

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a paper mill's machinery. Large metal rollers and a conveyor belt are visible, with a sheet of paper moving through the process. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the metallic surfaces and the texture of the paper.

News Best Practices

Confidential & Proprietary



Five fundamentals to guide your YouTube strategy

1. **Diversify** your content strategy
2. Leverage your **uniqueness**
3. Program for **discovery**
4. Plan for **consistency**
5. **Evolve** via experiments



1

Diversify your content strategy



Offer a diverse slate of content to achieve different goals



Goal 1:
Reach new
audiences



Goal 2:
Grow & sustain
subscribers



Goal 3:
Engage
your community





Reach new audiences

Examples of content types

- Live coverage of events & breaking news
- Explainers
- Cultural tie ins
- Full, topically relevant footage of top news

Ways to measure

- Impressions, views, watchtime, unique viewers, and traffic from suggested & browse



Take advantage of **live** on YouTube

- Live can be valuable in multiple scenarios
 - **Breaking news**
 - **Developing news**
 - **Popular news** - e.g. royal wedding
- 24/7 live streams **promise viewers a place to find information whenever they want**
 - **Use the community tab to alert viewers** when breaking or developing stories are in the 24/7 stream
- **VOD can be clipped out** for viewers to watch later



Create thorough **explainers** on subjects

- Explainers are one of the most YouTube-friendly formats as they are often:
 - Evergreen
 - Educational
 - Topical/Searchable
 - Intriguing
 - Longer-format





Grow & sustain subscribers

Examples of content types

- “Hub” serial content
- Expert guests
- Storytelling
- Personality-driven content

Can be measured by

- Subs added, audience retention, watchtime, subscribers added per 1000 non-sub views



Consider in-depth storytelling to captivate your audience

- Whether through investigative journalism or documentary filmmaking, **in-depth storytelling can set your channel apart** from the competition
- **In this example**, WVUE tells the story of their findings from their undercover investigation



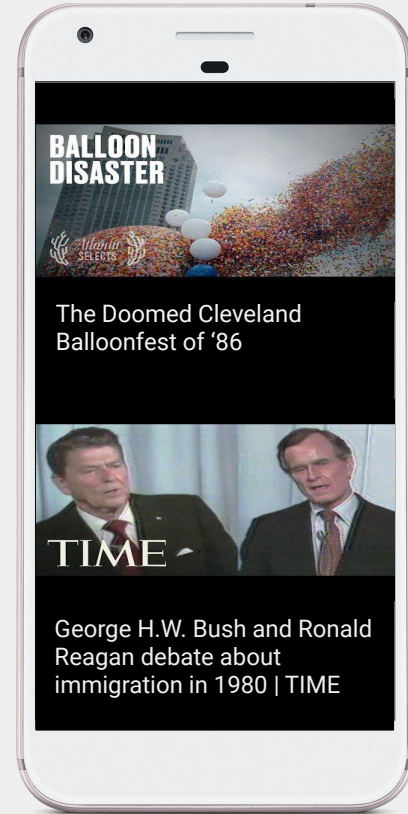
Upload full video & clips from interviews

- When posting interviews on YouTube, it is beneficial to upload the full version & clips for different audiences & purposes
 - Post full version for core audiences
 - Post clips of notable moments to reach new audiences via search & to pull audiences in



Leverage your archival footage for content & context

- **Repackaging historical footage from news broadcasts can create a documentary-style retelling** of the event
- Archival videos can also **provide interesting historical context** around a current debate or topic
- **In the top example**, The Atlantic used archival footage about the Cleveland Balloonfest of 1986 to create a documentary as part of their series “Atlantic Selects”
- **In the bottom example**, TIME posted a debate between Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush about immigration from the 1980 Republican primary race





Engage your community

Examples of content types

- Live
- Q&A
- Commentary
- Debate

Can be measured by

- Likes, comments, shares, engagement per 1000 views, and audience retention



Supply extra footage to your audiences

- On YouTube audiences often expect to **find full unedited video footage**
- This **allows audiences to make up their own ideas about what happened** without any commentary
- **In this example**, FRONTLINE PBS uploaded the full interviews they conducted as part of their investigation “Putin’s Revenge”, which were previously unseen in totality



Ask for your audience's input

- Use the two-way communication of digital to your advantage and ask for your audience's input
- Let the audience feel like they are part of what your channel is doing by asking them to weigh in on questions, content, and more



Engage your audience in questions and answers while live

- Use live functionality to **engage actively with your audience**
- **This helps you make a personal connection with your audience**
- In this example, VideoMug did a basic one camera setup in their newsroom and **took live inquiries from their audience about specific election updates they wanted**



2

Leverage your uniqueness



Give your journalists' expertise an opportunity to shine

- As experts in the field of journalism, let your **journalists and editors be an authoritative, yet personal, voice for your digital presence**
- Things to consider for establishing a personal voice
 - **Have host talk directly into the camera to the audience**
 - **Introduce yourself and credentials**
 - **Strong use of visuals is important** (graphics, photos, or video)
 - **Use easy to understand language**



Provide audiences with expert commentary

- Audiences seek not only news, but **expert analysis and what the news means for them**
- YouTube audiences often connect with **people and personalities** which forms a bond of trust and reciprocity
- **In this example**, Jason Bellini of the Wall Street Journal dives into the burgeoning world of test-tube food and also shares his experience testing the food himself



Customize news wire content for your channel

- To **differentiate your channel from others**, consider how you customize news wire content to your audience
- **In this example**, Al Jazeera has packaged footage from multiple sources to provide more context and create a more well-rounded story



Use your location expertise to your advantage

- The physical location of your offices and reporters can be an advantage as it potentially gives you unique insights in your coverage
- In this example, News 19 WLTX had established themselves as **a regular source of coverage** for Hurricane Florence through weather updates and local safety efforts

