

Module-4

LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site launched in 2003. It has 300+ million users across the world. It is available in 20 languages. It allows users to create and customize profiles and connect with people having similar interest areas.

Presently, it is the largest platform for social networking, assisting people with job opportunities. Jobseekers can connect and follow hiring managers and can update their profiles in a defined fashion to get easily discovered.

One can follow a company, get notifications, bookmark jobs, like and comment other's posts, and invite others on LinkedIn. The best part of LinkedIn is that you can see your recent visitors and endorse others' skills.

LinkedIn Marketing

LinkedIn is a professional networking platform and it has all the features of a great marketing opportunity provider. Here you interact with people who mean business. To market through LinkedIn, you need to do the following –

- Build a robust business page that displays your products and services in a compelling format.
- Invite clients and vendors to follow and recommend your page.
- Launch a group that is related to your business. It can attract significant traffic.
- Reach your audience through targeted advertising.

LinkedIn is a powerful social media tool. You just need to follow its policies and best practices.



LinkedIn Tools

What do you need?

First, think about what you want the LinkedIn automation tool to accomplish for you. What are your needs and goals? Do you want to expand your network, have more successful sales

discussions, or produce more content? How significant is it to you that your messaging be personalized? Do you wish to monitor your development and results?

1)Linkedin Scheduling Tools

♦ ContentStudio

The ContentStudio LinkedIn scheduling tool helps create excellent content, which you can schedule in multiple ways to save time. It's a perfect tool to create intelligent content pipelines using content curation techniques such as web feed and custom topics to help save you some time.

Features

- Post LinkedIn texts, images, and videos
- Mention a connection or other members (@ feature)
- Set your LinkedIn video thumbnail
- Post previews are available
- Make use of the 'best time to post' feature
- Enable auto first comment
- Connect your LinkedIn profile and pages with CS for speedy automation
- Post multiple pictures and one video on LinkedIn
- Create automations for LinkedIn

Pros

- Excellent customer support
- Smooth workflows

Cons

- The mobile app has fewer features than the desktop version

PromoRepublic

PromoRepublic can help you schedule meetings, events, and webinars on LinkedIn. The scheduling tool also helps you manage your LinkedIn campaigns by providing a simple way to plan, schedule, and track all your tasks in one place. You can also choose events such as workshops, webinars, live calls, and online training sessions.

Features

Establish workflows within your team
Keep your social media images on your platform
Add banners, shapes, and text to your photographs
Templates available for content creation

Pros

Tools for content marketing

Editor

Cons:

Restricts the number of accounts you can work on based on the pricing tier

Unable to post from a phone

Loomly

Loomly helps you schedule your time on LinkedIn more effectively by allowing you to create custom schedules that include any number of items, including people, projects, and events. You

can easily manage your schedule by seeing what's open now or in the future, and Loomly will notify you when a new item is available.

Features

Sponsoring of postings for promoted content
Instructions to manage all of your social media material
Creates post and ad previews automatically
Workflow for collaborative evaluation

Pros

Value for the money
Simple to use

Cons

The calendars have some bugs.
Notifications can be a little perplexing.

2)Linkedin Marketing Tools

Crystal

A personality evaluation tool called Crystal aids in identifying and comprehending individual personality characteristics. This application is helpful for LinkedIn since it allows you to use the LinkedIn profiles of your potential clients to assess their personalities. It will lead to the establishment of efficient communication. Any well-known social networking network can be used with its Chrome extension.

Features

Get started for nothing
It offers a web application
Chrome plugin
Mobile application

Pros

Advises on how you should interact with potential clients.

Cons

Effective only for B2-B companies and less compatible for B2C companies.

LeadFeeder

LeadFeeder is a scheduling tool that helps you manage your LinkedIn connections. It allows you to schedule meetings with multiple people, plan events and track your progress. You can also share your calendar with those who don't have access to it.

Features

Identify the businesses that visit your website
Salesforce, WebCRM, Zoho, and many other CRMs are simple to integrate
Email alerts when businesses visit your website

Pros

Automatic CRM update
Free Lite version
Simple and step-by-step instructions

Cons

The filtering feature is a little challenging.

Protop

Protop stands out among LinkedIn marketing tools because it automates member profile visits. Simply choose your search parameters, and ProTop will browse all LinkedIn profiles matching the criteria. This is the most acceptable strategy to raise your profile on LinkedIn.

