

# How De Telegraaf built a YouTube strategy to drive revenue and growth

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The Telegraaf Media Groep is an established media company based in the Netherlands. Its flagship newspaper, De Telegraaf, has been in publication for well over a century. However, over the last decade, the paper has seen a steady decline in print sales.

To stay relevant and attract new and younger audiences De Telegraaf had to meet young news consumers where they were—on YouTube. The brand invested heavily in developing a De Telegraaf YouTube channel, but when they tried to monetize it they ran into challenges. The video market in the Netherlands is highly competitive and it was difficult for De Telegraaf to stand out and subsequently sell enough advertising inventory on YouTube.

De Telegraaf joined YouTube's Partner Sales program in 2018. This allowed the brand to sell ads on its YouTube content directly to advertisers, rather than relying solely on YouTube's sales team. The Telegraaf team built a YouTube strategy around content and Partner Sales, and within just one year saw a **900% increase in subscribers**, a **212+% increase in views**, and a **600% increase in ad revenue**. Here's what they did to get there.

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## Lay the groundwork

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In order to drive sustainable, long-term success with the Partner Sales program, De Telegraaf had to make some internal changes to the way it did business.

First, the digital team secured buy-in from senior management so that Partner Sales was established as a brand priority across the whole organization. Executives could immediately see the benefits of the program, as it would help monetize assets on YouTube and uncover additional revenue streams.

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Next, the brand internally reorganized so that digital video (and specifically YouTube) was integrated across all teams and became a core business offering. A dedicated YouTube team was established, and they liaise closely with the sales team to ensure the right content gets in front of the right people. In addition, video and editorial staff work together to regularly analyze data, then optimize and improve content.

De Telegraaf also invested in infrastructure by creating an in-house studio at its headquarters. This was a critical step that enabled the team to create bespoke content for YouTube so they could reach new audiences and drive growth.

## Build up inventory

With the groundwork in place, De Telegraaf then developed a YouTube video strategy that would complement its existing owned and operated (O&O) content, as well as drive loyalty and growth amongst new, younger audiences.

The team used YouTube Analytics data (demographics, watchtime, views) to uncover the types of videos that performed well on YouTube, and built up their inventory with native content that appeals to millennials. To do this, they selected presenters who were already active on social media, and topics that resonated with younger viewers, such as stories about crime or successful young people.

While the tone and style of these new videos was very different to anything De Telegraaf had done before, they were designed to fit within the brand's overall look and feel. De Telegraaf has seen great success with shows like Club Trending, MonnieMakers, and Aso van de Week.



De Telegraaf selected topics important to young people.



De Telegraaf built an in-house studio to create bespoke YouTube content.

The team optimized their publication strategy by creating a schedule that prioritized quality over quantity: They uploaded less content per day, but all the videos were strategically created for YouTube audiences. This helped De Telegraaf **triple its reach within the first two months**.

The team also archived old De Telegraaf videos, which they released on YouTube, such as De Hotelpolite and Geld van de Sterren. These videos were generally longer than the newer content, which helped attract different audiences, as well as drive recommendations and watchtime.

Having more inventory helped De Telegraaf raise brand awareness among younger viewers, increase reach, and grow subscribers. As an unexpected bonus, the team found that the more views they generated on YouTube, the more people would then visit their O&O sites or connect via the app.

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By building up a strategic inventory of native YouTube content De Telegraaf can optimize content recommendations and increase the relevance of advertising messages to viewers. Subsequently, De Telegraaf is more appealing to advertising and agency partners, and is able to drive more revenue.

## Package content for the market

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The Telegraaf team had a three-phase strategy for taking this new inventory out into the market. First, they worked on educating advertising and agency partners about Partner Sales—because it was a relatively new offering, partners were not aware of the possibilities of buying YouTube advertising directly from De Telegraaf.

Next, the team focused on passive selling. They added the YouTube proposition to their established sales presentations and offered O&O plus digital packages, which include video and display ads on Telegraaf O&O with the addition of YouTube video. But as the De Telegraaf sales team and advertising partners became increasingly familiar with Partner Sales, the team began to more actively promote YouTube as a critical component of any campaign.



As familiarity with Partner Sales grew, the team began to more actively promote YouTube as a critical component of any campaign.



Most recently, the team has begun to focus on the benefits of selling inventory on YouTube alone, separate to O&O platforms. For example, they can sell skippable ads (which isn't possible on O&O platforms) and reach very specific audiences (e.g., high-value millennials). In these sales discussions they highlight the valuable nature of De Telegraaf's digital video content and how buying direct gives targeted access to De Telegraaf's substantial audiences.

This phased strategy has been a phenomenal success and, these days, over **half of De Telegraaf's YouTube revenue comes from Partner Sales sold campaigns.**



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## Driving Partner Sales success into the future

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According to De Telegraaf, the key to Partner Sales success lies in understanding that YouTube audiences are different to O&O audiences. For example, on YouTube, more than **60% of De Telegraaf's video views are generated by people under 34**. On O&O that number is only 30%.

The team knows that long-term success with the program relies on growing and changing with their audiences. They turn to data on a daily basis to learn more about audiences and optimize digital video strategy so they can better serve advertiser needs. By doing this, they're able to drive fantastic results for their own brand, and for all their advertising and agency partners, too.