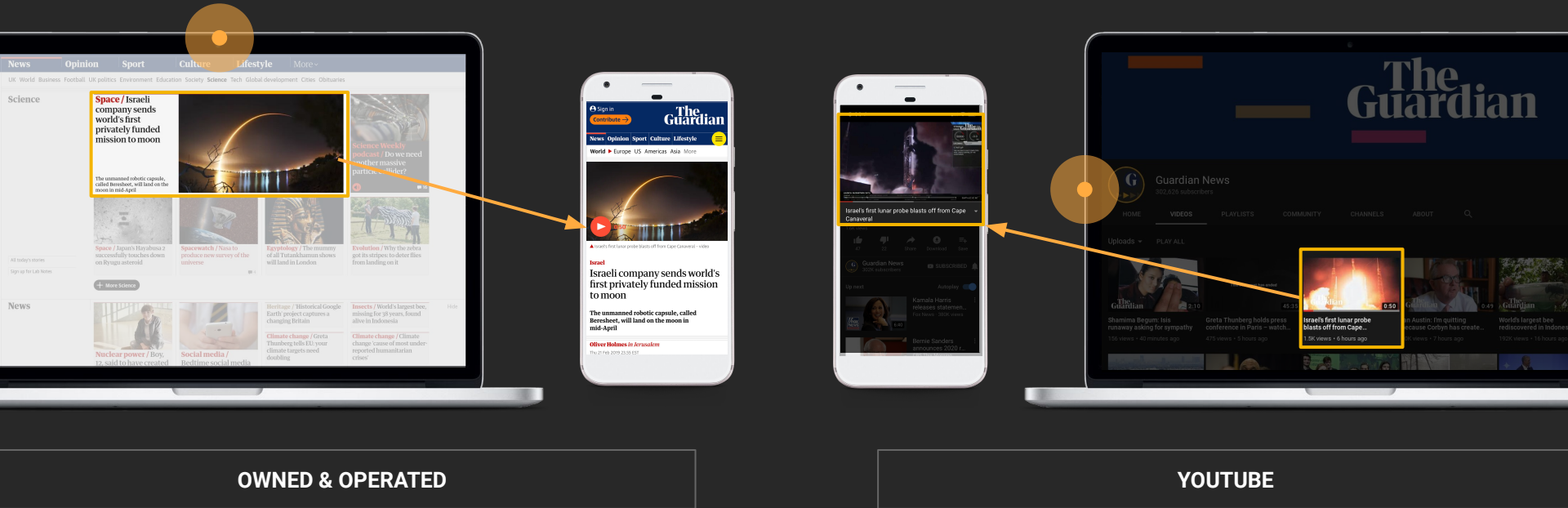


3

Program for discovery



Audiences have different context when viewing videos on owned sites vs. YouTube



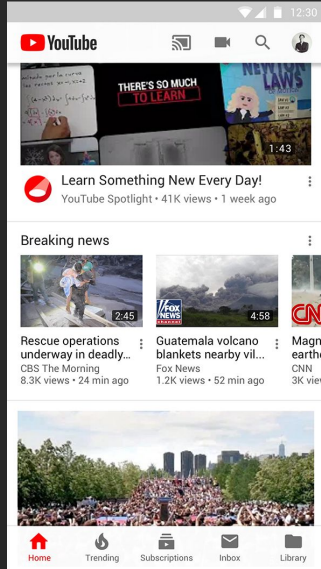
OWNED & OPERATED

YOUTUBE



Consider how your content is displayed in key YouTube traffic sources

BROWSE (YOUTUBE HOMEPAGE):



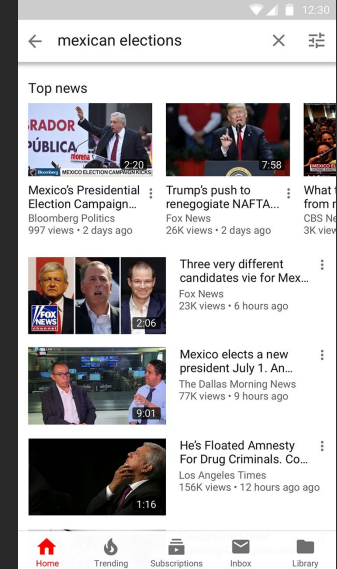
Consider the high-end options available in this premium space and how thumbnails + tiles, in addition to the newly released muted autoplay are what drive conversions.

SUGGESTED:



It is important to consider what a viewer may have just watched, is your content supplementary? Or duplicative? Consider how your content may tie together to keep audiences watching your content via suggested.

SEARCH:



Keywords and descriptive titles are important here as audiences are explicitly searching for a subject or topic. Consider how you compare with other channels seeking to cover the same topic and how you can stand out.



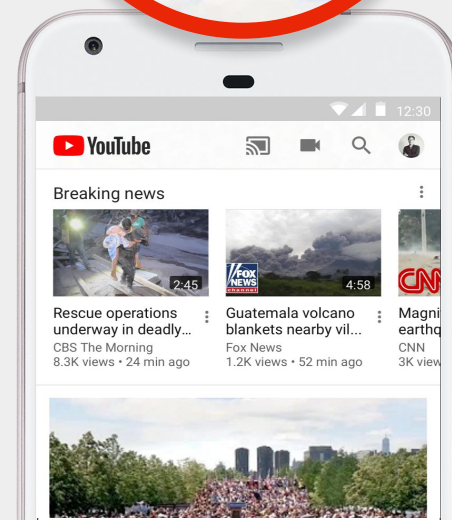
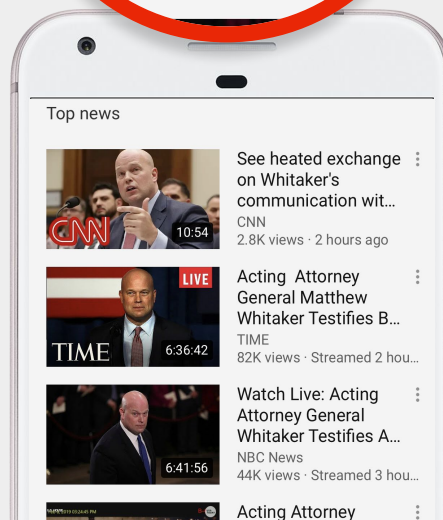
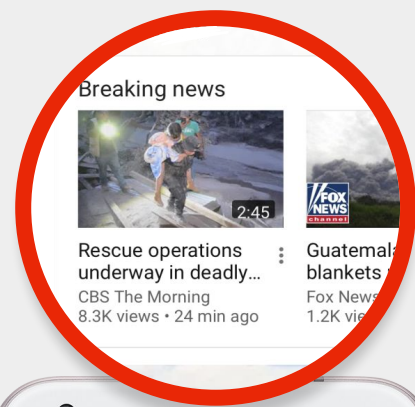
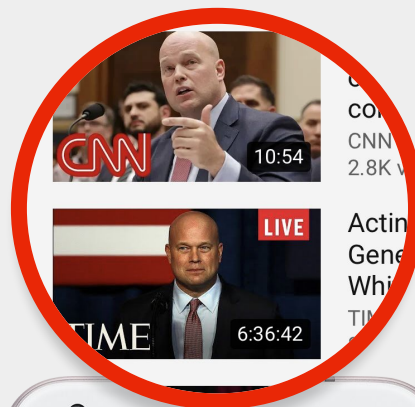
Content packaging on YouTube

