YouTube

Turn attention into action this holiday season on YouTube









YouTube



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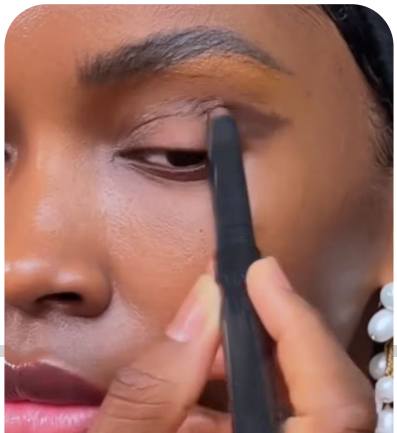
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YouTube

Make the most of the holiday season on YouTube

The holiday season brings intense pressure to get your brand in front of the right audiences at the right moment. Consumers aren't just looking for holiday gifts to buy; they are actively seeking menu inspiration, holiday travel tips, holiday movie reviews, and the confidence that they are making the best choice in every scenario.



YouTube is essential to holiday shopping

On YouTube, audiences find this confidence through purposeful viewing. The holiday season is no different. Instead of passively scrolling, they are actively leaning in, with

65% of shoppers saying they simply could not do their holiday shopping without Google and YouTube.[1]

Because these viewers are highly focused, YouTube ad placements rank #1 for attention compared to streaming, social, and linear TV.[2]



From inspiration to decision to action

During the entire holiday season, high-intent audiences come to YouTube to discover what to buy.

87% of viewers say YouTube introduces them to new things they wouldn't have discovered on their own.[3]

And as they narrow down their holiday options, the research deepens. And audiences look to their favorite creators for advice to help them decide where to spend their money.

66% of surveyed YouTube viewers state that creators help them make more confident purchase decisions.[4]



More confident purchases, faster

This combination of purposeful research and trusted creators drives confident action, faster:

94% of holiday shoppers who use YouTube report taking further steps towards a purchase after watching a related video.[5]

Read on to find out how YouTube can build your brand and drive performance this holiday season.

YouTube



What customers are saying

> “Before buying a trampoline set for my kids, I searched YouTube for longer review videos that helped me spot potential downsides that short clips didn’t show, like setup time and storage size.”

– Melissa, Gen Z







Get to know the three intents shaping the holiday consumer journey

1. Plan

Audiences turn to YouTube to prepare for a stress-free holiday season and tune into creator content to be inspired.

2. Shop

Whether they're seeking the best deals or reviewing options, audiences with this intent are diving deep and making decisions.

3. Experience

To slow down and connect, audiences watch creator-led entertainment that celebrates every aspect of the holiday season.

With our trusted creators and powerful AI, you can convert intentional research into actual purchases and bring your brand into the heart of their holiday celebrations.

YouTube

Win the holiday sprint with Demand Gen



During the holiday season, demand is at its peak. But solely capturing existing demand isn't enough. To help you create and convert demand and meet the moment, we've outlined the **YouTube Demand Gen Performance Four**, your essential guide to optimizing data, budgets, targeting, and creative variety.

1 Build a robust data foundation

Without a proper foundational data setup, you won't be able to fully activate Google AI as your performance engine. Maximize your signal accuracy by implementing sitewide tagging using Google Tag Gateway with PII or offline data imports.

2 Fuel Google AI with conversion volume

Give Google AI the intelligence it needs to drive the results that you aim to achieve. Choose the right bidding strategy and ensure your daily budgets are set high enough to capture at least 50 conversions.

3 Discover high-value users with AI Targeting

Find your next high-value customer dynamically with Google AI targeting solutions. By combining your first-party data seedlists solutions like optimized targeting and the new customer acquisition (NCA) goal you can find high-converting audiences you may have missed.

4 Maximize reach through creative variety

Tell your brand's story across a variety of formats so you can maximize performance across YouTube and Google inventory. Read more here about why a diverse mix of at least three vertical, square, and horizontal images and videos will supercharge your Demand Gen campaigns.

Go deeper on the YouTube Performance 4 here to unlock your next wave of growth.



