

 YouTube Social Impact

# The Playbook

You're on a mission to create greater impact. YouTube can help.

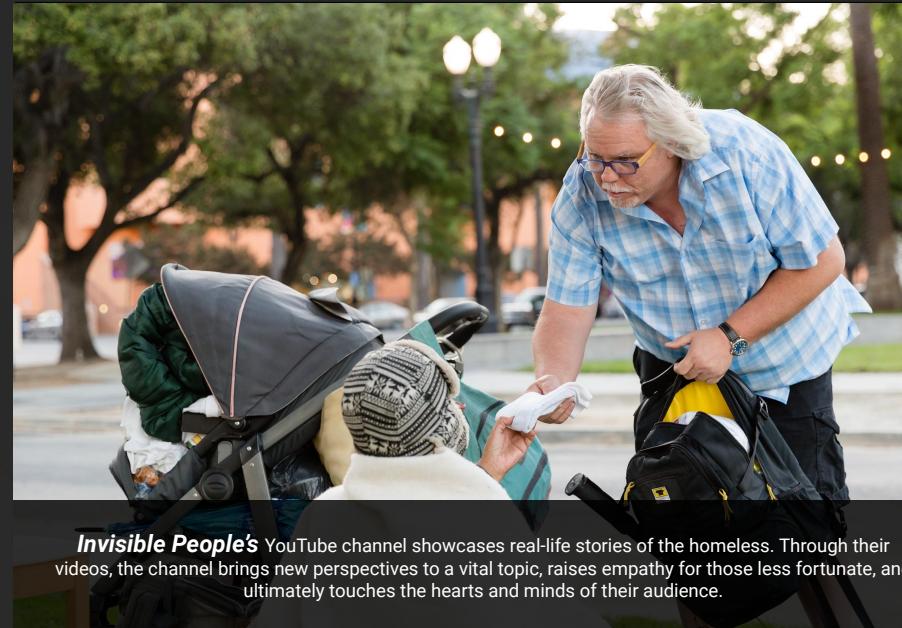
## HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

Let's do more good together.

From the beginning, YouTube has always believed in the power of video storytelling to have positive impact.

By combining your passion for your cause and our technology and scale, you can ignite and sustain movements that drive measurable social change.

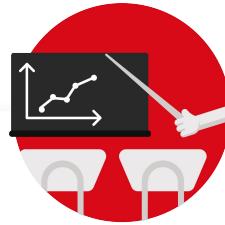
This playbook is a step-by-step guide for nonprofits, social activists, and creators starting out on a journey to create social impact content on YouTube. Filled with our tips, best practices, and worksheets to guide you, this walkthrough was designed for one ultimate purpose: to help you make an I.M.P.A.C.T. on YouTube.



**Invisible People's** YouTube channel showcases real-life stories of the homeless. Through their videos, the channel brings new perspectives to a vital topic, raises empathy for those less fortunate, and ultimately touches the hearts and minds of their audience.

## YOUTUBE IS THE HOME OF SOCIAL IMPACT

Here are just a few of the ways YouTube empowers anyone to effect positive, lasting change.



### Reach a Global Audience

YouTube has over 2 billion monthly logged-in users and every day people watch over a billion hours of video. Amplify your cause by bringing it to the largest viewing audience in the world.



### Drive Empathy

Video storytelling creates empathy for your cause—the first important step to move people to take action.



### Engage New Supporters

Whether you need help raising money or spreading the word, YouTube provides powerful tools and resources to get the next generation of supporters involved in your mission.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Initiate

- Overview
- Define Your Destination
- Congratulations

## Map Your Content's Mission

- Chart The Territory
- Find Fellow Explorers
- Plot Your Course

## Produce Content

- Strategy
- Search
- Storytelling

## Activate Your Community

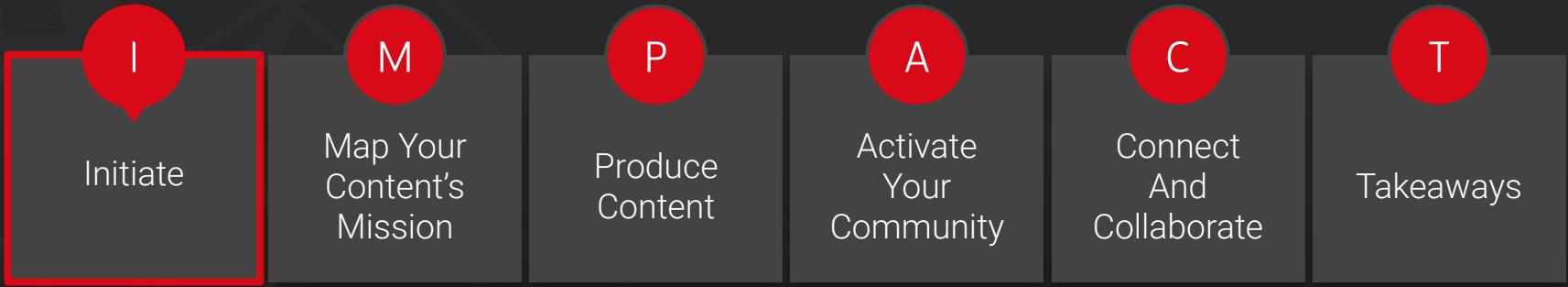
- Tools For Connecting
- Viewers Can Be Contributors, Too
- YouTube Giving

## Connect & Collaborate

- YouTube Collaborations

## Takeaways

- Key Points
- Worksheets



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Initiate

You're on a journey to  
**create greater impact.**

It all starts by exploring some  
basic (but vital) questions.



## DEFINE YOUR DESTINATION

To make the most of your journey, you need to know where you're going. That's why there's power in determining your YouTube goals: They'll help you navigate along the way!

**WHAT** is your content's mission? In other words,  
what do you want to change about the issues you'll address?

---

**WHY** is the issue important to your audience,  
and why should the world care?

---

# Congratulations!

You just took the first step in your I.M.P.A.C.T. journey! By deciding what you want to change, you've begun the journey toward your "destination."



What's Next:

[LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW TO REACH THAT DESTINATION »](#)



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Map Your Content's Mission

When creating social impact content,  
**you are the audience's tour guide for your chosen cause.**

Here's how you can have the greatest impact as you lead others through your cause's "territory."



## CHART THE TERRITORY

You may be an expert on the issue, but **to make it accessible to audiences, you'll need to educate them on your chosen cause.** Help newcomers understand by "charting the territory."

### KEEP THESE QUESTIONS IN MIND AS YOU CREATE CONTENT:

1. What is the history and evolution of the issue?
2. What are the most common misperceptions of the issue?
3. What are different positions on the issue and why?
4. What challenges have kept the issue from improving?
5. Is this a global or local issue? If global, how is it taking shape/action locally? If local, how can global examples of other issues give you ideas and benchmarks for what can be done?



[SEE THE "CHART YOUR TERRITORY" WORKSHEET »](#)

## FIND FELLOW EXPLORERS

You're not the first to dive into this issue online. It can be both instructive and inspiring to seek out others passionate about the cause.



### HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO GET STARTED:

1. Find organizations already talking about this issue.
2. Identify and analyze relevant YouTube creators and other influencers who are active in social change.
3. Connect across social media.
4. Contribute to the community, and share your story.