- **3 aspects to packaging on YouTube:**
 1. **Title:** Clear, descriptive, accurate, succinct
 2. **Thumbnail:** High resolution and illustrative (of the content)
 3. **Description:** Be descriptive, first 2 lines are key
- **Plan & create your title + thumbnail together**
- Leverage impressions & CTR data in YouTube Analytics to **gauge what works best for your audiences.**



Visually differentiate your content with thumbnails & logo

- Use your logo to help audiences that trust you, find you around important news stories
- Construct titles to tie together series or topics to help audiences continue their sessions
- Develop thumbnail templates/styles for topics or genres based on your programming mix
- In this example, consider how thumbnail images can be similar for big news stories



Templatized thumbnails:

Simple, yet effective

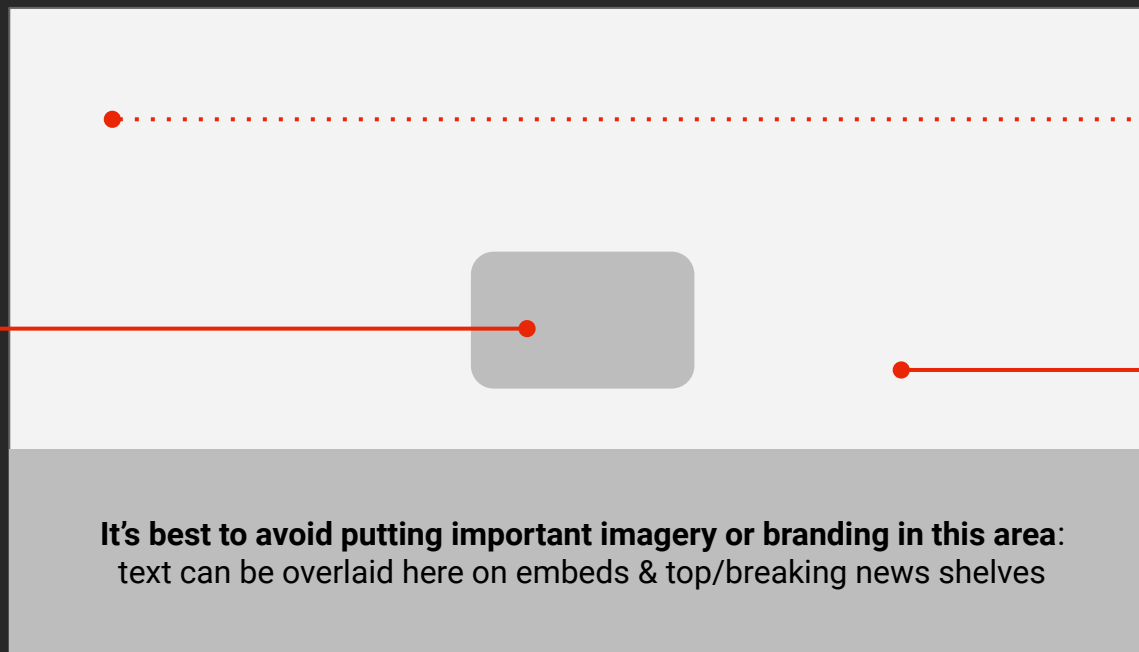


Templatized thumbnails are great for quick turn content that you want to visually differentiate. The great thing about templatized thumbnails is that after the template is made, an editor can quickly swap in a new photo & update the text on the overlay before uploading to YouTube.



Considerations for building thumbnails

Play button will
overlay



It's best to avoid putting important imagery or branding in this area:
text can be overlaid here on embeds & top/breaking news shelves

Branding should
ideally be situated in
corners.

Four tips for main image:

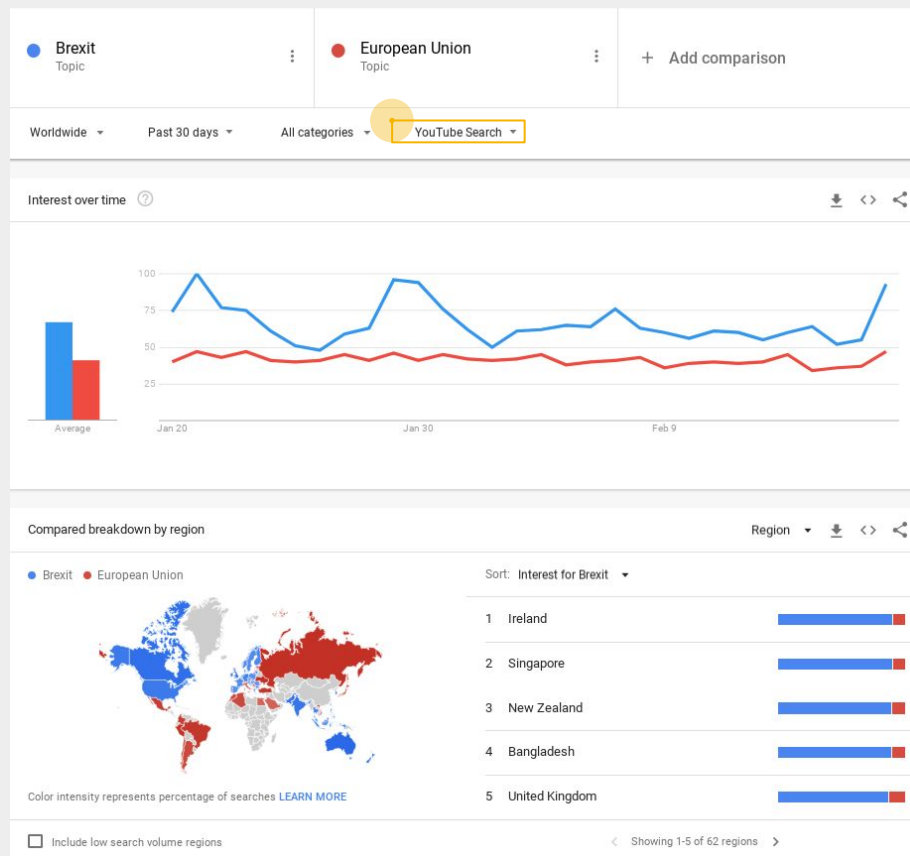
1. Accurately represent content
2. Be bright
3. High contrast
4. Clear at all sizes