Master creative on YouTube this holiday

Pro tip

To unlock peak performance in Demand Gen, your foundation is the Rule of 3: supply 3 images and 3 videos across 3 aspect ratios—horizontal, vertical, and square—for every campaign.

#1 Use YouTube Insights to resonate with shoppers

Map creative strategy to gifting moments: Use YouTube Insights to identify seasonal trends around Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Identify top audiences on YouTube: Discover new audiences and learn more about what they're watching.

Leverage Creator-led genres: Build around top performing genres, like challenges, get ready with me, DIY, with me, listicles and more.

#2 Build with brand and creators

Design a creative system, complete with brand assets and creators assets: Aim for at least half of your assets to be creator-led.

Work with creators across verticals: Partner with a range of creators across a variety of verticals to reach new audiences relevant to your brand.

Build for organic: When brands combine paid, earned and owned on YouTube, they increase iROAS by 16%.[8]

#3 Unlock scale, relevance and last-minute demand opportunities with Google AI

Edit, crop, and generate variations of your holiday assets with Google's latest technology including Gemini Omni and Nano Banana in Asset Studio.

4 pro tips to get you started:

- Check out multimodal video creation to help you create videos from scratch.
- Swap image backgrounds for more relevance with Nano Banana.
- Turn image-to-video with Veo.
- **If you have no time to create…**Turn on Asset Optimization, and allow Google Ads to automatically optimize.



YouTube



Fuel your campaign with trusted creators

Q4 is about driving the decision and the sale, without breaking the bank. Don't start from scratch — **boost the creator partnerships you already have** to convert demand, when it's at its peak.

Boost your existing creator assets

Get more out of the organic creator content and brand deals you've already executed this year. Secure Brand Partner Access for your top-performing assets and amplify them using Demand Gen and Video View Campaigns. Creator partnerships boost delivered an average 30% increase in conversion lift for Demand Gen campaigns, while maintaining CPA efficiency.

Deploy a 50/50 asset mix for the holidays

Brand ad or creator content? Don't guess. Run your polished holiday Brand-produced spots and your lo-fi creator assets inside the exact same ad group. Then let Google's AI dynamically prioritize the highest-performing assets to maximize your ROAS. When creator assets are introduced alongside traditional brand ads, campaigns see dramatic incremental lifts.



Supercharge with affiliate

While brand partnerships bring you deep into creator's communities, YouTube Shopping affiliate campaigns turn YouTube into a creator-powered marketplace. Visit the Google Merchant Center to find the creators who align best with your brand. Then create groups of priority creators to set exclusive commission rates and initiate product gifting to incentivize relevant creators.

Pro tip Looking to build new YouTube creator partnerships? Go deeper with the YouTube Creator Marketing: Build Playbook.