## PLOT YOUR COURSE

It's almost time to take the next step to create your content!

### FIRST, CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Are there "gaps" in the way the issue is typically presented? New ways to share the issue and its importance?
2. What compelling facts and stories about the issue can help audiences connect with it?
3. How can you utilize your own background and story to connect to the issue and to audiences?



# Well Done!

You've built a strong base of knowledge!  
Now it's time to put that prep work to use.



What's Next:

[LET'S LOOK AT HOW TO GET YOUR STORY IN FRONT OF THE WORLD »](#)



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Produce Content

There's a lot to producing content. But it doesn't have to be overwhelming!

**We'll break it into a few basic stages:**

- Strategy
- Search
- Storytelling



Looking for more info about producing content for YouTube? Check out these resources.

[YOUTUBE CREATOR ACADEMY »](#)

[CHOOSING YOUR EQUIPMENT »](#)

[10 FUNDAMENTALS OF A CREATIVE STRATEGY »](#)

## STRATEGY (AKA HERO, HUB, HELP):

Though viral social impact videos come along once in a while, the more reliable way to make an impact on YouTube is to sustain your channel with ongoing new content.

As you think about your long-term channel strategy, it helps to imagine your videos in three categories: **Hero, Hub, and Help**.



## STRATEGY: HERO CONTENT

**Hero Content** is the content you want to push to a big, broad audience.

You'll likely only have a few hero moments per year—major campaign launches or seasonal tentpole events—so make them count by entertaining and inspiring.

To decide on your Hero Content, ask:

1. What major events, anniversaries, milestones, etc., are relevant to your cause, and how can you benefit from the interest they generate?
2. What “special ingredients” (e.g. style, guests) can you bring to this video to make it stand out?



## STRATEGY: HUB CONTENT

**Hub Content** is the core of your channel.

When people subscribe to your channel, it's usually for this type of content: regularly scheduled, reliably engaging, and designed to give a fresh perspective on your cause.

**Let these questions guide your Hub Content:**

1. What are you known for?
2. What is repeatable?
3. What do you want to be your “bread and butter”?



**Great Big Story's** hub content is their regularly-posted short documentaries, often no more than five minutes long, like this video, 6 Stories Celebrating Native American History and Culture.

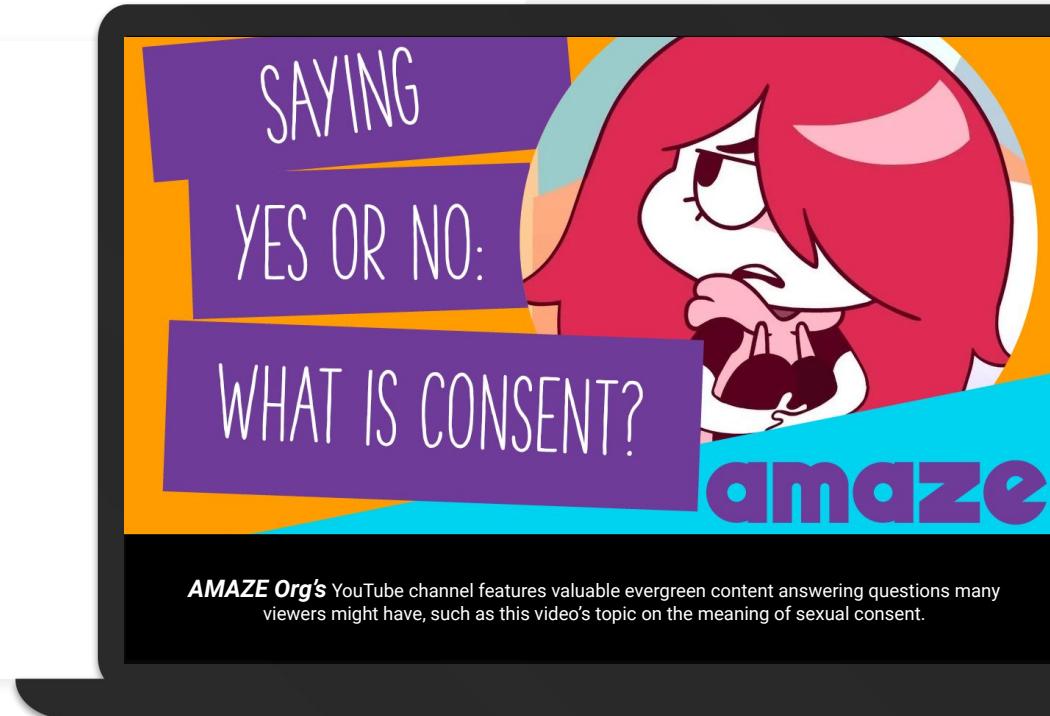
## STRATEGY: HELP CONTENT

**Help Content** is programming that is always relevant.

Throughout the year answer audiences questions. Posted semi-frequently, some examples could include Q&As, how-tos, or history lesson videos.

Showcase your unique knowledge and identify:

1. What is your audience looking for?
2. What search phrases are they using?
3. What keywords are they typing in?
4. What questions can you answer that are especially timely now but will also be relevant in the future?

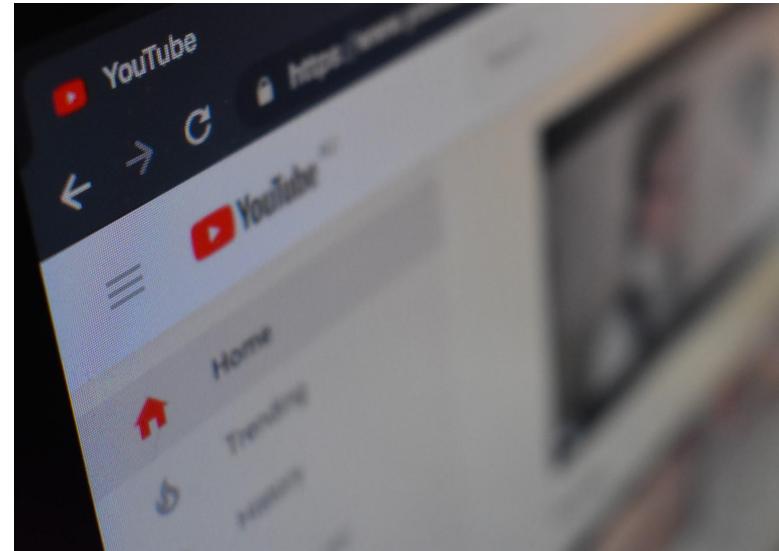


## SEARCH | OVERVIEW

People come to YouTube to search for topics that are important to them, so it's worth investing time in making sure people looking for content about your topic find and watch it.

To help that happen, it's important to **"package"** **your videos in the optimal way**, and to **think about that package even before you begin production.**

**"Package"** is the way a video is presented to audiences who search for it and is made of two main factors: **Thumbnail** and **Title**.



## SEARCH: THUMBNAILS

Thumbnails are the images that show up when people search on YouTube. Along with titles, thumbnails act like a billboard to help viewers decide to watch your videos.

**Well-designed thumbnails can attract more viewers to your content.**

Take a look at the thumbnails on the right. Which one is more compelling?

