

Best Practices: Optimizing for the Improved YouTube



YouTube is evolving from a video-based site to a channels-based site, where subscriptions rule. And so, we're redesigning the site to make it easier for our users to find and subscribe to the channels they love by putting the Guide on all pages. So, what does this mean for you as a creator? Channels are available to your subscribers in the Guide throughout the site, so you can seamlessly keep your fans plugged into your content and your channel. Here are some of the changes you'll see:

- Improved "Guide" now everywhere, showcasing your channel's activity to subscribers
- Significant increase in channel recommendations across the site, to help grow your subscriber base
- More robust interface for playlists, providing a better, more engaging viewing experience

As always, it's important that your videos are optimized to build a strong subscriber base, and you're providing an engaging experience for your audience so they keep coming back for more. We'd like to give you an overview of the new site design and suggest ways for you to make the most of it for you and your channel. If you're looking for a comprehensive set of best practices, check out the [YouTube Creator Playbook](#).

What You Can Do:

Channel Metadata: Due to the increased prominence of channels and channel recommendations throughout the site, it is critical to have strong channel titles, avatars, and descriptions.

- The **Channel Avatar** is one of your main marketing images on the site.
 - Helps raise awareness for current subscribers
 - Used in search, suggestions and recommendations, and now on the watch page and in comments
 - Make sure the avatar is compelling, eye-catching and communicates the channel concept.
 - Your Channel Avatar will appear in many different sizes across YouTube. Make sure it looks clear in sizes big and small.

"Confessions Of A Youtuber" Tales Of Mere Existence



AgentXPQ · 70 videos



Subscribe

221,970

- Only the first ~45 characters (or often fewer!) of your **Channel Description** appear next to your avatar across the the site.
 - Your channel should be summed up concisely and communicate what the channel is about
 - Compel users to subscribe by featuring key talent names and channel subject matter.
- The **Channel Title**, rather than your username, is used in many locations throughout the site including search and recommendations.
- Type your Channel name into YouTube search to see how your Channel is being presented to viewers, and modify the items mentioned above (Avatar, Title, and Description) as needed.



VlogBrothers

by vlogbrothers · 1,049 videos · 822,633 subscribers

Raising nerdy to the power of awesome.

• We're all Scared (4:00)

CHANNEL

Subscribe

Video metadata

As the feed becomes a bigger part of the YouTube experience, nailing your metadata is really important.

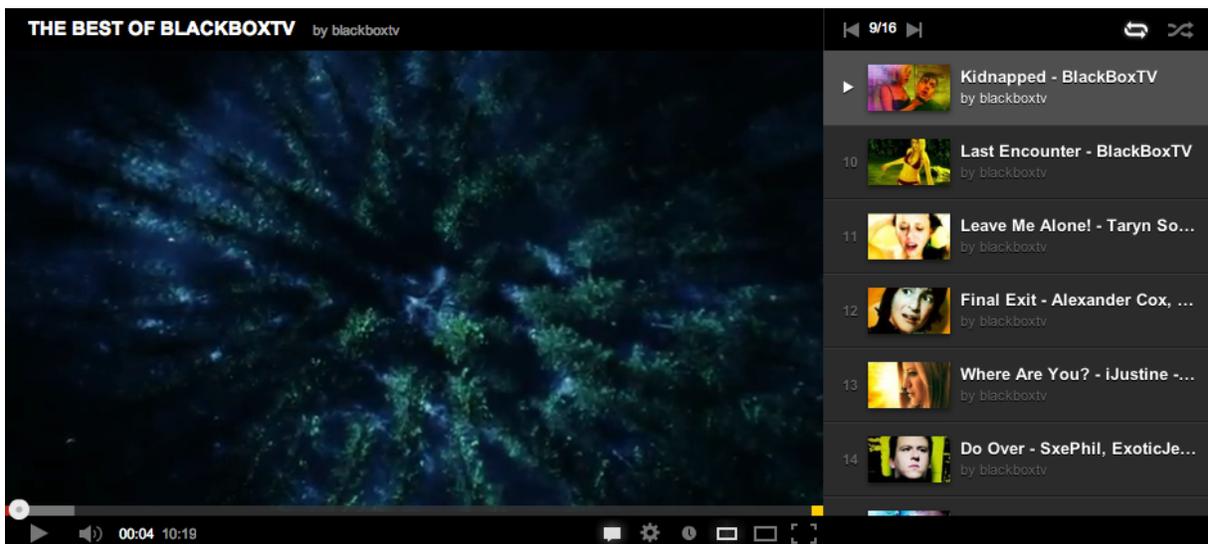
- Make sure that **titles** lead with the most compelling keywords; save branding for the end of the title.
- On the new YouTube homepage, now more of the **description** is visible for each video. Provide the most interesting information first since this is most likely to show up with your video on the home page.
 - Descriptions should also offer links to the subscribe page, playlists, and the channel page, but links should follow descriptive information about the video.



Sharing playlists

We've updated the playlist viewing experience to display the other videos in the playlist more prominently to the right of the video being viewed on the watch page.

- Make sure to curate your videos into playlists and share this playlist URL, so that viewers can enter this curated experience.
- The playlist URLs can be very long, and are not easily shareable on social networks. Consider using a URL shortener such as goo.gl to shorten the playlist URL before sharing so it's more readable.



Although the look and feel of YouTube has changed, the vast majority of optimizations in the Playbook are the same: optimizing Calls to Action, Annotations, and video metadata are still critical in building audience on YouTube. Our hope is that the site changes will help make it easier for your current subscribers to find and enjoy your content, as well as make it easier for new fans to find and subscribe to your channel.

Now, go create something!