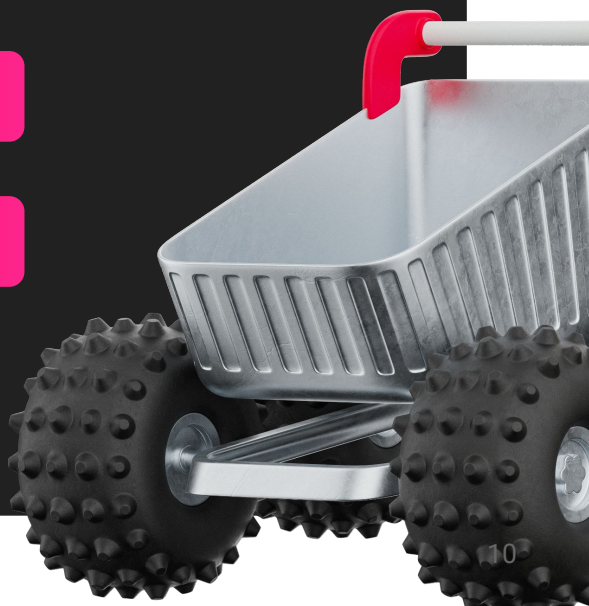
YouTube

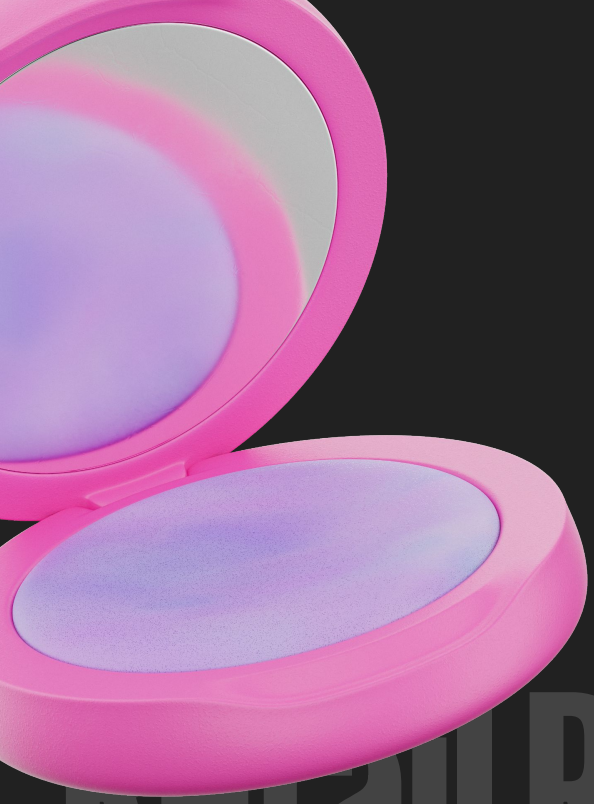
There's more to the holidays on YouTube

Ready to capture seasonal demand and drive sustained growth? Dive into our vertical spotlights to uncover the holiday shopping behaviors, trends, and content that are shaping consumer decisions across:



- Retail
- Consumer electronics
- Travel
- Media & entertainment
- Automotive
- Food & beverage





YouTube



Retail

What customers are saying

> YouTube works well for my holiday shopping because creators totally get where I'm at in the season. Like, in October they're posting these huge gift guides with tons of ideas – really inspiring stuff.

– Cassi, Gen Z





1. Plan

Prep and plot

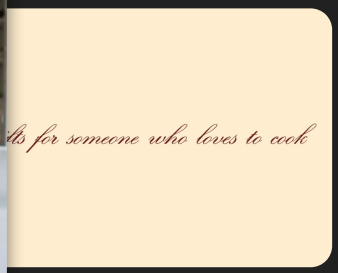


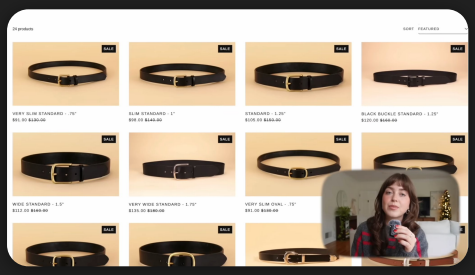
During this early planning phase, audiences look to trusted creators to help them curate their festive environments, update their winter self-care routines, and plan gift lists in plenty of time.

Audiences seek out niche, highly targeted gift guides, such as age-specific children's toys or non-toxic beauty products.

Creative gifts for everyone on your list! 2025 holiday gift guide.







Lifestyle and interior design creators spark inspiration with “Luxury for Less” DIY decor makeovers, showing audiences exactly how to achieve high-end holiday decoration and festive tablescapes on a budget.

Dollar Tree Ralph Lauren Decor





2. Shop

Seal the deal



To cut through holiday hype, shoppers watch trusted creators unbox and rate viral advent calendars and gift sets with “Buy or Skip” reviews.

Brutal honest review of holiday makeup gift sets





Brick-and-mortar retail is also brought to life on screen through gamified in-store discovery challenges, where creators film directly from the aisles to showcase real-time find-and-seek traditions.

Let's go holiday shopping!! Black friday haul 2025!!

By blending entertainment with savvy saving, creators guide their communities through “designer vs. budget” comparisons and retail price battles, helping them find the best holiday deals.