A



Why You Can't See Stars on the Moon

B



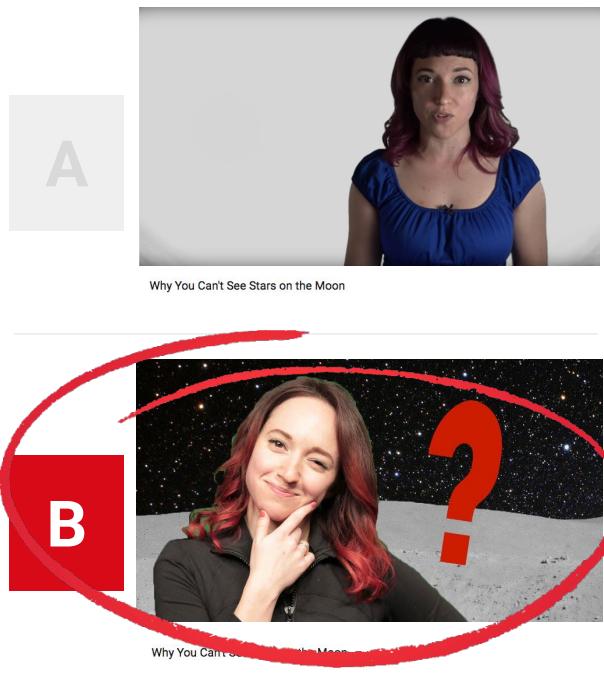
Why You Can't See Stars on the Moon

## SEARCH: THUMBNAILS

Thumbnails are the images that show up when people search on YouTube. Along with titles, thumbnails act like a billboard to help viewers decide to watch your videos.

**Most people agree (and we do, too!) that option B is the better thumbnail.**

Why? Among other reasons, it works well with the title, gives you a sense of the video's style and tone, and accurately represents the content.



## SEARCH | TITLES

Though there can be overlap, as a general rule there are two types of titles:

**Searchable** and **Intriguing**.

### SEARCHABLE

Filled with search-friendly keywords, capitalizes on pre-existing interest of users looking for the topic.

### INTRIGUING

Focused less on keywords and search than on creating an intense curiosity in the viewer (in conjunction with the thumbnail).

BELOW ARE TWO TITLES FROM THE SAME CHANNEL. WHICH TYPE OF TITLE IS WHICH?



Don't Worry, No One Cares  
The School of Life 483K views • 1 month ago  
We're often held back by a crippling fear that we can't possibly do certain things because other people will judge us. But ...  
CC



How to Overcome Shyness  
The School of Life 1M views • 2 years ago  
The secret to overcoming shyness is to remember that others are, beneath the differences, always substantially the same as we ...  
CC

## SEARCH | TITLES

## SEARCHABLE



## How to Overcome Shyness

The School of Life 1M views • 2 years ago

The secret to overcoming shyness is to remember that others are, beneath the differences, always substantially the same as we ...

CC

## Why Is This Searchable?

Because it is filled with keywords viewers interested in the topic would search for, this is a searchable title.

## INTRIGUING

**DON'T  
WORRY,  
NO ONE  
CARES**

## Don't Worry, No One Cares

The School of Life 483K views • 1 month ago

We're often held back by a crippling fear that we can't possibly do certain things because other people will judge us. But ...

CC

## Why Is This Intriguing?

Nobody would likely search for this title, but if you saw it in related videos or on your home page, it could catch your eye. (Intriguing videos are often a better idea once you already have an audience.)

[MORE ON THUMBNAILS AND TITLES FROM CREATOR ACADEMY »](#)

## STORYTELLING | OVERVIEW

Your videos are **fundamentally storytelling vehicles**, so it's important for them to be both **compelling and meaningful**.



### GENERAL TIPS TO HELP GUIDE YOU WHEN CREATING CONTENT:

- 1. Be accurate**
- 2. Tell a story in an **emotionally resonant way****
- 3. Think about how your video can help you reach your objective**  
(i.e., what do you want to happen as a result of the video?)
- 4. Inspire viewers to do something** by including a relevant call-to-action

## STORYTELLING | FORMATS

What video formats work for social impact content? Almost any format can!

**HERE ARE A FEW THAT ARE SUPER EFFECTIVE:**

- 1.** Experiments In Empathy
- 2.** Impact In Action
- 3.** Sharing Our Stories
- 4.** A Wonderous World



## STORYTELLING FORMAT | EXPERIMENTS IN EMPATHY

One compelling format is  
**Experiments In Empathy.**

Often featuring **social experiments between seemingly opposite groups** (i.e., Parents vs. Teens), these videos ultimately show the common ground we all share.

By encouraging audiences and participants to **challenge assumptions they might have about others** (i.e., "6 Minimum Wage Workers vs. 1 Secret Millionaire"), they also invite us to **live with greater empathy and spirits of generosity**.



**Jubilee** is among the creators who particularly excel at this format.

## STORYTELLING FORMAT | IMPACT IN ACTION

### Impact In Action

If you've ever seen a **moving, documentary-style video** about an important cause, it may well have been what we call Impact In Action.

Capturing true stories in a **cinematic documentary style**, these videos **showcase the positive, real-world impact organizations and causes have**.



## STORYTELLING FORMAT | SHARING STORIES

### Sharing Stories

Telling stories is central to being a person, and the **Sharing Our Stories format** is a fantastic way to do so.

**Often presented in uniquely powerful visual styles, these videos draw inspiration from true stories** from viewers. YouTube creators, and the Internet at large.

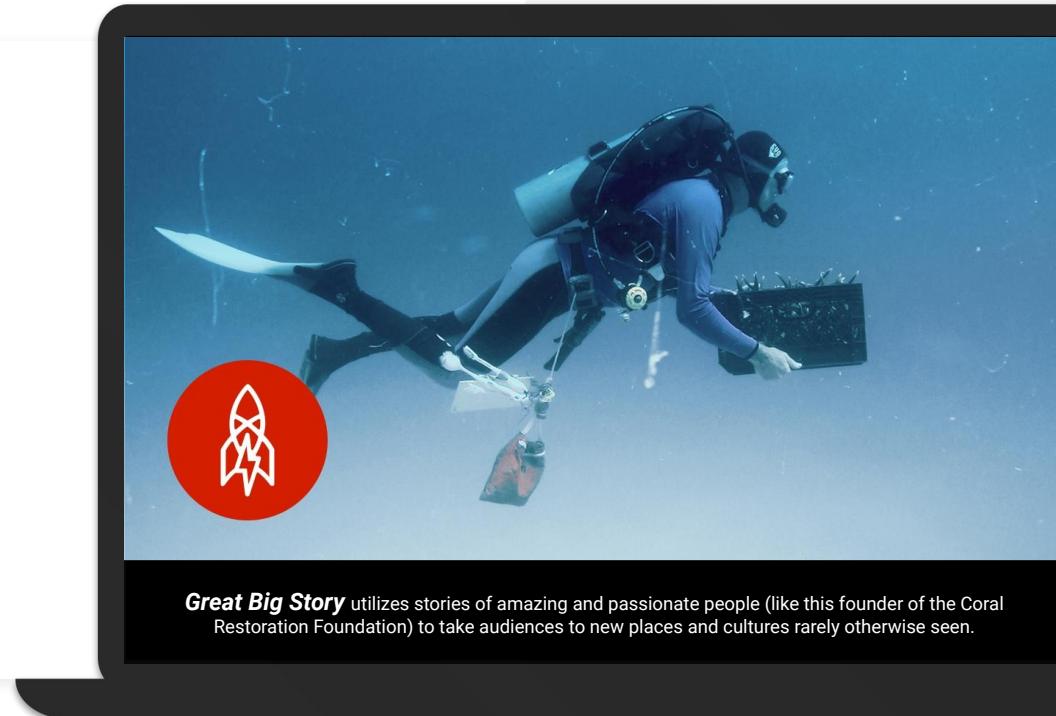
**By highlighting stories we might normally not share** (for instance, our worst mistakes or fears), this content **offers a sense of connection and encouragement to not judge others (and ourselves) so harshly.**



