What makes a trend

Human truths behind the Top 5 YouTube trends

Pakistan
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.

Popular creator Maaz Safdar shared his wedding announcement on his channel Maaz Safdar World. The follow-up video, showcasing his wedding, drew 2.6M views, almost 3X the view count of his wedding announcement video.
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.

Travel vlog channel WildLens by Abrar hosts Q&A live streams for its 568K subscribers while its creator, Abrar Hassan, travels around the world on his motorcycle.
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

RKG Army creates gameplay videos, tutorials, and bundle reveals for hit game "Free Fire," attracting 2.34M subscribers. His most popular video has earned 6.4M 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.

The Honest Hour Podcast by Shahveer Jafry, which has 674K subscribers, features fun and relatable conversations about daily life, and it often stars celebrity guests. Its most popular video has 3.2M 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.

WHAT WE LEARNED:

Show how content is made
Is reality more captivating than fiction? Millions of people seem to think so.

Salman Noman is a prolific and adept user of Shorts, making use of it to create skits for his 2.26M subscribers, which attract up to 20M 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.