Features

1000 daily profile visits are permitted
Export visited LinkedIn profile information
Keeps a log of visited profiles

Pros

Easy to use
There is a no-cost option
Simple integration and installation

Cons

Only makes 100 visits each day under the free plan.

3)Linkedin Analytics Tools

Quintly

You can get assistance from Quintly, one of the best LinkedIn analytics tools, with social media statistics for blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+, LinkedIn, Instagram, and other platforms.

Features

Finds benchmarks for your social media platforms
Monitors your progress with centralized analytics
Smart reporting
Personalized dashboards with the stats of your choice.
Keeps track of specific KPIs.

Pros

Measuring social media activities through personalized reports and dashboards
Simple social analytics

Cons

Custom plans start at \$300 per month, which is too pricey for smaller firms.
The collected information is too broad and not suitable for in-depth social analytics.

Keyhole

Keyhole is among useful LinkedIn reporting tools to understand a little bit about the hashtags you use if you're interested in playing the hashtag game. Keyhole enables account, keyword, and URL tracking online. Additionally, Keyhole allows you to keep track of mentions of URLs, keywords, and social media profiles.

Features

Historical information
Reports in PDF format
Actual time information
Twitter statistics
Instagram analytics

Pros

The capacity to assess influencer impact and return on investment
Monitoring and evaluating rivals on social networks.
Hashtag tracker

Cons

Hidden costs are possibly too pricey for some businesses.
Not simple for new users.

Brandwatch

Brandwatch, has partnered with LinkedIn to bring LinkedIn data into its offering. It allows users to analyze information from LinkedIn profiles, which can be a valuable source of insight for marketers.

LinkedIn data is included in Brandwatch's suite of real-time social media data sources, along with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms.

Features

Image analysis

Find the most prominent influencers who use your keywords

Locations

Automated reports

Pros

Offers unique reports and valuable marketing data

Excellent tool for gathering brand mentions

Cons

High Price

LinkedIn Ad Campaign

Yes, LinkedIn Ads is quite expensive in comparison to Facebook & Instagram but it's narrow audience targeting on the basis of their jobs, industry, education and other attributes allow brands to reach individuals from the specific industries that they are targeting & it is worth your investment.

1.Create an Ad account.

If you already have created your LinkedIn Ad Account then you can skip to the next step.

Like other social media marketing platforms, you have to create an ad account on LinkedIn to organize and analyse all your campaigns without affecting the content on the company page.

2. Select your objective.

In this step, you'll have to decide what you want your audience to do when the ad appears on their news feed.

According to LinkedIn, “choosing an objective helps them customize your campaign creation, deliver the best ROI for your stated goal, & show you relevant reporting”.

LinkedIn Campaign Objectives are categorised into 3 sections based on the buyer's journey – **Awareness, Consideration & Conversion**.

Objective

Let's get started! Select the objective that best fits your goals below.

Awareness	Consideration	Conversions
Brand awareness	Website visits	Lead generation
	Engagement	Website conversions
	Video views	Job applicants

Under these categories, the following are the objectives –

- Brand Awareness: Choose this objective to reach more people just to tell them about your product, services, or company
- Website Visits: Choose this objective to reach people who are most likely to click on your ads to visit your website or marketing landing pages.
- Engagement: Choose this objective to show your ads to people most likely to engage with your ad or follow your company.
- Video Views: Choose this objective to show your videos with people most likely to watch.
- Lead Generation: Choose this objective to show your ads to people most likely to fill out a lead generation form.
- Website Conversion: Choose this objective to show your ads to people most likely to take the actions on your website which are valuable for your business.
- Job Applicants: Choose this objective to show your ads to people most likely to view or click on your job ads to apply.

Now, evaluate the goals you want to achieve from the campaign and choose the most relevant objective.

3. Create an audience.

In this step, you will have to create an audience you want to target through your ad.

LinkedIn allows you to target your potential customers on the basis of various attributes like Education, Company, Profession, Skills and many more.

LinkedIn has also listed a bunch of audiences based on different audience attributes. If you're a first-timer, you can choose one of the relevant audiences for your campaign.

4. Choose an Ad format:

On the basis of your campaign objective, choose of the relevant ad format.

