. On the other hand, the effects of the Article are truly projected to be big. It remains to be seen what happens in the end; perhaps some form of middle ground might be found.

7   Conclusion

Overall, YouTube remains the world's largest video platform. With all its good and bad points, YouTube still continues to generate great amounts of revenue for itself and the users of the platform. It can be said that YouTube is too big for its own good – many of the problems with the site being unsolvable, according to YouTube itself. Because of the massive number of hours of content each minute, bad seeds will always slip through.

Being a popular YouTube creator is all about consistency and awareness of the world around them. Jumping into fads may get quick popularity, but the best way remains to be consistent and upload high-quality content. People have grown accustomed to montages, best-of series or similar quick series. Dramatic and shock value content has also been growing, in part because of the algorithm and in part because that's what people want to see.

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