16:9 aspect ratio // 1280 x 720px // file size less than 2MB



Keyword choices & trends can be important to search

- **Google trends can help you with:**
 - Which keywords are most popular
 - Where keywords are popular
 - How keyword interest is trending over time
 - How trends differ across Web, News, or YouTube search
- **Consider carefully the terms you use for the audience you want to reach & the timing of your uploads**



Reach international audiences with closed captioning & translations

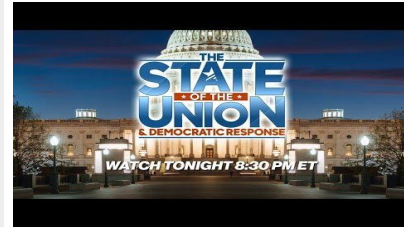
- Translations can help you **appeal to a broader audience**
- Can be **vital to your content's accessibility** and helpful for global audiences
- **Translations of titles and descriptions** can help global audiences understand and find content easier
- *Note that **only closed captions can be translated by YT**, not burned in captions/text



Uploading early and often can improve performance

- **Quick uploading of content around events and breaking news** can help you become established in search and reach new audiences via the Breaking News shelf on home.
- **A consistent habit in timely coverage can help entice audiences to go to your channel first** when future news breaks
- **Update regularly** around breaking news as the story develops
- **Be considerate of the keywords & metadata used for users searching** for information

Feb. 5, 2019
8:30 P.M. ET



President Trump's
2019 State of the
Union Address

Views: 1,027,736

Feb. 5, 2019
11:57 P.M. ET



Lindsey Graham
reacts to Trump's
State of the Union

Views: 423,109

Feb. 6, 2019
12:47 A.M. ET



Democrats kept
throwing shade at
Trump during State
of the Union

Views: 304,930



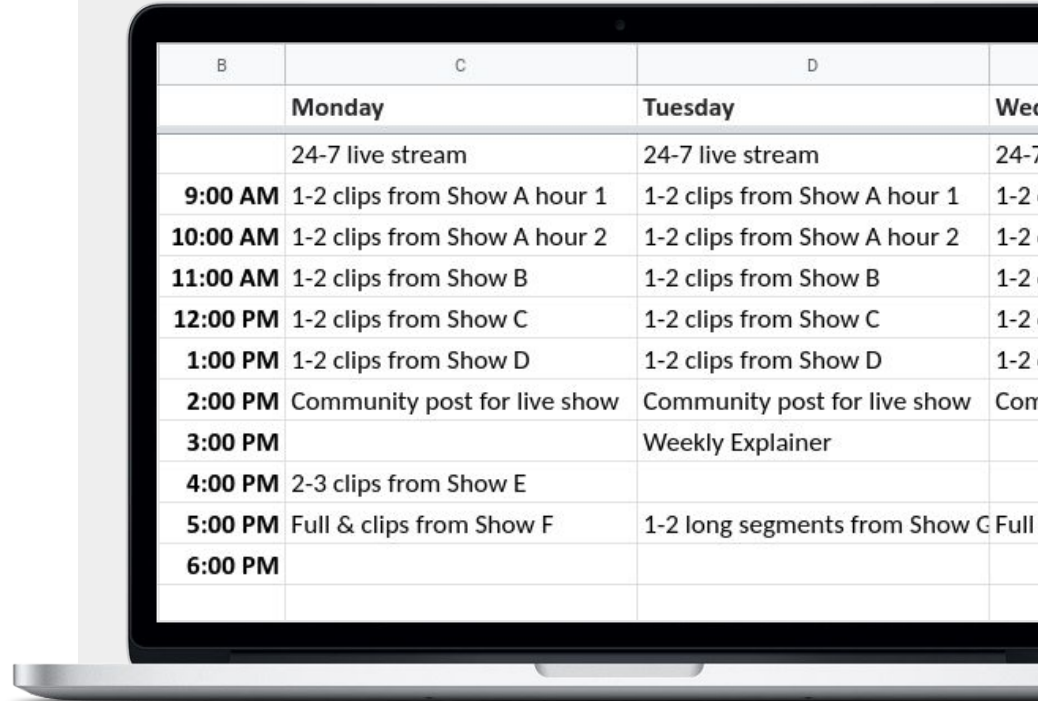
4

Plan for consistency



Create a programming calendar to keep yourself on track

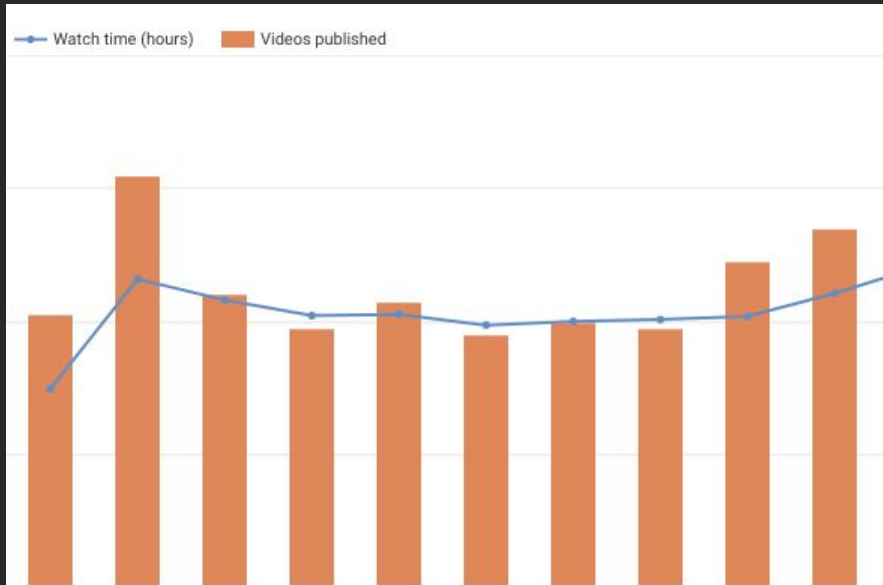
- **Having a plan of how much content & when helps you in planning and production**
- **Consistency builds a habit with your fans**, so they know when to return for **more of what they want**
- A calendar can also be **useful when doing content evaluations** to provide a broader view of your channel & how to bucket content
- **EXCEPTION: Breaking news & Events** where channels often break from their typical upload cadence & timing to fulfill audience needs