- **Single Image Ad:** Choose this ad format to create an ad using a single image that will show up in the news feed.
- **Carousel Image Ad:** Choose this ad format to create an ad with two or more images that will show up in the news feed.
- **Video Ad:** Choose this ad format to create an ad using a video that will show up in the news feed.
- **Text Ad:** Choose this ad format to create text-based ads that will show up in the right column or top of the pages on LinkedIn.
- **Spotlight Ad:** Choose this ad format to create ads that are personalized using profile data to promote an offering throughout the desktop.

- **Follower Ad:** Choose this ad format to create ads that are personalized using data to promote your company page throughout the desktop.
- **Message Ad:** Choose this ad format to create ads that are delivered to your target audience's LinkedIn Messaging inbox.
- **Job Ad:** Choose this ad format to create ads that are personalized using profile data to promote jobs throughout the desktop.

5. Set up ad budget & schedule.

Now, you can choose to set up a daily budget or both a daily & total budget from the drop-down menu.

Budget & Schedule

Budget ?

▼

Daily Budget

Actual daily spend may be up to 20% higher ?

Setting up a campaign budget is very crucial to make sure you're in control of spending the budget & it doesn't exceed the pre-defined campaign budget.

After that, you have to decide whether to run the campaign continuously from the start date or schedule the start & end date. In case of choosing to run the campaign continuously, you have to stop the campaign manually.

6. Select a bid type.

At this step, you have to choose how you want your ad budget to be spent. LinkedIn offers the following 3 types of bidding –

1) Automated Bid – This allows LinkedIn to set your campaign's bid automatically based on historical campaign data and member information.

You can choose this option when you're not sure how much to bid. Also, this is charged by impressions, not by clicks.

2) Enhanced CPC Bid – This gives you control to set the bid yourself & you'll be charged only if someone clicks on your ads.

You can set the maximum bid amount you want to pay per click and you'll not be charged for more than that.

3) Maximum CPM Bid – In this bidding, you'll be charged an amount each time your ad appears every 1000 times on a LinkedIn feed.

7. Set up conversion tracking.

Now, LinkedIn Ads allows you to measure the actions your audience take on your website after clicking or viewing your LinkedIn ad by adding Conversion tracking in your campaign.

Conversion tracking is an optional step in the process of setting up the campaign but it can be very helpful for you to understand how people engage on your website after clicking the ad.

8. Create ads for the campaign.

Finally, you've to add the ad in the campaign for which you can create an ad or sponsor existing posts on the page.

To sponsor the existing post, click on “Browse existing content” button, select the post you want to promote & then click on the “Sponsor” button above the preview bar.

- v. **Use Customer Information** – Use all the knowledge about your customer to create content for them. This shall help in creating relevant, personalized videos. Having information on location, age, gender, needs, motivation and passion points can help to better connect with customers.
- vi. **Keep It Simple and Straightforward** – The target audience can get irritated and bored if there are too many irrelevant messages. Do not give viewers too much unnecessary information.

Your content should be crisp, clear and related to the product/services you are dealing in. You ought to put across a couple of simple ideas in such a way that it stays in the mind of the viewer.

VIDEO OPTIMIZATION FOR IMPROVING REACH

Creating a good video is not enough. Marketer ought to make it discoverable when user searches. The following practices help in video optimization for improving reach²⁶:

- i. **Keywords** – Keywords in title, description and tags are helpful for video optimization. It has a better chance of ranking on YouTube search and Google.
- ii. **Catchy Title** – An attractive title leads the video to stand out, but it is important to remember that the title should include relevant keywords.
- iii. **Thorough Description** – A succinct description of the video gives a better understanding to bots about the content of the video. It is even better if you make transcript of the video as more the content more will be the number of keywords and better chances of discoverability.
- iv. **Tags** – Key phrases and keywords are the simplest way to let the bot know how a video should be classified.

YOUTUBE MARKETING

After creating videos, we need an efficient platform to post them to get the maximum outreach. One of the most active platforms is YouTube. It has over 1.9 billion monthly active users. Over 1 billion hours are watched on YouTube every day.²⁷ With such an immense audience presence, it is a great platform to promote your company. Marketers on YouTube have two broad areas of participation. They are as follows.