## STORYTELLING FORMAT | WONDEROUS WORLD

**Wondrous World** videos expand our horizons by helping us explore new places.

Whether in exotic locations we've never visited or subcultures we've never encountered these videos are often packaged with **irresistible titles that promise a fascinating world we may be unfamiliar with** (i.e., "Why the World's Best Mathematicians Are Hoarding Chalk"). By examining subcultures and the people within them, these videos **showcase both diversity and shared human experience**.



# Great Job!

By posting content, you've spoken directly to your audience.  
But that's only half of what makes YouTube a special place.



What's Next:

[THE OTHER HALF: SPEAKING WITH & ACTIVATING YOUR AUDIENCE »](#)



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Activate Your Community

Building an engaged and passionate community around your content is a key to long-term success on YouTube.

**Let's look at how you can connect with your audience to take your impact to the next level, by exploring three sections:**

- Tools For Connecting
- Viewers Can Be Collaborators, Too
- YouTube Giving



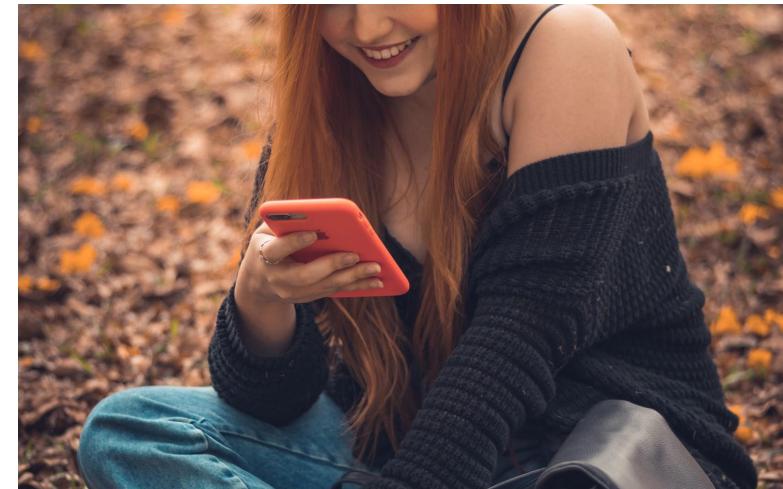
[READ MORE ABOUT BUILDING A COMMUNITY ON YOUTUBE »](#)

## TOOLS FOR CONNECTING | COMMENTS

A lot of your communication with your audience will take place in the comments of your videos.

### SOME BEST PRACTICES TO CONSIDER AS YOU INTERACT:

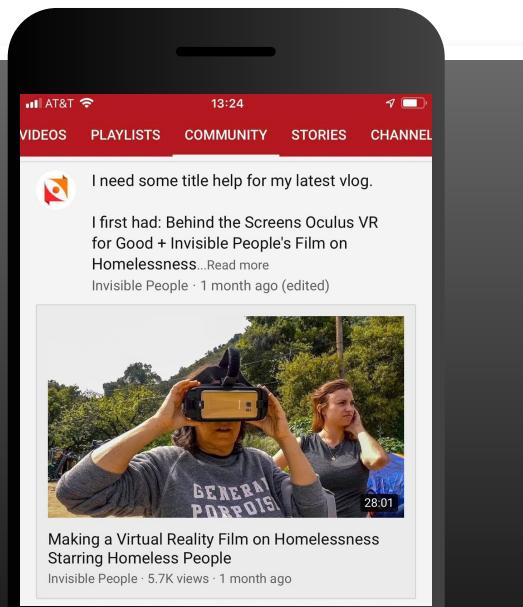
- 1. Encourage viewers to comment** by asking a question in your video and inviting them to share their thoughts.
- 2. Lead with positivity.** Remember, your goal is to spread a positive message.
- 3. Especially when beginning, respond to as many comments as you can!** You can also heart and pin your favorites.
- 4. Over time, build inside references**
- 5. Use your moderation tools.** Removing comments or blocking someone can be the right response. Don't be afraid to use these tools when you have to.



FOR MORE ON COMMENTS, WATCH THIS CREATOR ACADEMY LESSON »

## TOOLS FOR CONNECTING | COMMUNITY TAB

YouTube's Community Tab is a powerful way to connect with audiences in exciting ways outside the comments section.



### WITH THE COMMUNITY TAB, YOU CAN:

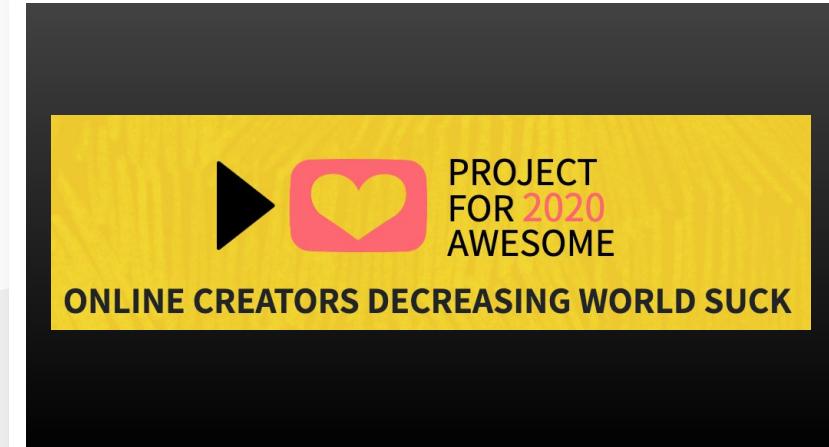
1. Use polls to ask viewers what content they want to see on your channel next
2. Grow excitement for new or upcoming uploads with GIFs
3. Bring viewers backstage with photos from shoots or from within your organization
4. Recognize and interact with your most engaged audience

## VIEWERS CAN BE CONTRIBUTORS, TOO

Some of the most extraordinary social impact content can happen when you engage with and empower viewers to become advocates for your cause.



Inspired by requests from fans, **Mr. Beast** partnered with National Arbor Day Foundation to raise enough money to plant 20,000,000 new trees. With the help of viewers and over 600 other YouTube creators who made videos in support of #TeamTrees, Mr. Beast reached this goal in just over two months!



During the Vlogbrothers' annual **Project for Awesome**, thousands of people post videos talking about and advocating for charities. Over the course of the 48-hour event, these videos help raise awareness and funding for these organizations, all thanks to a community passionate about "decreasing the overall level of world suck."