B	C	D	
	Monday	Tuesday	Wed
	24-7 live stream	24-7 live stream	24-7
9:00 AM	1-2 clips from Show A hour 1	1-2 clips from Show A hour 1	1-2
10:00 AM	1-2 clips from Show A hour 2	1-2 clips from Show A hour 2	1-2
11:00 AM	1-2 clips from Show B	1-2 clips from Show B	1-2
12:00 PM	1-2 clips from Show C	1-2 clips from Show C	1-2
1:00 PM	1-2 clips from Show D	1-2 clips from Show D	1-2
2:00 PM	Community post for live show	Community post for live show	Com
3:00 PM		Weekly Explainer	
4:00 PM	2-3 clips from Show E		
5:00 PM	Full & clips from Show F	1-2 long segments from Show C	Full
6:00 PM			



Consistency can help keep performance steady



A consistent style can provide familiarity to audiences

- Consistency doesn't just apply to when & how much you upload
- The **structure of your content, kept consistent, helps your audience know what to expect**
- **Change can be difficult with any audience** due to “change aversion” and **should be implemented slowly overtime**
- **In this example**, Philip DeFranco has established a consistency in his content production, packaging, introduction, and outro that his audience community looks forward to with each upload



5

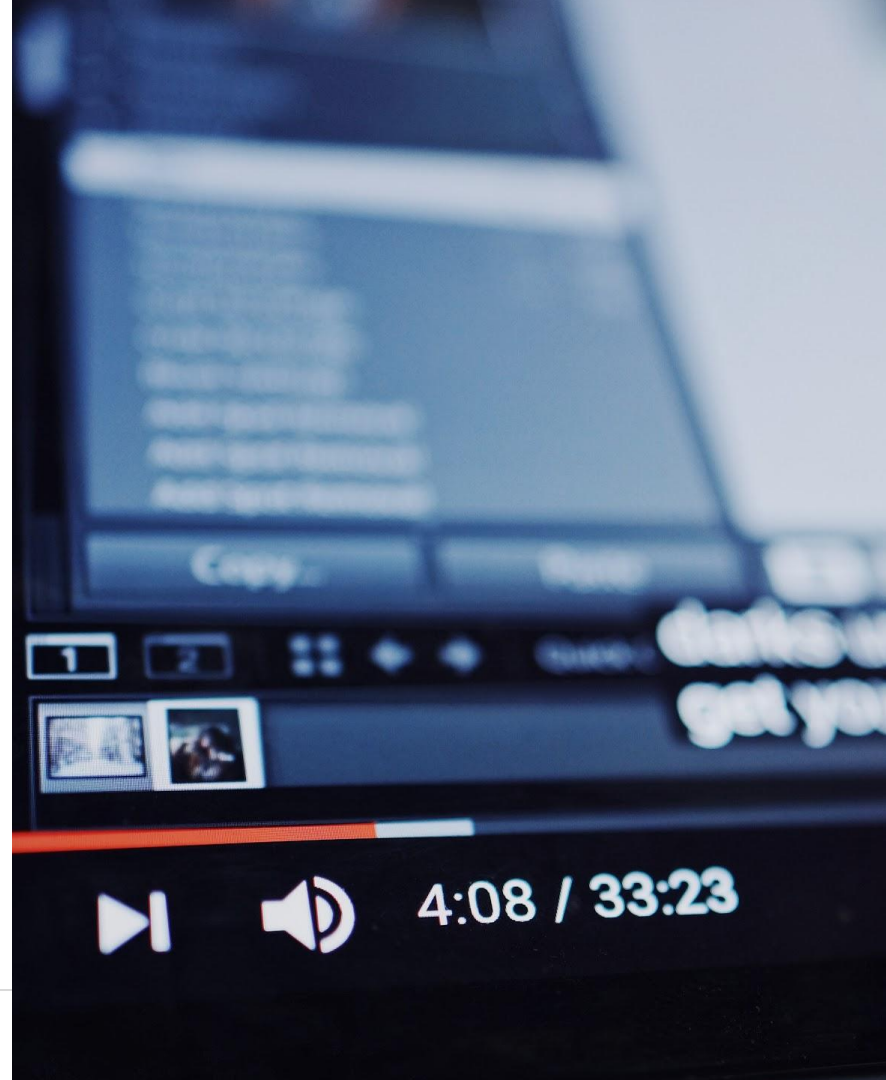
Evolve through continual experiments



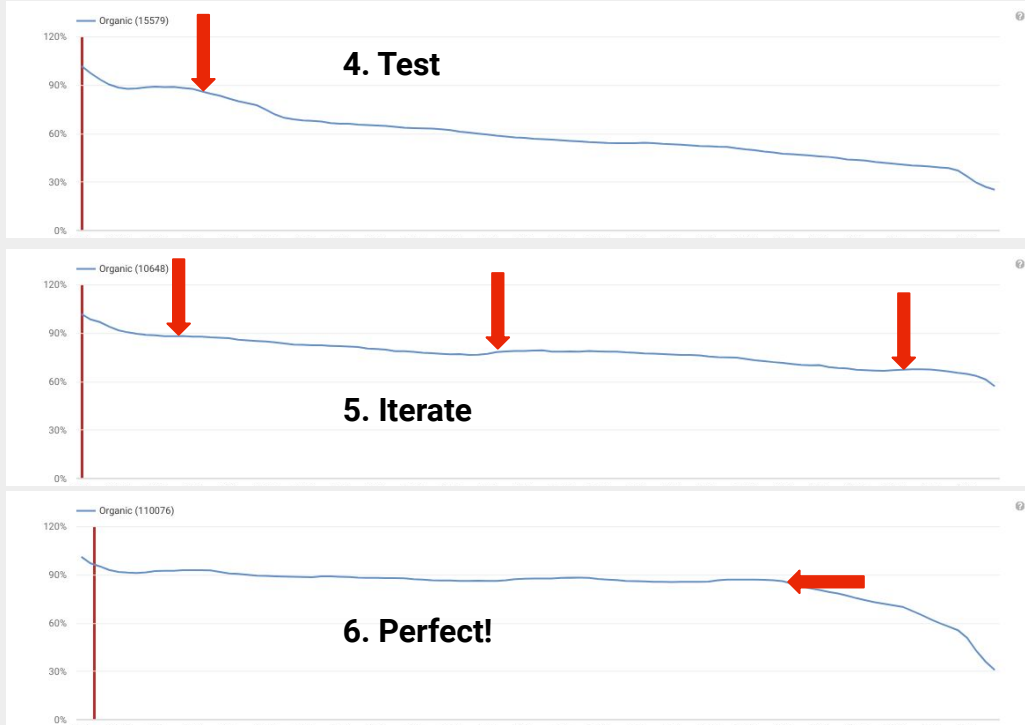
Testing content & analytics

YouTube is a great place to test out new pieces of content, here is a framework to get you started in your content experiments.

1. Think Sustainably
2. Scout YouTube
3. Be Authentic
4. Test
5. Iterate
6. Perfect
7. Repeat



Using audience retention to **Test-Iterate-Perfect** your experiments



These graphs show the **evolution of a content series** over a few years. Using these graphs, the channel iterated on production of the series leading to vast performance improvements:

25% increase in AR per upload

8x increase in views per upload

7x increase in watchtime hours per upload



Managing your YouTube presence

1. One channel or multiple channels?
2. Channel management: 101



1

One channel or multiple channels



Considerations for one channel vs. multiple channels