YOUTUBE CHANNELS

Companies can promote their brands and products by creating quality video content and curating them into a YouTube channel or profile. This will aid discovery and engagement whenever someone searches for relevant content on YouTube. Here are a few optimization techniques for a YouTube channel to grow better:

- **Come Up with Engaging and Catchy Titles** – Your YouTube channel growth is directly affected by your presentation. Using listicles, hyperboles, question-based titles and titles that end with ‘of all time’ are always eye-catching. Give examples of catchy titles that marketers are more inclined towards using. Using words like ‘best of’ and ‘how to’ is always a safe option for titles. They might not be extremely catchy but people are drawn towards them.
- According to a study,²⁸ it was shown that the ideal length for a title needs to be around 41–70 characters and the most ideal case being 55 characters. There are a few useful tools such as CoSchedule’s headline Analyzer that one can use for generating user-friendly titles to promote your YouTube channel.
- **Engage with Your Current Viewers** – Ask your current viewers to hit the like button, share and subscribe using innovative methods. Replying to the comments on your YouTube channel is extremely beneficial as they feel special and may share it with their friends who may also subscribe to your channel.

- Create Customized Thumbnails for Your Videos** – When a customer is directed to your page, the first thing he would notice is the thumbnails of all your videos. Keep it clear and eye-catching. Here are a few tips on how to go about it:
 1. Try and stick to 1280×720 px (or any other 16:9 ratio).
 2. Your video format should be one among .JPG, .GIF, .BMP or .PNG.
 3. Restrict the video size to less than 2MB.
 4. Use high-contrast images as thumbnails.
 5. Add different texts and colours to your thumbnail.
 6. Choose a more close-up photograph.
 7. Be consistent and try to follow a particular pattern or series.

- Make More Playlists and Keep Your Channel Structured** – A structured format is neat and tidy and is always more preferred by the customers.



FIGURE 12.10 Audi US Page

Source: Audi US

As you can see in Figure 12.10, in all the Audi ads, the description is very clean and structured with lesser text and more attention to detail.

YOUTUBE ADS

YouTube allows you to capitalize on the millions of partner videos already present on YouTube, by targeting your display ads to relevant videos. These ads are available in two different formats. The most widely used formats are as follows.

Display Ads

These ads appear next to your video while you are using YouTube on a laptop or a desktop. This ad format is not available on the mobile device and can be purchased in both cost per click (CPC) and cost per milli (CPM) formats.

Overlay Ads

An overlay ad appears in a rectangular format in the bottom 20% of the video. It is available only on a laptop or a desktop and not on mobile devices, TVs, game consoles, etc. Viewers can dismiss the ad anytime.

Skippable Video Ads

A skippable video ad is the most popular advertising format on YouTube. Viewers can skip the ad after watching it for 5 seconds. It can be inserted before, during or after the video and is available on desktop, TVs, gaming consoles and mobile devices. It has a very unique buying model wherein the publisher is paid only when a user watches 30 seconds of the video or till the end of the video – whichever comes first.

Non-Skippable Video Ads

Non-Skippable video ads are 15–20 second long video ads that can be inserted before, during or after the YouTube video. For these ads, the publisher gets paid only when a user fully watches the ad.

Mid-Roll Ads

Available only for videos over 15 minutes, mid-roll ads are spaced between the video similar to TV commercials. For better viewing experience, publishers can choose to place their ads at natural pauses between the scenes. They are available only on desktop and mobile versions and not on game consoles, TVs, etc. Further, these mid-roll ads could be skippable or non-skippable ads and the pricing model is as per the chosen format (i.e. skippable or non-skippable).

Bumper Ads

Bumper Ads are lightweight, non-skippable video ads up to 6 seconds long. They are specially optimized for mobile devices. Similar to non-skippable ads, the publisher is paid only when the user fully watches the ad.

Search Ads

They are native display ads that appear in the same context as organic content. These ads can be bought on a cost per click (CPC) basis. Figure 12.11 shows an example of search ads.

