TV IS MORE THAN TV

PART 1

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUTUBE

How marketers can connect YouTube to their marketing strategy

MiQ BETTER CONNECTED MARKETING

TV IS MORE THAN TV

TV is more than TV is our four-part ebook series looking at the changing world of TV and what it means for marketers and advertisers. In the first ebook, we take a look at YouTube and how to get better results from the platform.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

In this short ebook you'll find out:

- Why linear TV and YouTube have more similarities than you might think, especially when fitting them into your wider marketing plans.

- The major challenges with YouTube, and how they all stem from a lack of insights.

- How you can use YouTube API data to get more out of your spend on the platform and connect those insights to the rest of your strategy.

INTRODUCTION

It used to be simple. The TV was the largest screen in the house. You knew what shows were on by looking at the schedule and you knew (approximately) who was watching from the ratings. Then it was just a case of buying as many slots to hit the demo you wanted as your budget would allow.

Okay, so maybe it was a bit more complicated than that. But compared to today, TV was a cinch.

Nowadays, TV is a multichannel, multiplatform, multi-device conundrum.

By watching video on their mobiles, their laptops, their tablets and their connected TVs, consumers are generating the kinds of data that media buyers of old could only dream of. But connecting all that data together, digging out the insights, and then activating them in unified campaigns that reach audiences across all the things that now count as TV is really, really tough.

And getting your TV strategy right is what this ebook series is all about.

In this first installment, we're looking at YouTube. Its importance as part of the TV marketing mix doesn't need making. It's the largest video publisher in the world across all of in-stream, native, and video formats, and it's the most rewarding channel when it comes to unique user reach. The opportunity to reach engaged consumers is huge.

But why is it such a consistently frustrating channel for advertisers?

Below, we'll look at some of the challenges facing advertisers when running YouTube campaigns and show you how, by using data from the YouTube API, you can solve those challenges and connect your YouTube insights to your wider TV strategy.

Let's dig in.

01

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

On the face of it, YouTube and old-fashioned linear TV shouldn't have that much in common. Beyond the fact that they're both in the business of showing people video content, you'd think they were in all other ways unalike.

Most obviously, linear TV grew up in the analogue age whereas YouTube is its millennial younger cousin, which leads to huge differences in the data, targeting and measurement available. But the divergences are more profound.

TV is still dominated by networks with execs in swivel chairs commanding legions of programmers, directors, producers, camera crews, gaffers, and runners. YouTube, on the other hand, is a free-for-all of user-generated video, creators aiming to be the next PewDiePie, and a chaos of brands and businesses uploading content of massively varying quality.

Likewise, TV is still run according to schedules, with allotted time for programmes and allotted time for ad breaks, an orderly system compared to the whenever, wherever YouTube model, where content is viewed on the basis of what a user searches for and what the recommendation-algorithm suggests next.

So, linear TV and YouTube are miles apart. And yet...

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For brands, advertising on YouTube creates many of the same problems of traditional TV.

Both attract large portions of budget and are the go-to channel for the biggest, sexiest brand level ads. But the level of insights they get back leave a lot to be desired. And the insights they do get generally tend to be after the fact, so that optimizing and improving as a campaign runs is impossible.

In other words, YouTube, like linear TV, is an incredible opportunity to get your brand's best content in front of engaged eyeballs, especially when you can connect both together to form a unified TV strategy.

But getting to that point, making the most of that opportunity, and then proving you've done it, is frustratingly elusive.

So, what gives?

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THE CHALLENGES WITH YOUTUBE

There are four main problems with advertising on YouTube.

01

There's a lack of insights

This is the big one, and it's fair to say that all the other three issues all stem from the first.

Because YouTube is owned by Google, the only way to buy inventory programmatically on the site is through Google's self-serve advertising platforms (Google Ads or DV360). It is, in essence, a walled garden, and like other walled garden advertising - Facebook, Twitter, Amazon and so on - brands get what they're given in terms of insights. That means it's hard to dig into the detail about where exactly their ads are running.

And, because YouTube is walled off, it can be hard to use insights from other channels - linear TV being the obvious one - to inform YouTube campaigns as well.

In a world without cookies, where even advertising on the 'open' web is likely to involve navigating between discrete identity resolution providers, the need for better insights within walled data environments is a challenge that brands will increasingly face. Solving this challenge within YouTube is a good example for the way advertisers will have to work in other platforms - and a crucial building block in creating a unified TV strategy across all platforms.

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There's the potential for wasted media spend

Because of the lack of insights, YouTube has the potential for wasted media spend.

In an ideal world, you want to reach the people who are most likely to be influenced by your ads who will go on to convert. And you want to target them via the content and channels where that audience is engaging.

But unless you have solid insights into both sides of that equation, you're going to end up spending money reaching sub-optimal users in sub-optimal places. And that's a waste of your budget.

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It's tough to be brand safe

As discussed above, lots of the content on YouTube comes from a chaotic range of sources. And if you don't know which content your ads are being shown alongside, that creates a huge challenge for brand safety.

For a start, no one wants their ad shown alongside the violent, pornographic, or politically sensitive content that sometimes makes its way onto YouTube. But there may also be times when you need to be responsive to events, avoiding videos and categories that would usually be okay, but for immediate and pressing reasons, are not. Unless you have the insights and the flexibility to control this, there's the potential for reputational damage.