## YOUTUBE GIVING | OVERVIEW

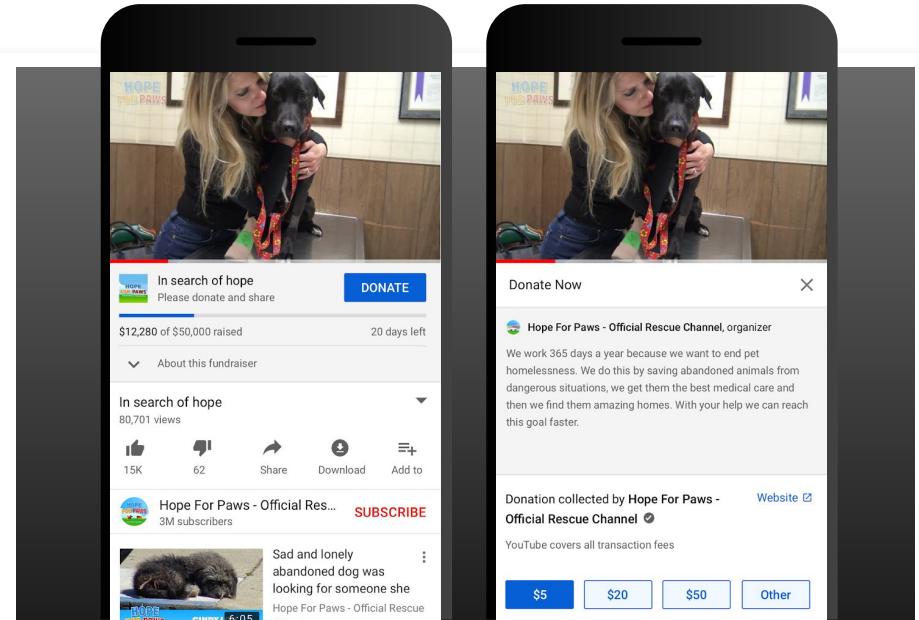
YouTube Giving empowers you and your audience to financially support the causes you care about.

### Donate Button

Add the **Donate button** to your videos and livestreams, invite viewers to contribute, and 100% of the funds go to the approved nonprofit, with YouTube covering all transaction fees.

You can learn more about setting up YouTube Giving by checking out this [YouTube Help Center resource](#).

Let's take a look at how to make the most of your YouTube Giving fundraiser.



## YOUTUBE GIVING | BEST PRACTICES

### Plan Your Campaign

A great fundraising campaign begins with a great plan. **As you prepare and set up your own fundraiser, be sure to...**

- 1. Set a goal and timeline.** This incentivizes viewers to donate toward a common milestone.
- 2. Choose the right moment.** Consider launching your campaign during times of increased awareness around your cause or charitable giving in general, like Pride Month or Giving Week. You can also make your own perfect moment, as ItsJudysLife does each year with their annual #Dancember fundraiser.

**#Dancember**  
The Kids Need Your Help!  
Fundraiser

85,547 views • Premiered Nov 20, 2018

5.4K 96 SHARE SAVE

**itsJudysLife** 1.66M subscribers

**Dancember** - It's an annual fundraiser where YouTubers and people from all over the world Dance for Donations to help kids have a better future. As little as \$25 can help change a child's life. Hit the

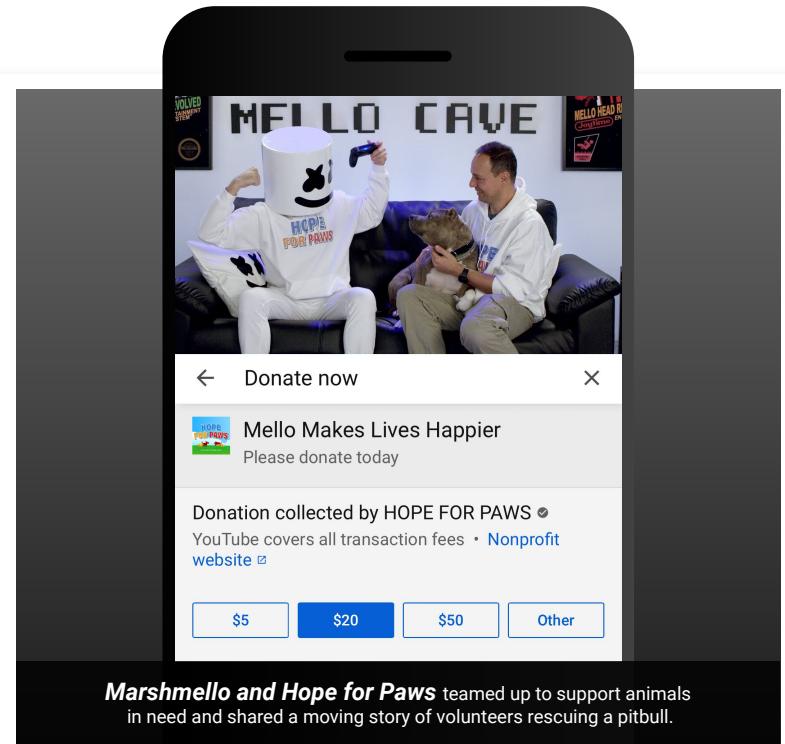
**itsJudysLife** brings their channel's community together every December by asking fans to dance and donate to help children in need.

## YOUTUBE GIVING | BEST PRACTICES

### Create & Promote Your Content

When making your content, we recommend that you...

- 1. Share the “why.”** People with an emotional connection to a cause are more likely to donate, so share why the cause is important to you and remind viewers that any amount goes a long way.
- 2. Show donations’ impact.** Explain (or even better, show!) how nonprofits will utilize donations to make a real-world impact.
- 3. Gamify giving.** Whether it’s with goals, milestones, or other incentives, use your unique voice to make the act of giving fun and interactive.
- 4. Promote your cause across social media.** When The Try Guys launched their fundraiser for The Trevor Project with a powerful video titled “I’m Gay - Eugene Lee Yang,” the video trended across social media and raised over \$50,000 in only 24 hours.



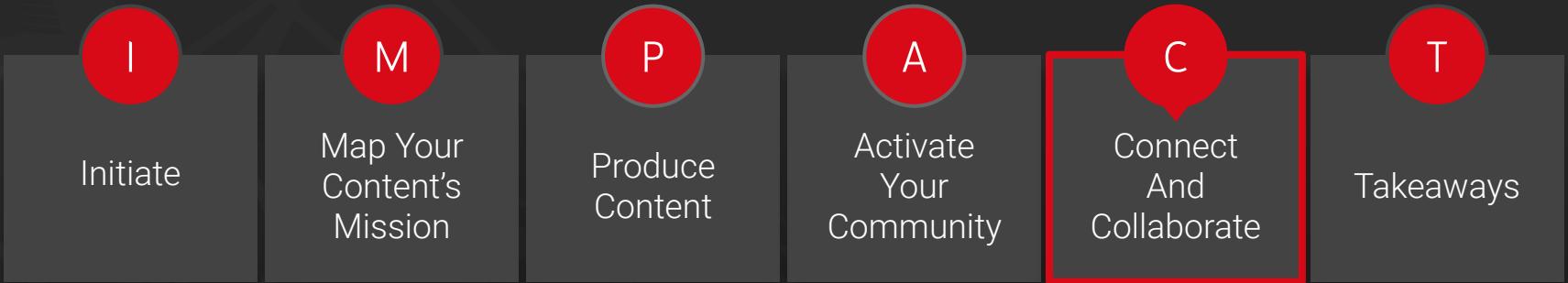
# Right On!