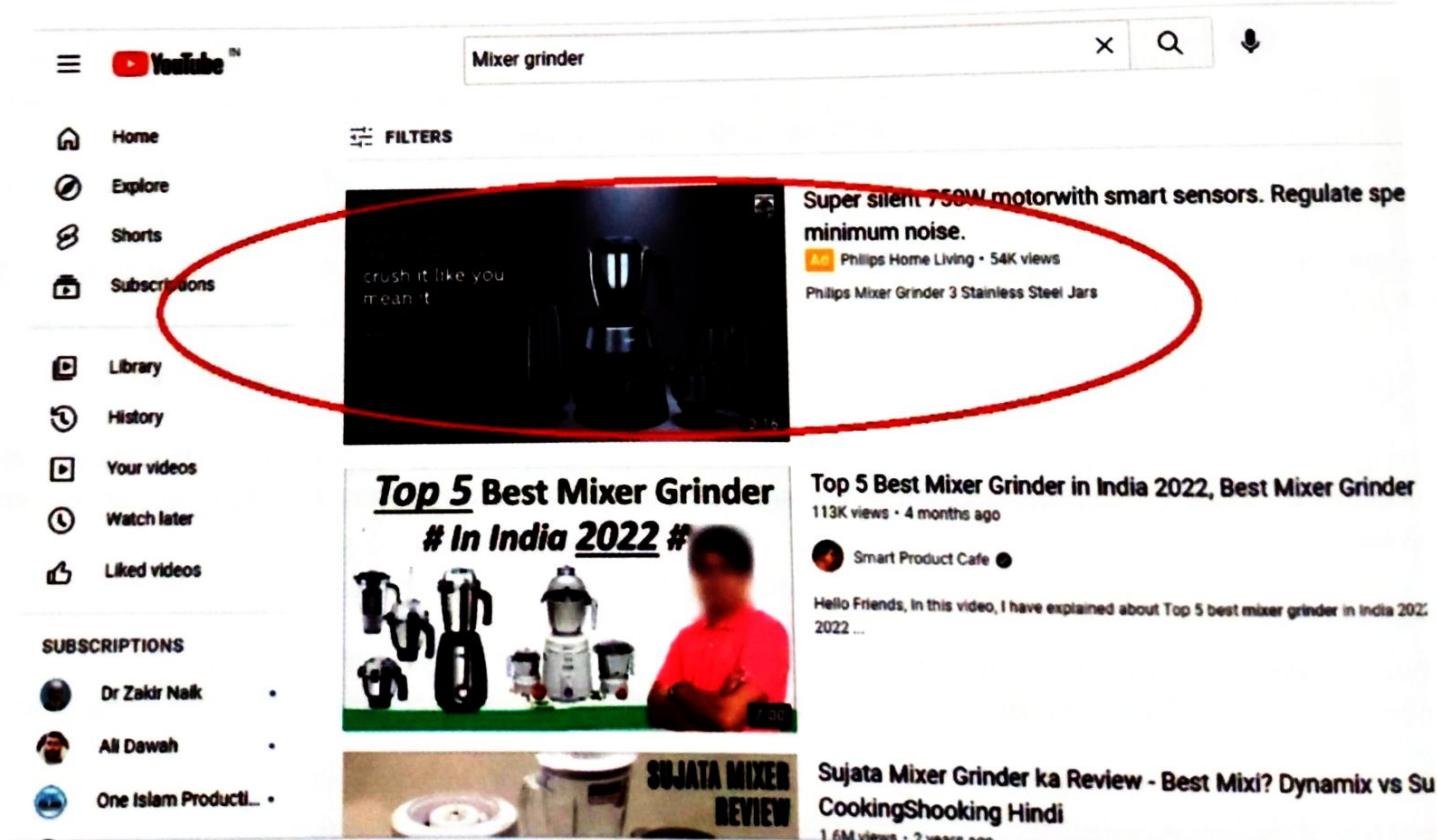


FIGURE 12.11 Search Ads

YouTube skippable ads and discovery ads that come in the search results are called true-view ads as users choose to see the ad by their own volition.

YOUTUBE AD CAMPAIGNS

Google Ads allows us to create ad campaigns on YouTube by signing up on Google Ads and creating an account. On successful creation of your account, Google Ads lets you choose from a list of campaigns based on the goal.

As with display ads, YouTube ads can also have different goals such as awareness, leads, consideration, conversion, app install, etc. (Figure 12.12).

Select the goal that would make this campaign successful to you



FIGURE 12.12 List of Goals to Be Achieved by the Campaign

Source: Google, *List of Goals to be achieved by the campaign*, https://ads.google.com/aw/campaigns/new?ocid=336209709&mpnInfo=%7B%228%22%3A%22C9C65179-9319-4417-9711-9C892ED6E88C-6%22%7D&_c=6861287941&authuser=0&u=1895088326

YOUTUBE MARKETING

While the convenience to use YouTube has been a major factor in determining its success, the channel's ability to adapt to latest consumer trends is a key driver of its growth.