I Bought & Tried 2025’s Most VIRAL Makeup Holiday Gift Sets... (Worth it?)



3. Experience

It's a wrap!

Once the main shopping rush is over, viewing habits shift toward nostalgia and connection, as audiences watch how their favorite creators celebrate the season through Vlogmas videos and festive get-ready-with-me styling guides.



VLOGMAS WEEK 3 | Christmas shopping, NYC WINTER, birthday dinners, lots of eating lol









This feeling of connection continues with Christmas hauls and "What I Got" videos, which audiences watch to share in the excitement of unwrapping.

What I got for christmas 2025 haul

Rather than ending the purchase journey, this late-season content sparks a second wave of shopping, inspiring consumers with ideas on how to spend holiday gift cards and navigate end-of-year sales.

Pro tip

Add product feeds to Demand Gen campaigns to turn your product catalog into a virtual storefront on YouTube.



What customers are saying

> YouTube creators often have hauls where they show a bunch of gifts and offer suggestions which often lead you to new ideas.

– Amber, Gen Z



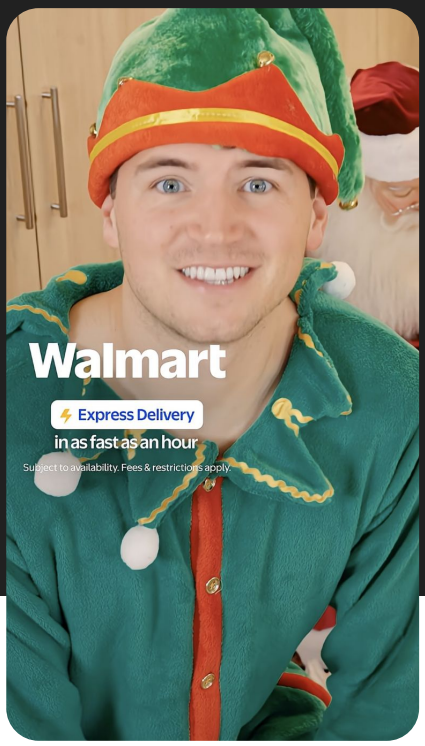


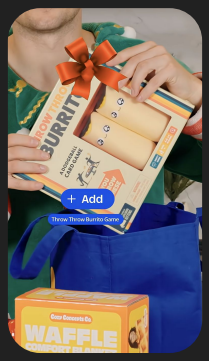
Case study

Walmart

Creator-led storytelling drives purchase intent for Walmart

Facing the high-pressure holiday countdown, Walmart leveraged **Mastheads, Demand Gen** and, **Creator Partnership Boosts** to drive last-minute purchases through authentic creator storytelling. The 10-day sprint saw:



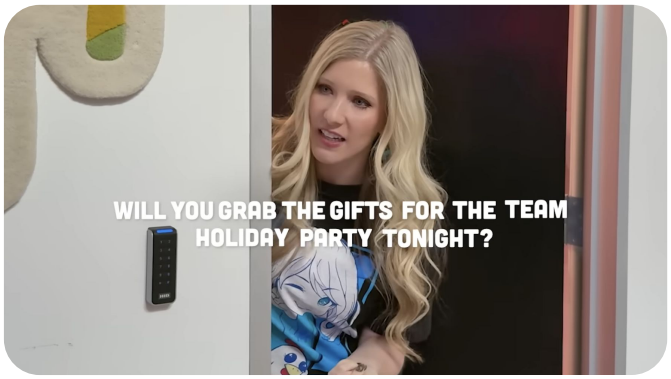


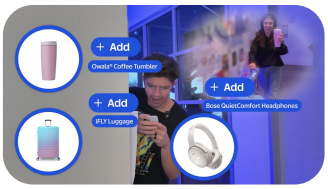


44% increase in ROAS

8x surge in purchase intent

175% spike in express delivery searches





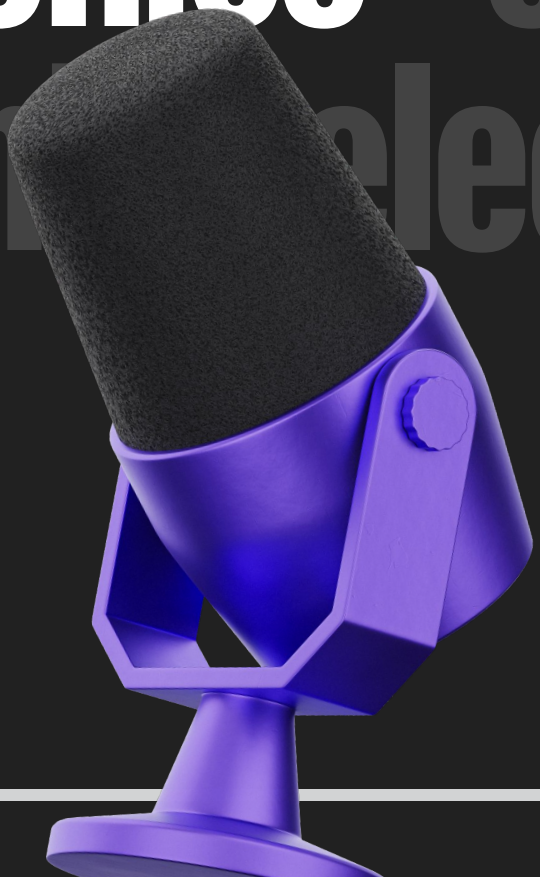




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Consumer electronics



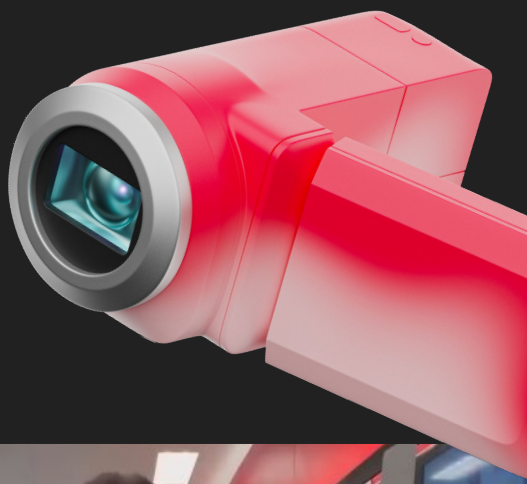
1. Plan

Filter and find



The holiday season is the perfect time to find a gift, whether it's for a loved one or something you're self-gifting. Audiences come to YouTube to hear what tech and electronics creators have on their holiday wishlists, to see gift guides, and two-thirds of them report they make more confident purchase decisions after watching creator content.

30 Tech Gadgets WORTH Buying! (2025 Holiday Gift Guide)



2. Shop

Deal hunters

Black Friday and holiday deals are a powerful opportunity for consumers to snag the tech they've had on their wishlist. But cutting through the noise and finding the best deals can feel overwhelming. Which is why it's great when someone you trust can do the hard work for you. Audiences flock to curated videos sharing the best deals of the season, across all tech and electronics price points.

