What makes a trend
Human truths behind the Top 5 YouTube trends
Malaysia
What are millions of people choosing to watch on the world’s largest video platform?

And what is it that makes these videos so popular?

Here, we look at the top 5 YouTube trends from the last year and the human truths that are driving them.
The success of sequels

Some of 2021’s most successful videos were follow-ups to top-viewed videos.

SEISMIK TV received 10.3M views in 2021 and its most popular video from the SEISMIK Challenge series drew almost 500K views, topping the first episode’s view count by 2X.
If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it

The success of sequels reveals how viewers are taking comfort in familiarity, particularly amid times of uncertainty.

Once viewers are invested in content they love, they begin to actively seek out more of the same.
Live streams are mainstream

Creators are using live streams to connect with their audiences in real time, making cultural moments a communal affair.

Malaysian trader and traveler Anson Tan shares updates about the stock market and cryptocurrency via live stream on The Tradveller 作手过客. The channel has 56.9K subscribers and its most popular live stream in 2021 attracted 18K views.
You don’t need big budgets or intricate scripts to captivate audiences. The popularity of live streams shows that viewers are placing value on **authentic and immediate** content that reflects real life.
Once a subculture, gaming is now undeniably pop culture. The first half of 2021 saw over 800B gaming-related views on YouTube.¹

Gaming creator Horangi99 has 388K subscribers who watch videos of him playing games on Roblox. His most popular gameplay video from 2021 has 3.8M views.

¹ Source: YouTube data, Global, H2 2021
Create shared experiences to bring people closer

Gaming is more than holding a controller — it’s joining a community.

Digital audiences seek content they can relate to and tribes they can align with, and gaming pop culture provides a colorful backdrop for diverse storytelling and engaging experiences.
Podcast enthusiast

YouTube is now an established **podcast destination**, buoyed by greater demand for **audio content** and **multisensory experiences**.

**JinnyboyTV** Hangouts appeals to its **105K subscribers** with conversations about **culture, food challenges, and celebrity interviews**. The video podcast's episode featuring internet celebrity Uncle Roger had almost 360K views.
The rise of video podcasts shows how viewers are seeking to build deeper connections with the content and creators they care about.

Providing behind-the-scenes access can help to establish virtual proximity for viewers, while offering creators and brands an opportunity to show a different or more intimate side of themselves.
Is reality more captivating than fiction? Millions of people seem to think so.

Mark O'Dea's channel has 171K subscribers with funny and relatable Shorts about life in Malaysia. His most popular Shorts has 414K views.

Top creators are tapping into the quick, informal aspect of Shorts to spotlight the humor and relatability of daily life.
It’s not what you say, it’s how you say it.

Regardless of themes or topics, this year’s most popular Shorts had one thing in common: they were relatable.

Today’s viewers are looking for content that is unfiltered and unpretentious.
Explore more examples from other APAC markets here.