Major YouTube Marketing Trends

1. Live Streaming²⁹

Live streaming wherein you can broadcast an event or a conversation online has been gaining a lot of prominence and taking over the traditional TV broadcasting.

If you're a corporate chain or a fashion brand, you can give insights to your customers regarding your business easily through live streaming. During Covid, live streaming was majorly the way brands used to connect with their customers in absence of offline events.

Live streaming can be used for various purposes like interviewing an industry expert, running FAQ sessions with the audience and even live shopping events. Depending on the type of business you have, you can use the feature of live streams accordingly.

YouTube Live offers two types of live streams: simple and custom.

- **Simple:** You can go live on our webcam or phone, provided that you have more than 1000 followers. It's helpful for doing a Q/A session or showing a presentation.

- **Custom:** Here the delivery mode is complex because it is made for presentations that have a complex nature. If you want to share your screen or use more than one web camera, an encoder will be required to make that happen.

To drive traffic through YouTube Live, create a promotional plan. Just like your product needs promotion, your live event also needs promotion. You can do this by scheduling your live video, create hype on other social media channels and give all the possible details to your audience.

Whatever the purpose of your live is, make sure that it has valuable content in it. Audience will only watch when they get back something in return. For instance, a tip/unboxing videos/ experience, etc.

Be very smart about the CTA you choose to have. For this, ask a simple question, "What do I want from my customers after the live? Purchasing, following your socials, subscribing, etc.?"

Once you've made that decision, only then choose a correct CTA.

2. YouTube Shorts

YouTube smartly used the features of TikTok and Snapchat and created its own platform called 'Shorts'.

The platform allows creators to take multiple videos and compile them using a range of music options and captions.

Apply the following tips while using YouTube Shorts:

- **Length of the video:** Consumers usually don't like dwelling on a video that is too long. Make sure to always get straight to the point, breaking down the topics in categories and tailor the clip to the platform.
- **Understand your Audience:** It is important to know what kind of videos will work for the audience, demonstrative or informative, or simply fun videos? This decision can also be made by looking at your target audience. Always choose a type of video that you think your target audience would like to engage in.
- **Reuse your Content:** Once you've used your content in the form of Shorts, you can use it again by making it into a longer writeup, making an infographic on it and sharing on your socials. You can even use it as reels which will maximise your potential to reach the right audience.

Title optimisation and thumbnails are also extremely important to make your Shorts video go viral. In the following sections, you'll read more about this.

3. New Content Creation Features

Two new features were added that can change the way you present your videos:

Chapters/Timestamps: As the name suggests, chapters allow creators to compile their videos in different segments, each with a unique title so that users can skip to the part they're actively interested in seeing by clicking on the video progress bar.

If you arrange your videos in timestamps, it is most likely to get positioned as a 'suggested clip/video' on the Google search results which will help in extending your traffic source.

Premiers: This feature helps creators to post a pre-recorded video while engaging with their fans through live comments. The gist is that you can post the video as per your convenience with your own settings but the reactions to your video will be live.

Just imagine the kind of personalised effect both the creators and audience will get from this. After the premiers (that is your video) ends, your video will be labelled as "Premiered" and your audience can see the live comments after that too.

4. Community Engagement

Earlier, the only way for the audience to engage was through likes, shares and comments. This was more of an indirect engagement rather than a direct one. YouTube now has created a 'Community' feature that helps creators to interact with audiences through polls, texts, images and videos.

This feature can be used to share the latest news, reveal your latest videos or products or just general feedback. This allows you to take a creative approach rather than uni-dimensionally conversing just on comments.

How to make the Best use of YouTube Algorithms?³⁰

In order to understand what the audience likes watching, YouTube follows their users, which means tracking their engagement through the videos they watch. Also, it figures out what videos they liked/disliked and what particularly interests them.

These parameters need to be understood in the six main user categories that YouTube provides:

1. Search

According to HubSpot, the two main factors to determine your search ranking are relevance of keywords and engagement metric like thumbs up, sharing, commenting and subscribing. Therefore, what matters here is how well your content is in terms of titles and descriptions.

Also, the algorithm also accounts for how many users have watched videos from your channel and similar videos just like the topics your channel focuses on. This means they value quality content and retention capacity of your videos.