2025 Holiday Price Battle — Amazon vs Walmart vs Target



3. Experience

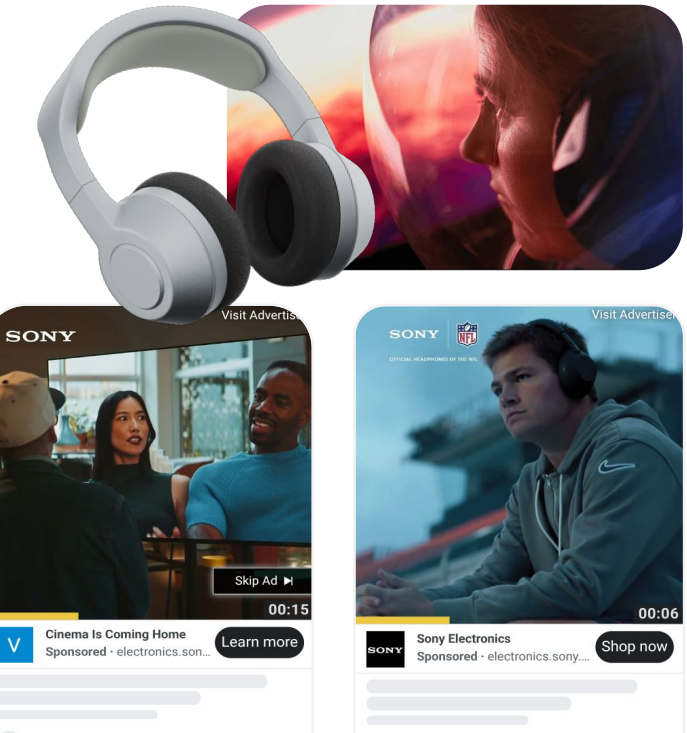
Merry and bright

The holidays are a chance to bring color and light into - and outside of - homes in a big way. During the holidays festive lighting content is extremely popular, with app-controlled and smart holiday decor a favorite. This type of content is driving audiences to purchase: **66% of viewers state that YouTube creators help them make more confident purchase decisions,** outperforming every other platform.[6]



Holiday lighting made EASY with Govee! Sync Everything!

Pro tip Add users who have engaged with your brand on YouTube and interacted with your website on Google channels to your data seed list to maximize reach.



Case Study SONY

Sony needed to build broad awareness while also driving deeper product consideration. Partnering with their agency, Tinuiti, they deployed a dual strategy using **Video Reach Campaigns (VRC)** for awareness and **Video View Campaigns (VVC)** for consideration, minimizing overlap between audiences. Sony was able to engage distinct audiences in the right mindset, driving:

13.55% lift in relative recall

YouTube

What customers are saying

> Before buying the ASUS Vivobook 14, I watched YouTube reviews from regular people who had actually bought and used it. **Hearing real-world experiences validated what Search had suggested.**

– Yaw, Gen Z







YouTube



Travel



1. Plan

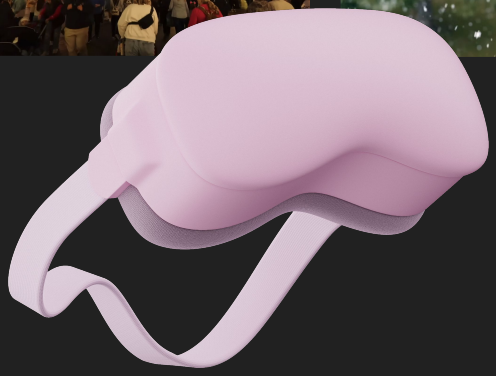
Dream and discover



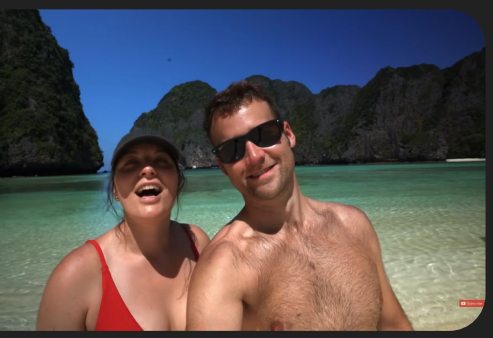
When it comes to travel, consumers are driven by early discovery and aspirational planning. To capture the magic before they even book, they turn to YouTube creators for immersive live streams and high-quality 4K walkthroughs. Live events like Christmas parades at Disney Parks drives massive engagement, helping families map out their perfect seasonal adventure.







Went do DISNEYLAND with the cousins and ... *12 days of VLOGMAS* | the Aquilars



2. Shop

Route to value



Whether preparing for winter family visits or 2027 getaways, travelers compare options and look for the best deals. To make confident choices and reduce stress, they turn to trusted creators for tips on destinations, easing travel friction, and finding value to finalize their itineraries.