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You can't optimize in real-time

The way DV360 provides insights is largely via static post-campaign reports. That means even if you had the insights to solve the challenges of wastage and brand safety outlined above, you wouldn't be able to use them on a campaign while it was happening.

Learning and doing better next time is the essence of good marketing, of course, but when you have teams of highly skilled programmatic traders whose ability to change strategies in flight is the basis of their whole job, such post-hoc optimization is frustrating to say the least.

These challenges are all real and need solving. But they certainly don't mean brands should be turning their backs on YouTube. What we said at the top - the bit about YouTube being the most rewarding channel for reaching unique users - is still true despite the problems.

So, the question is, how can you get more from YouTube?

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SOLVING THE YOUTUBE CONUNDRUM

Time for the good news. There is a way marketers and advertisers can solve the challenges outlined above to run YouTube campaigns more efficiently and effectively.

It comes in the form of the YouTube API, an incredible and vast source of data on all the content uploaded to the platform that, if analyzed correctly, can be used to get far deeper insights - and more quickly - than those provided by DV360.

Anyone can plug into the YouTube API and get access to this data, so the obvious question is, why doesn't everyone do it?

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Simply put, the volume of data you can access is absolutely enormous, and most brands don't have the technological or data science capacity to analyze it in a timely and cost-efficient way.

And even if they do, there's still the larger challenge of connecting it to other datasets to find cross-channel insights and having the programmatic trading expertise to activate those insights.

But, if you work with a partner that does have such capacity (*gentle marketing cough*), the benefits can be enormous.

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SOLVING THE YOUTUBE CONUNDRUM

### 1) Expanding reach with category overlap

By looking at exact video IDs within categories, you can see what content is resonating well and find overlapping categories. So if, for instance, your DV360 campaign data shows you that your campaign resonates especially well in sports categories, you can analyze API data to see which categories overlap most closely. Once you see that, for example, esports and video games, are a good fit, you can change your activation strategy and expand your reach.

2) Reducing waste by ensuring your categories are relevant

By looking at individual video IDs, you can make sure each video is relevant to the category you want to target, and exclude anything that's not relevant to the campaign, minimizing your media wastage.

To give you an example, we were once working with a B2B engineering firm displaying ads in manufacturing and building categories. But when we got down into the weeds, we saw their ad was being delivered against children's videos about building train sets. By recognizing this quickly, we were able to stop wasting spend on an audience that clearly wasn't relevant.
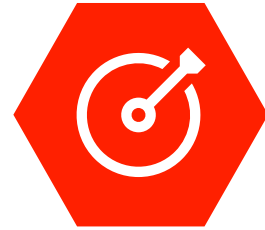
3) Using video descriptions for better targeting

Video description metadata is an incredibly powerful way of optimizing campaigns. Let's say you're a grocery brand advertising your food offerings, and so you're targeting videos in the food category. But, by diving into the descriptions, you're able to see that for example videos about Italian and Mexican cooking are outperforming other cuisine types.

Not only can you optimize your campaign to take advantage of this insight, but you can also use it to fuel wider marketing initiatives. If you know certain description keywords are performing well on YouTube, this can also inform your display, your search and your PPC campaigns.

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SOLVING THE YOUTUBE CONUNDRUM
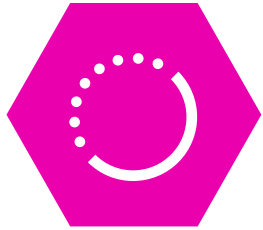
4) Learning from contextual trends

The YouTube API also gives you access to a load of contextual data - video length, likes/dislike ratio, view count, subscriber count, publishing data etc - that can be included in your planning and activation.

At a basic level, this means you can optimize towards videos that meet an optimum level of quality or popularity. But it also lets you test and learn from more idiosyncratic experiments. For instance, you might find that you get lower completion rates for brand new videos (because fans are so eager to see the new content) whereas if you wait a bit, a viewer might be more likely to watch your ad before the video.
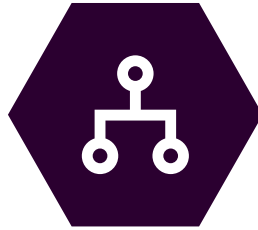
5) Connecting YouTube to your wider marketing strategy

This is where things can get really exciting. Depending on the datasets in your market, you can also connect YouTube data to things like TV data and anonymized mobile data to get a unified view of your audiences' TV viewing habits across all the screens and platforms they're watching on.

For instance, in the US you can use ACR data from opted-in TVs to see what YouTube users are watching on other TV platforms, to do things like find users with similar viewing habits, exclude the users you've already reached on linear TV, or even see what YouTube content your competitors are running on to conquest that audience.

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IT'S TIME TO GET MORE FROM YOUTUBE

The truth is that most advertisers aren't getting the most out of their YouTube spend because they don't have the time and the resources to make the most of all the powerful data available to them..

And that's when YouTube advertising ends up looking like old fashioned linear TV ad spend: broad-brush stroke targeting, minimal insights, and disconnected from real marketing outcomes.

It doesn't need to be like that.

At MiQ, we're helping advertisers get more out of their YouTube spend by setting our data scientists loose on the YouTube API to find and connect the insights that drive better performance before, during, and after campaigns.

If that sounds good, we'd love to talk about YouTube or any of the other capabilities of our **Advanced TV** solutions.

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