2. Home

Just like everyone else, your users would also want to watch those videos that catch attention instantly. While accessing the homepage, the algorithm gives them suggested videos based on their previous watch history and also according to how well the videos performed. It is important to have appealing thumbnails, eye-catching titles and quality content that users would want to click on and watch.

3. Suggested Videos

YouTube's first priority is to always give the most relevant and personalised experience to their users. To understand what users will like, they analyse their watch history and find content that will be relevant to them. Following that, it ranks these videos based on:

- Engagement rate of the videos and satisfaction by similar users
- Frequency of a user to watch videos from a particular channel or similar channels
- Frequency of YouTube showing these videos to users

You need your content to come under suggested videos because this feature has been appreciated by the users as they can access a variety of content in one go.

4. Trending

The trending page shows the new and popular videos in a user's country. Since the platform wants to balance between popularity and novelty, which is why they consider the view count growth rate of each video they rank. The trending videos have four categories: Now, Music, Movies and Gaming. So, for instance, if any hit music has a million or billion views, it is likely to be featured under the 'Music' section of the Trending page.

5. Subscriptions

On the subscription page, users can view all the videos from the channels they subscribe to. However, apart from this, the channels also benefit in the form of 'view velocity', a metric which measures the number of subscribers who watched your video immediately after posting it. The higher your view velocity rate, the higher your videos will rank. The ranking is also based on the number of active subscribers your channel currently has.

6. Notifications

Just like every other platform, YouTube also makes use of notifications to give tailored videos to its audience. If you want your audience to receive notifications from your channel, they will need to tap on the bell icon.

This will only happen if you have sufficiently optimised your videos according to the algorithm based on keywords and engagement metrics, as discussed before.

How does the Algorithm Work for YouTube Recommendations?⁵¹

There is an audience for almost every video and the job of YouTube's recommendation system is to find that audience. They majorly lead the overall viewership ratio of the platform, even more than the subscription or search.

The main task of this recommendation system is to help people find relevant videos they want to watch and can add value to their time spent on the platform. This is done by: 1. Homepage, where there are personalised recommendations, subscription and news, and 2. Up Next panel, which appears when you're watching a video and suggests more content on the basis of your current video.

To understand how YouTube personalises these recommendations, let's take a look at this recommendation pyramid:



FIGURE 12.13 YouTube Recommendation Algorithm

As the pyramid shows, these six parameters play a crucial role in curating the videos that YouTube can recommend to the users. Video creators must move users from one stage to the other, thus creating a funnel. Users enter at the top of the funnel at which stage the engagement is very fleeting and thickens towards the bottom of the funnel.

Impressions Firstly, the marketer must expose the users to the content as then only they can engage. Paid ads, managing video SEO and increasing subscribers are some of the ways to increase your impressions.

To optimise your videos according to SEO, align your content based on long tail keywords. Of course, it receives less traffic but, at the same time, it also helps in keeping away the competition.

Similarly, optimise your title and video descriptions to rank better. Video descriptions can be further optimised using links, resource materials or call to action.

Using paid ads can eventually increase your impressions. Based on what the motive of your ad is, you can choose the ad type according to that. The greatest benefit of these ads is that you get extra shares and views and it boosts SEO. Further, if your video is already a success according to algorithms, paid ads will make it reach greater heights.

Clicks We only click on a video if it has an appealing thumbnail and a subtle title. You can increase clicks by adding words like 'benefits', 'new' , 'promise' or giving a name authority and percentages in your titles. For instance, "5 Benefits of Learning Excel in 2022."

play When a user clicks on the video and it starts playing, it is called a play. Another related variable is playrate, which is the speed at which your video is playing. An ideal playrate would neither be too fast nor too slow so that viewers can understand the intention behind the video properly. Also, in case you have an accent, always make sure to add subtitles to your videos.

Views When a user watches a video for more than 30 seconds, it is called a view. It is important that the video keeps the user hooked for 30 seconds. Some strategies that are effective in retaining the user in the first 30 seconds are intriguing the user, making a teaser, a crisp start, coming straight to the point, and bringing the brand upfront. You can also follow the strategies given below to get views:

- Consistency:** Sometimes, we feel that consistent posting means posting every day. However, consistent posting can also mean you can set a pattern of when you'll post a video which will make viewers feel excited to come to your channel. For instance, you can fix that you'll only post on the first Tuesday of every month, which will probably make your audience wait for your content, provided it's relevant and watch worthy.
- Suggested Views:** Audience prefers suggested views provided by YouTube more than searching themselves. To get on the list, make videos on trendy topics based in your domain that are going to catch the algorithm's attention. Use a strong list of keywords and keep the beginning very interesting to keep your viewers hooked.