Now that you've built a community, what can you do together?  
Our final section will be about growth.



What's Next:

[GROWING YOUR IMPACT AND GROWING YOUR AUDIENCE »](#)



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Connect & Collaborate

You've done remarkable work along your I.M.P.A.C.T. journey.

To forge an even brighter future for your content and your cause, let's examine the best practices for one of the most powerful tools on the platform: **YouTube collaborations.**



INTERESTED IN READING MORE ABOUT COLLABORATIONS?»

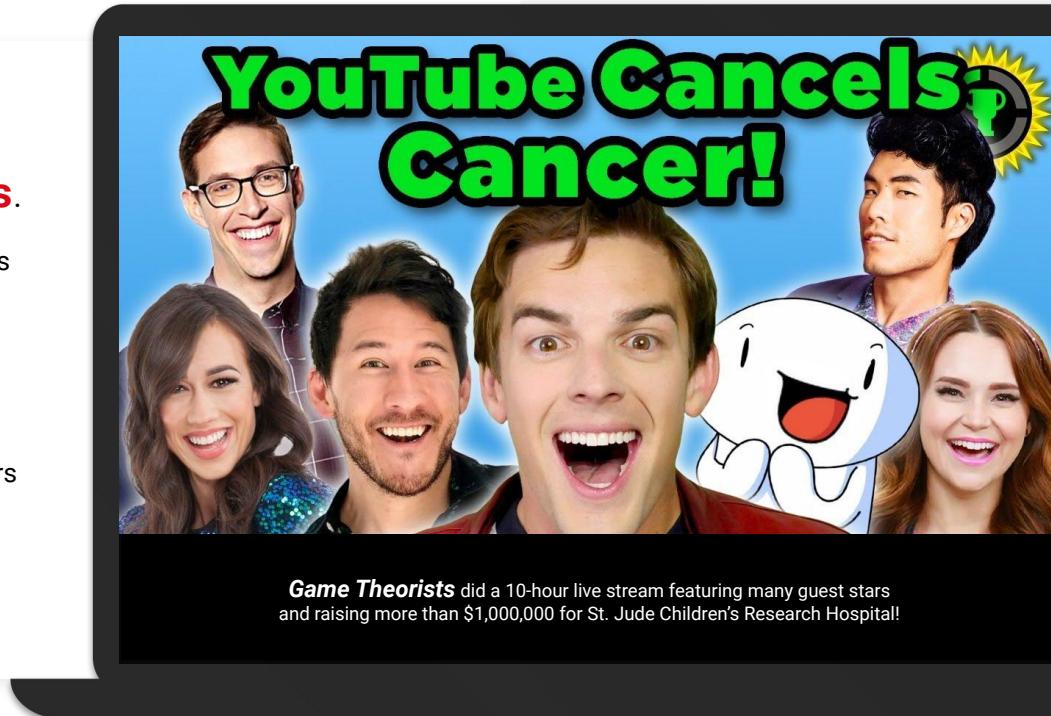
## COLLABORATIONS | OVERVIEW

As you begin thinking about potential collaborations, **be clear on your goals.**

Knowing what you want from a collaboration will help focus your efforts and narrow down ideal collaborators.

**Some goals you might have include:**

1. Drive donations for your cause
2. Reach more viewers already watching content like yours
3. Get exposed to completely new audiences
4. Diversify your content offerings



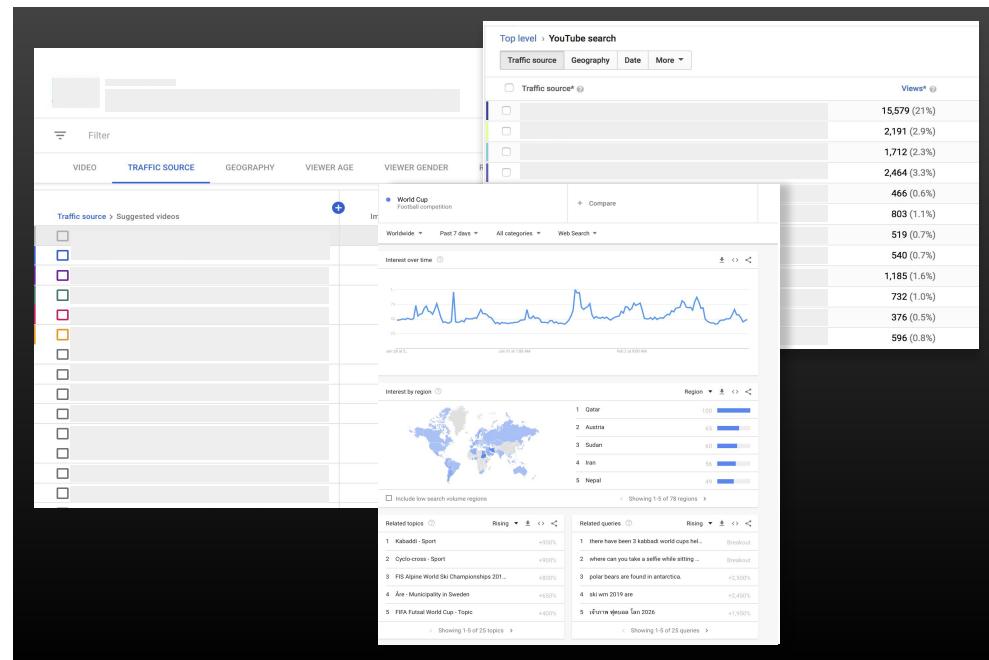
**Game Theorists** did a 10-hour live stream featuring many guest stars and raising more than \$1,000,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital!

## COLLABORATIONS | FINDING COLLABORATORS

The search for collaborators might **take many forms**.

Consider these avenues as potential starting points:

- 1. Check the data.** Look at Suggested Traffic in YouTube Analytics for what other channels are sending traffic to your channel. (This gives a clearer understanding of other creators your viewers watch.)
- 2. Ask your audience.** Put the question to your viewers in Community posts or videos.
- 3. Get close and personal.** Industry events, local meet-ups, and creator summits offer unique opportunities to meet face to face with fellow creators. Consider attending these to build new relationships and meet future collaborators!