REASONS TO **HAVE** MULTIPLE CHANNELS

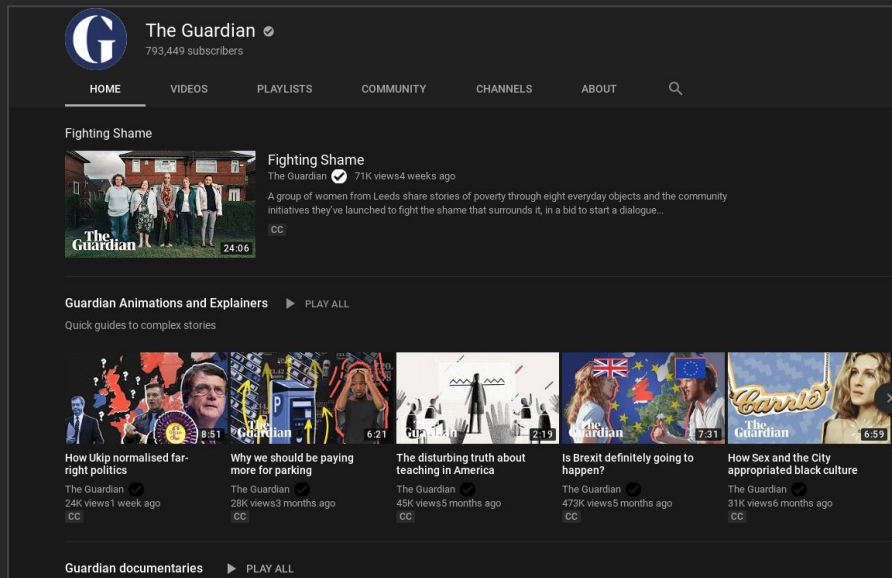
- **Have multiple brands with established audiences**
- **Content voice is very different - targets different audiences (e.g. serious vs. humorous, adult vs. youth, etc.)**
- **To avoid oversaturation** due to a heavy content load - only works if the content has distinguishable categories to divide by

REASONS **NOT** TO HAVE MULTIPLE CHANNELS

- **Much more work!**
 - **Harder to maintain** two different but related channels
 - **Have to produce more content** to keep both channels fresh & relevant
- **Splits your audience** between two channels
- **Video velocity can be easier to achieve on one big channel** (subscribers)



Multi channel example: The Guardian & Guardian News



The Guardian 793,449 subscribers

HOME VIDEOS PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

Fighting Shame

Fighting Shame
The Guardian 71K views 4 weeks ago
A group of women from Leeds share stories of poverty through eight everyday objects and the community initiatives they've launched to fight the shame that surrounds it, in a bid to start a dialogue...

Guardian Animations and Explainers **PLAY ALL**
Quick guides to complex stories

How Ukip normalised far-right politics
The Guardian 24K views 1 week ago

Why we should be paying more for parking
The Guardian 28K views 3 months ago

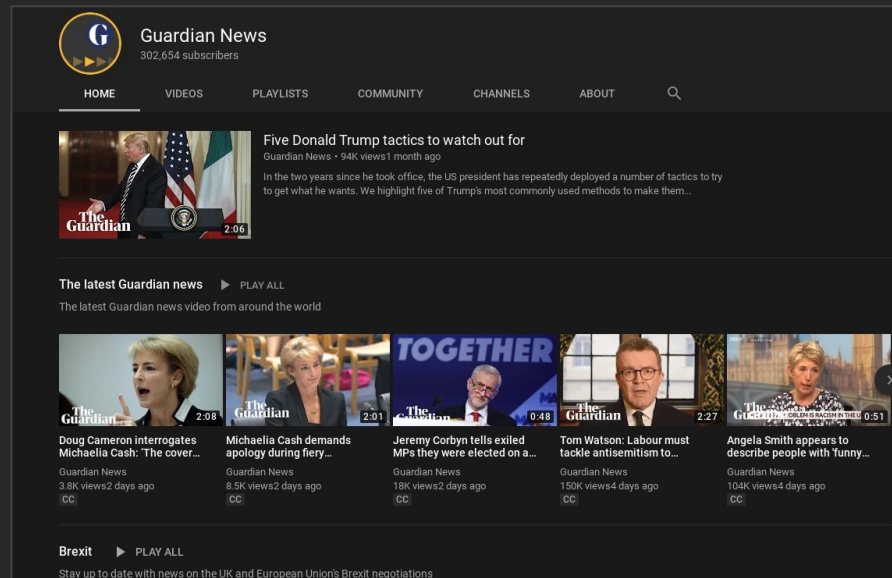
The disturbing truth about teaching in America
The Guardian 45K views 5 months ago

Is Brexit definitely going to happen?
The Guardian 473K views 5 months ago

How Sex and the City appropriated black culture
The Guardian 31K views 5 months ago

Guardian documentaries **PLAY ALL**

The Guardian's more curated,
YouTube channel



Guardian News 302,654 subscribers

HOME VIDEOS PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

Five Donald Trump tactics to watch out for
Guardian News 94K views 1 month ago
In the two years since he took office, the US president has repeatedly deployed a number of tactics to try to get what he wants. We highlight five of Trump's most commonly used methods to make them...