Engagement Getting views is not enough. Video must engage the user as that is a feedback to YouTube that the user found the content interesting. Engagement simply means the number of likes, shares and comments you've got. The system assumes if you've liked a video, it adds value to you. On the other hand, if you've disliked a video, that means it did not really add value to your time.

You can drive engagement by asking your viewers how they like it after the most special part of your video, and not in the beginning. You can even ask for likes on review groups that run on Facebook. This will help you get more viewers. You can also ask for likes and comments by mentioning it in the captions or stories while posting the video link on other social media channels.

In order to get more comments, structure your video around something that offers a solution to the viewers like a recipe or technical support. Secondly, in the video, try asking questions from your audience too so that they put forth their views. It is very important to reply to the comments in order to keep the conversation going. Lastly, always give links for resources or a strong CTA.

Watch Time³² Video creators must retain the user not just for 30 seconds but for the entire length of the video. Retention is the most important parameter in the recommendation algorithm as YouTube can show more ads when it prioritises videos which keep the users longer on the platform. The more ads YouTube can show, the more money it can make. In 2012, YouTube incorporated Watch Time into their recommendation systems. It measures which videos you've watched and for how long. For instance, if you've watched IPL highlights for 20 minutes and just 5 minutes of the match analysis where experts make their remarks, YouTube assumes that you found the highlights video more valuable.

To make sure that your watch time is maximised according to the system, deliver high quality content that eventually leads to audience retention. You can also use listicles as a format that is easier to read and can sustain your viewers for a longer duration. Apart from this, you can also give a bonus tip in the end and mention it somewhere in the beginning to maintain the levels of curiosity. You can also use the end screen to link your most relevant video and increase your watch time.

However, the platform soon realised that watch time solely cannot add value since some videos are solely done for entertainment purposes and they did not want viewers to regret spending their time watching videos, and therefore they used other parameters also like engagement to make the algorithm more efficient.

YOUTUBE ANALYTICS DASHBOARD

YouTube Analytics is a powerful tool that allows marketers to assess their customers in a very well-defined and a parametric way³³. It provides useful insights into how customers are viewing and engaging with the brands content, what the customers like the most, what kind of content the brand needs to create to get more views and conversions. YouTube Analytics has a list of parameters that help in deciphering this valuable information. YouTube divides its Analytics page into four major sections based on the brand's intentions.

For a better understanding, let us study the four sections it is distributed into:

1. Overview

Overview gives key information on the brand's performance and engagement in a very simplified manner. Overview gives information about views per video, watch time and subscribers. This data can be extremely helpful in getting a fair idea about the current audience, and brands can make relevant content based on their needs. The overview section also shows reports on marketers, the top videos and the real-time activity on their channels. Marketers can visit this section if they need a quick review of how the brand's channel has been performing.

2. Reach Viewers

This section shows the marketers about the overall reach that the channel has been achieving. It displays the impressions and the click-through rate and also shows the unique viewers to the channel. This tab also shows reports on traffic sources external and internal, showing where the users can find the video, impressions and how they lead to watch time showing how many people saw the video and clicked on it to watch it. This data can be used to efficiently spend the finances on sources that are getting the brand videos more views.

3. Interest Viewers

This section focuses more on users and what content they watch on YouTube. The main report shows us the watch time and the average number of minutes a user spends on watching the brand's video. This tab also shows reports on top videos and playlists in the channel and top cards and end screens on a specific video. This data can be majorly used for developing better videos based on users' interests as the marketers already have access to the content users tend to like more.

4. Build an Audience

The Build an Audience section mainly focuses on the people who watch the brand's video. The main graph gives us insights into unique viewers, average number of videos watched by the users on the brands channel, and into the subscriber growth or fall. This section also gives us reports on the top countries viewing the brand's videos, top subtitles, gender and age of the viewers. This data can be used to make target- and region-specific data, which is more focused on the customers and their behaviour.

All this data made available there can be accessed in the form of reports and tables by applying multiple features based on geography, viewer's age, gender, etc.