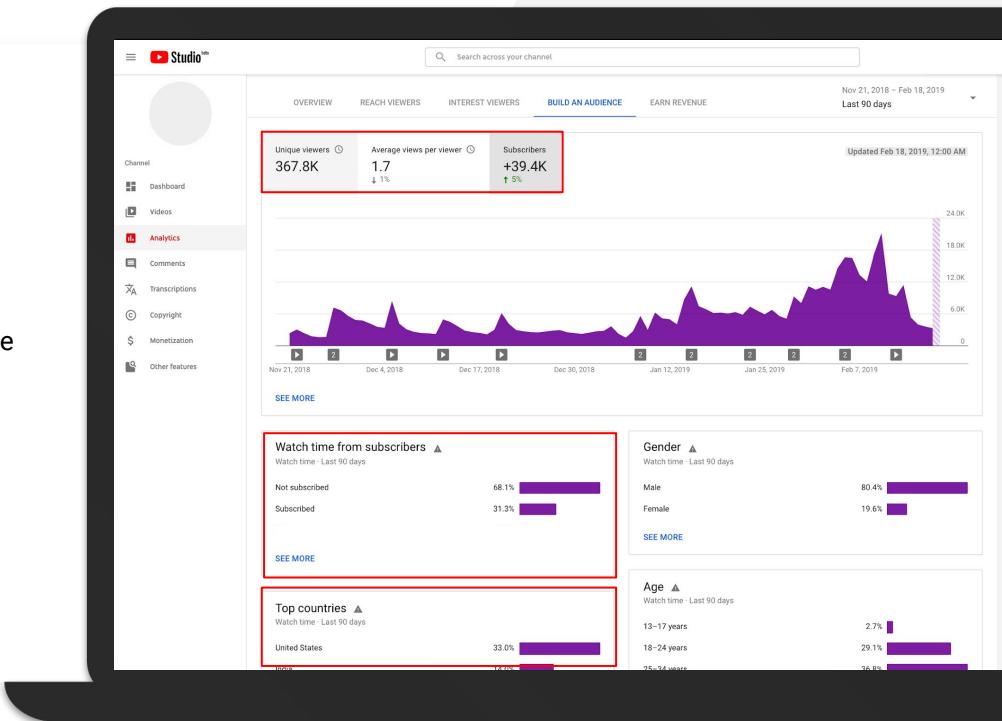


## COLLABORATIONS | KNOW YOUR VALUE

What do you **offer potential collaborators?**

**Before reaching out to fellow creators, ask yourself:**

- 1. What's your appeal?** Are you in a unique position of authority or trust on your topic? What key elements drive viewers to tune in, and how can they complement other creators when creating joint content?
- 2. Who is your audience?** Looking over your viewers' demographics and comments, how might fellow creators benefit from exposure to your audience?
- 3. Do you have unique access** to resources (equipment, talent, etc.) that would be appealing to other creators?

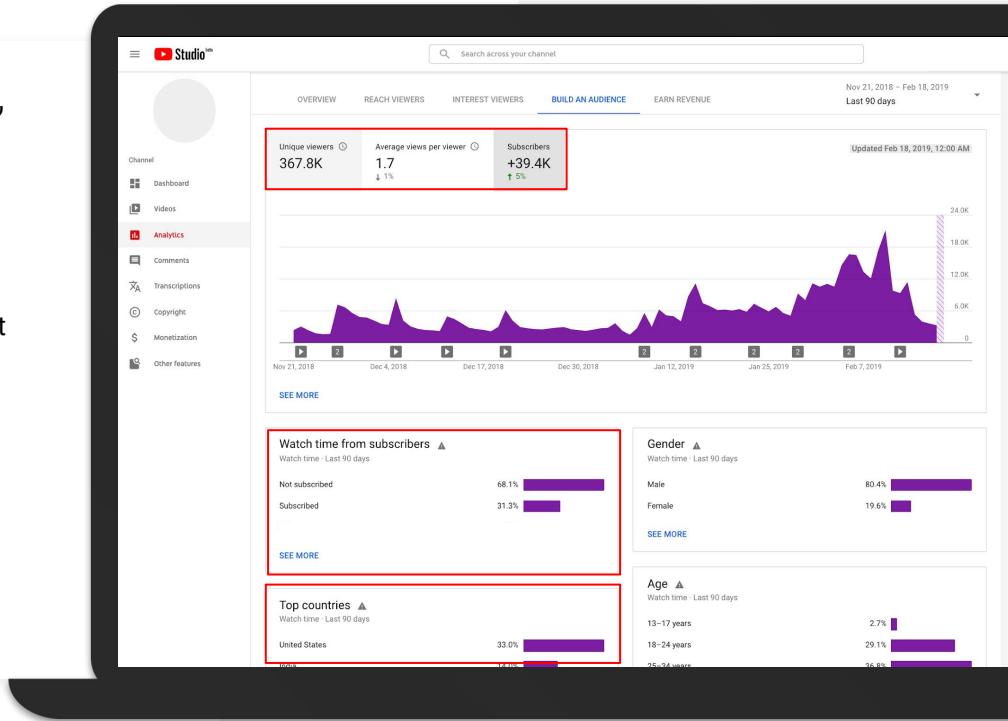


## COLLABORATIONS | MAKING THE ASK

Once you've done the necessary prep, it's time to **approach your potential collaborator!**

Stay calm and remember to:

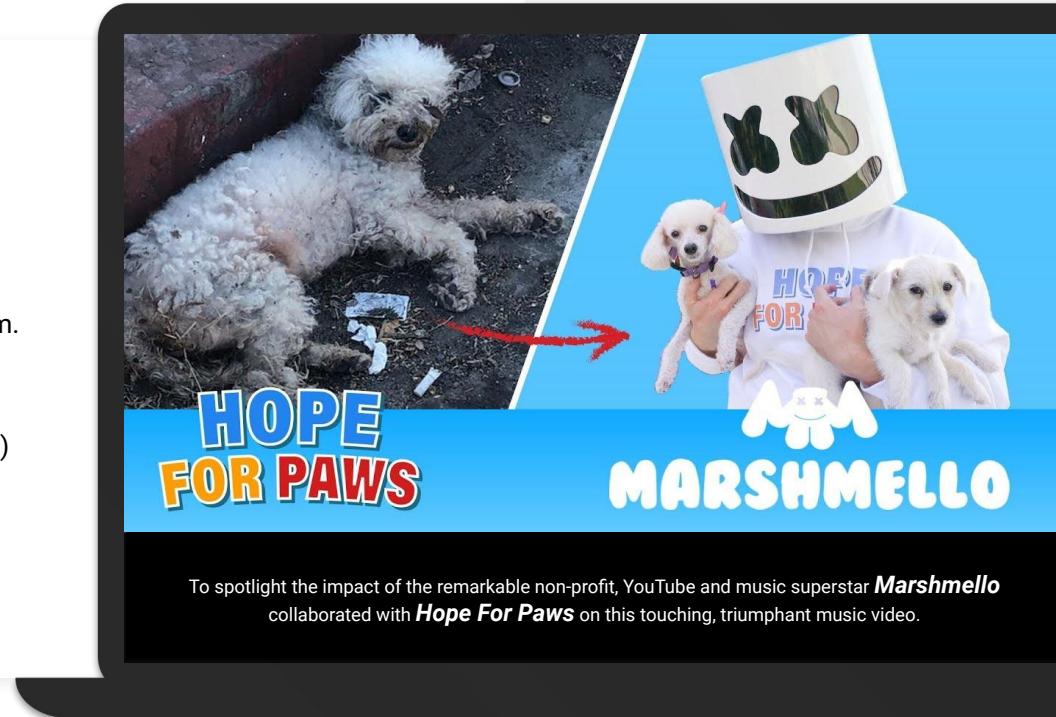
- 1. Keep it honest and earnest.** This about partnership, not giving a sales pitch. Tell the creator your honest reasoning behind the collaboration and convey your authentic excitement to work with them.
- 2. Stay specific.** Share a clear outline of your plan for the collaboration, including timing, expectations on each side, and overall goals.
- 3. Be flexible.** Be open to ideas and changes the other creator might suggest along the way.