The latest Guardian news **PLAY ALL**
The latest Guardian news video from around the world

Doug Cameron interrogates Michaela Cash: The cover...
Guardian News 3.8K views 2 days ago

Michaela Cash demands apology during fiery...
Guardian News 8.5K views 2 days ago

Jeremy Corbyn tells exiled MPs they were elected on a...
Guardian News 18K views 2 days ago

Tom Watson: Labour must tackle antisemitism to...
Guardian News 150K views 4 days ago

Angela Smith appears to describe people with funny...
Guardian News 104K views 4 days ago

Brexit **PLAY ALL**
Stay up to date with news on the UK and European Union's Brexit negotiations

The Guardian's news wire channel,
for more frequent uploads



Considerations for one channel vs. multiple channels

STRATEGY FOR MULTIPLE CHANNELS

- Craft a **unique voice and purpose** for each channel
- **Channels should be identifiable** not indistinguishable
- **Different content for different audiences**
- **Use similar, but distinguishable styles for packaging & titles** to link & differentiate content

PROMOTE NEW “SECONDARY” CHANNELS

- **Utilize channel end screens to promote channel & subscription**
- If launching a new series - **consider programming a teaser or first episode on an established channel** to promote newer channel
- **Link to channel in description**
- **Verbally promote new channel & mission** on established channel



2

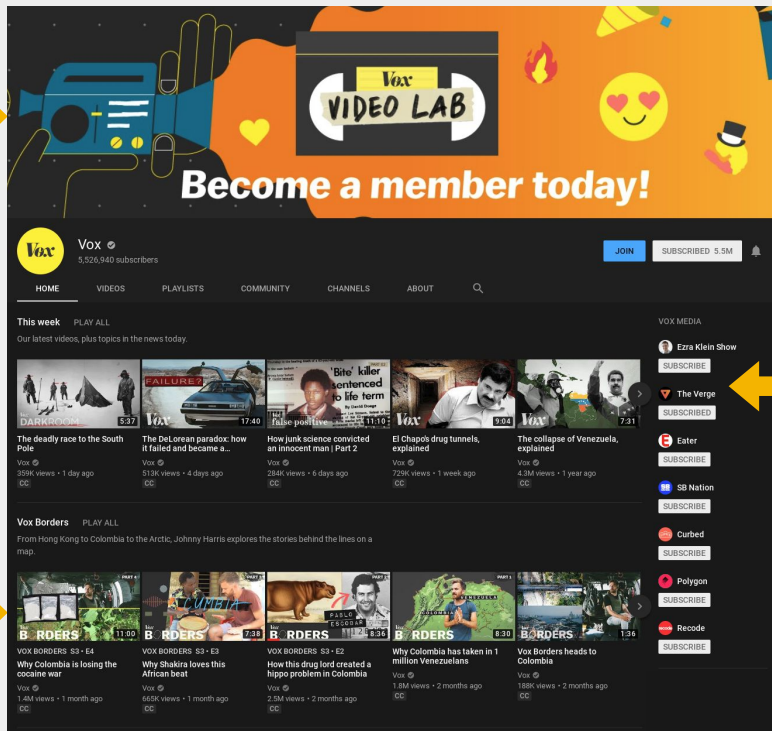
Channel management



Keep your channel homepage fresh and tailored for new audiences & current subscribers

Channel banner, great place to share:

- Schedule
- Announcements
- Mission statement



Shelves can be curated in many ways:

- Single Playlists
- Multiple playlists
- Latest uploads
- Most popular uploads

Featured Channels

- Great place to promote other channels that you own or are related to



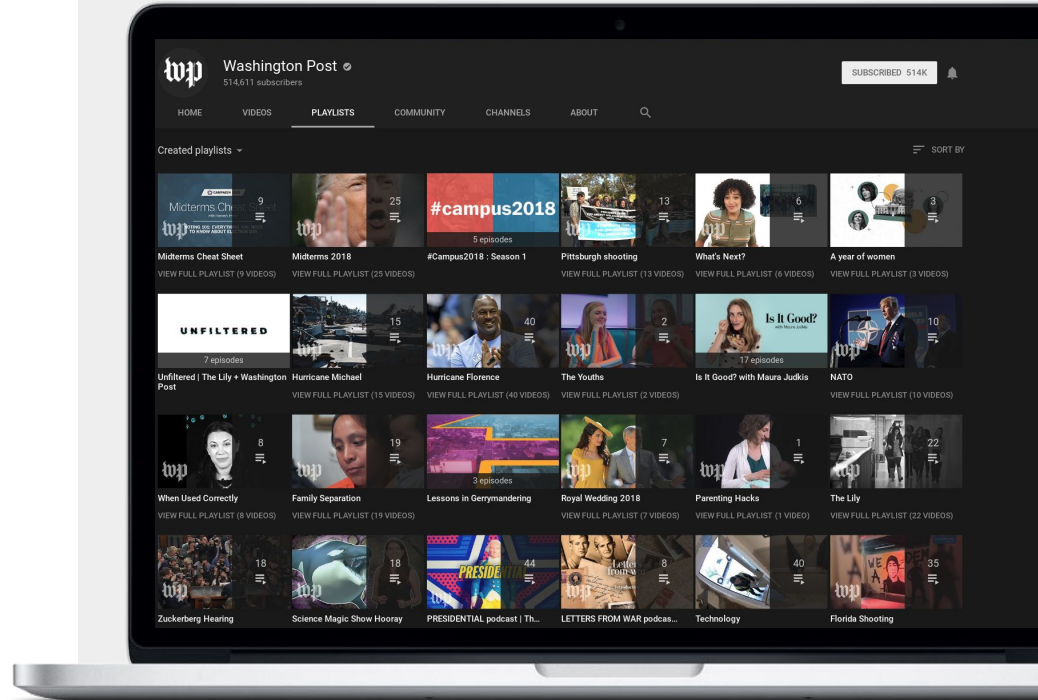
Captivate new audiences with a compelling trailer

- **Assume the viewer has never heard of you.** Introduce them to what you have and tell them why they should subscribe.
- **Keep it short.** It should tell your visitors who you are, what your content is like, and when they can expect new uploads.
- **Ask viewers to subscribe** in your video's end card. This gives the audience an easy way to subscribe.



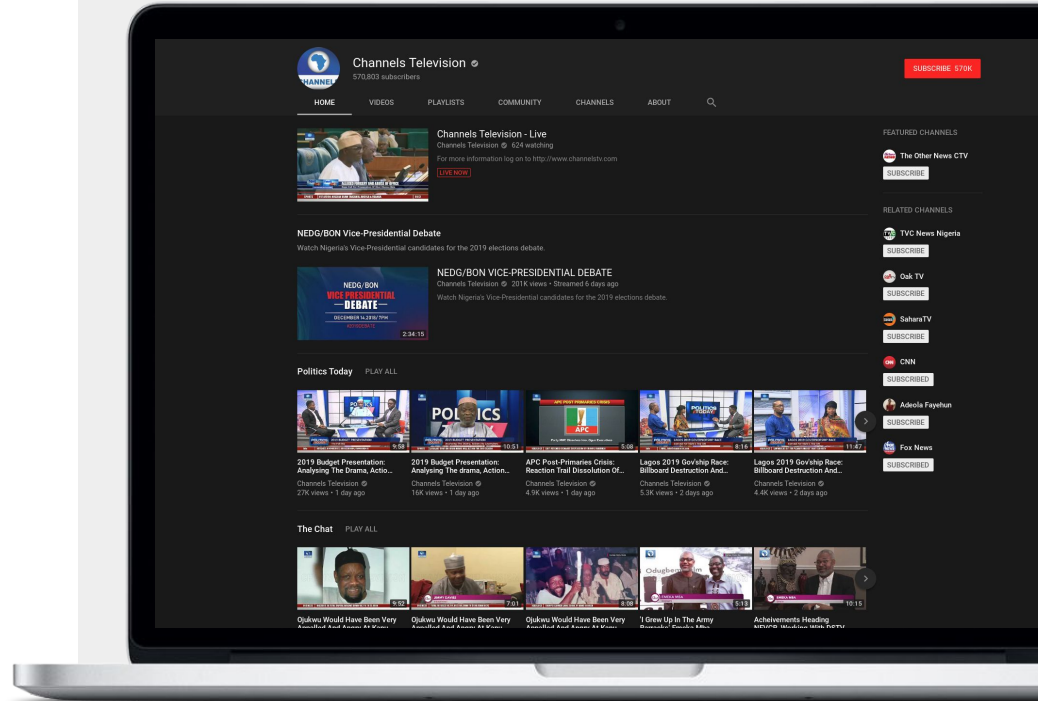
Create playlists to organize topics

- Playlist can help you organize content for a variety of audience interests:
 - Geography (Australian-focused or U.K.-focused news)
 - Topics (Korean Summit or Jean-Claude Juncker)
 - Events (Brazilian election)
 - Genres (Science or Politics)
 - Series
 - Personalities



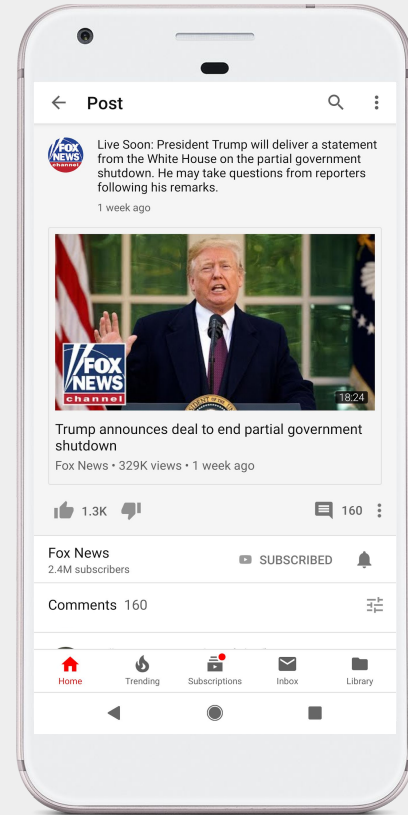
Use playlist shelves to organize your homepage

- Playlists are also a valuable way to organize content on your channel's homepage
- Refresh your homepage as often as necessary to keep it current for audiences



Use the community tab to engage & communicate with your audience

- The community tab is a great tool for channels to share information or start a discussion that may not make sense as a video
- Some common uses of the community tab:
 - Resharing older clips when topically relevant again
 - Sharing live streams to notify audiences of upcoming moments of interest
 - Engaging the community for a discussion or reaction around events



News best practices recap

THE FIVE FUNDAMENTALS

- 1. Diversify your content strategy**
 - a. Balance topical & evergreen content
 - b. Create content for different goals
- 2. Leverage your uniqueness**
 - a. Be conversational & use your expertise
 - b. Customize content for your audience
- 3. Program for discovery**
 - a. Focus on Home, Suggested, and Search traffic
 - b. Package your content to stand out
 - c. Time your uploads for optimal discovery in breaking news & search
- 4. Plan for consistency**
 - a. Build a schedule to keep uploads on time and in proportion
 - b. Maintain a familiar production style for your audience
- 5. Evolve via experiments**
 - a. Test-Iterate-Perfect-Repeat with the help of Audience Retention

MANAGING YOUR PRESENCE

- 1. One channel or multiple channels?**
 - a. Consider the audiences, would you be dividing a similar audience or focusing content on different audiences?
 - b. Do you have the resources to keep two channels fresh with content and managed properly?
- 2. Channel management**
 - a. Keep your channel homepage fresh and relevant
 - b. Create a trailer to tell audiences who you are and why they should subscribe
 - c. Use playlists to effectively organize content by topics and to create shelves on your channel homepage