## COLLABORATIONS | CREATING THE CONTENT

Whatever creative direction you choose, **keep these tips in mind.**

- 1. Be reliable, responsive, and respectful.** The creative process doesn't always go precisely as planned, and that's okay! Just remember you're all on the same team.
- 2. Have fun!** This is a great opportunity for new professional and personal growth, so enjoy it! (Audiences can tell when you're truly enthusiastic, too.)
- 3. Stick the landing.** Plan your video launch in advance; make sure to thank your collaborators in video and in private; and be active on social media and the comments after your video goes live.



# AMAZING!

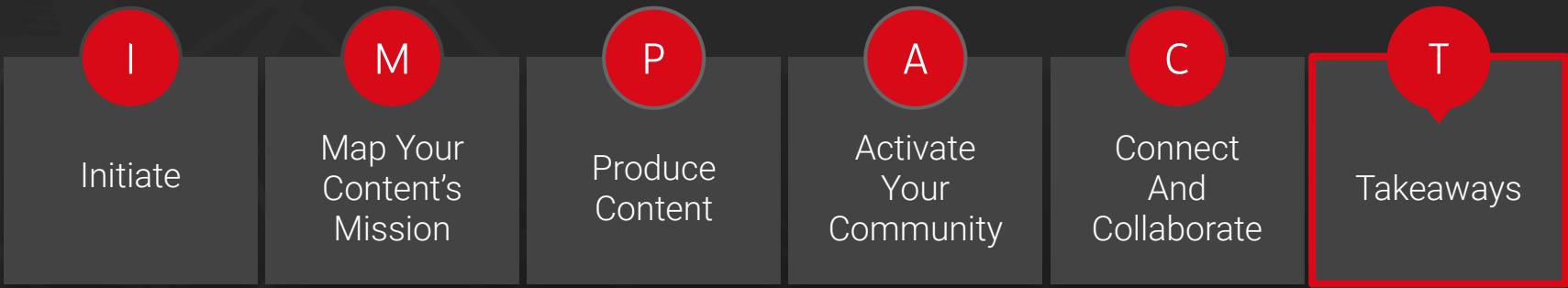
You've done what it takes to drive impact on YouTube.

Let's take a look at the main points to remember as you continue your remarkable I.M.P.A.C.T. journey.



What's Next:

[TAKEAWAYS »](#)



## Your Journey to Making an I.M.P.A.C.T.

# Takeaways

Thank you so much for doing more good together with YouTube.

**We can't wait to see what I.M.P.A.C.T. you'll make next. As you continue your journey, here are five key takeaways.**

- 1.** Be clear on your content's purpose.
- 2.** Connect with the larger community around your cause.
- 3.** Create and package your content strategically.
- 4.** Use YouTube tools to build relationships with viewers and even raise money for your cause.
- 5.** Utilize collaborations to grow your impact and audience.





---

**VISIT US AT:**

[socialimpact.youtube.com](http://socialimpact.youtube.com)

**LEARN MORE AT:**

[www.youtube.com/socialimpact](http://www.youtube.com/socialimpact)

---

# Worksheets Appendix

---

## DEFINE YOUR DESTINATION

To make the most of your journey, you need to know where you're going. That's why there's power in being clear about your YouTube goals: They'll help you navigate along the way!

**WHAT** is your content's mission? In other words,  
what do you want to change about the issues you'll address?

---

**WHY** is the issue important to your audience,  
and why should the world care?

---

## CHART THE TERRITORY

Your audience will come to your content with questions like those below. To prepare for building your YouTube presence, take some time to decide the main points you'd like to highlight.

<b>WHAT</b> is the history and evolution of the issue?	<b>WHAT</b> are the most common misperceptions of the issue?	<b>WHAT</b> are different positions on the issue and why?	<b>WHAT</b> challenges have kept the issue from improving?	<b>IS THIS</b> A global or local issue?
[Handwriting practice lines]	[Handwriting practice lines]	[Handwriting practice lines]	[Handwriting practice lines]	[Handwriting practice lines]

## FIND FELLOW EXPLORERS

You're not the first to dive into this issue online. It can be both instructive and inspiring to seek out others passionate about the cause. Here are some tips to get started.

**WHO** are the individuals, organizations, and/or YouTube creators already talking about or working on your issue?

---

**HOW** can you contribute to the community and share your story?

---

## PLOT YOUR COURSE

It's almost time to take the next step! Before creating your content, consider these questions.

**ARE THERE GAPS** in the way the issue is typically presented? New ways to share the issue and its importance?

---

**WHAT COMPELLING FACTS AND STORIES** about the issue can help audiences connect with it?

---

**HOW CAN YOU UTILIZE YOUR OWN BACKGROUND** and story to connect the issue and to audiences?

---

## HERO CONTENT

Hero Content is the content you want to push to a big, broad audience. To decide on your Hero Content, consider these questions.

**WHAT MAJOR EVENTS**, anniversaries, milestones, etc., are relevant to your cause, and how can you capitalize on the interest they generate?

---

**WHAT SPECIAL INGREDIENTS** (style, guests, etc.) can you bring to this video to make it stand out?

---

## HUB CONTENT

Hub Content is the core of your channel: regularly scheduled, reliably engaging, designed to give fresh perspectives on your audience's passions and interests. Let the questions below guide your Hub Content.

**WHAT** are you known for?

---

**WHAT** is repeatable?

---

**WHAT** do you want to be your “bread & butter”?

---

## HELP CONTENT

Help Content is programming that stays relevant throughout the year by answering questions audiences may be asking. Showcase your unique knowledge, and identify:

**WHAT** is your audience looking for?

**WHAT** search phrases are they using?

**WHAT** keywords are they typing in?

**WHAT** questions can you answer that are especially timely now?

## TOOLS FOR CONNECTING

YouTube is an amazing place to connect with audiences, in videos, comments, and the Community tab. Use the questions below to brainstorm how you can build your community on the platform.

**WHAT** kinds of questions will you ask viewers to answer via comments?

---

**HOW** could you use Community tab in unique ways to further connect with your viewers?

---

**WHAT** amazing projects could you create with your viewers as contributors?

---

## YOUTUBE GIVING

YouTube Giving empowers you and your audience to financially support the causes you care about. Consider the questions below make the most of your Giving campaign.

**WHAT** should your goal and timeline be?

---

**WHAT** special moment can you use to choose your launch?

---

**HOW** can you show the “why” and impact of your Giving campaign?

---

**HOW** can you “gamify giving” to make the campaign more interactive?

---

**HOW** will you promote your cause and campaign across social media?

---

## COLLABORATIONS

To make the most of potential collaborations with other YouTube creators, take time to answer the questions below.

**WHAT** are your goals for collaborating?

---

**WHO** are your ideal collaborators?

---

**WHAT** unique value can you offer them?

---

**WHAT** special kind of content can you create in this collaboration that you otherwise couldn't?

---