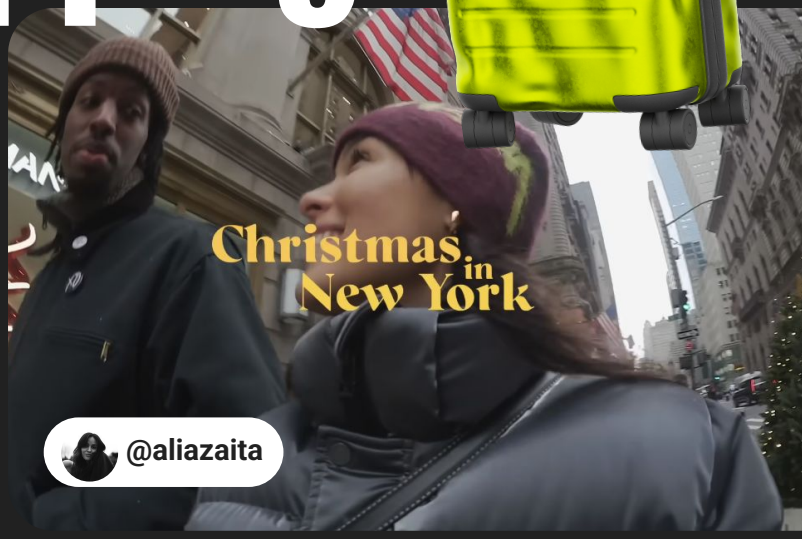
10 Cheap (and EPIC) Winter Travel Destinations for 2026

3. Experience

Holiday tripping

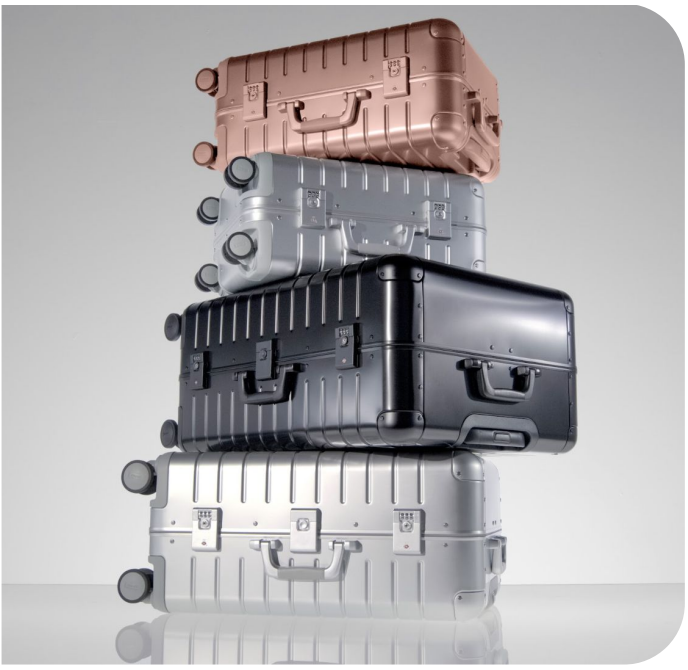


Whether they are currently traveling or enjoying the holidays vicariously from home, audiences seek immersive holiday travel content that transports them to seasonal destinations. With specific destination keywords driving massive interest. Audiences love to unwind and experience the cozy, nostalgic magic of seasonal travel alongside creators.



The Perfect NYC CHRISTMAS DAY | Must-Eats, Markets & Activities

Pro tip Build creator partnerships and then use Creator Partnerships Boost to turn creator assets into standout ads for Demand Gen campaigns.



Case Study AWAY

Away Travel needed to move beyond its core audience to capture new customers and drive immediate holiday sales. By meeting travelers where they get inspired, on YouTube, Away deployed a powerful combination of **Demand Gen** and **Creator Partnership Boost.** Amplifying creator storytelling in the holiday season with the power of YouTube's AI created:

78%
lift in incremental sales

140%
lift in add-to-carts during the holidays



YouTube



Media, entertainment & gaming



1. Plan

Gamer's guides



If you're not a gamer, how do you know what to buy a gamer? You turn to YouTube. Early in the season, shoppers actively search keywords combining "gaming" and "holiday gifts" to get that special something for a loved one. PlayStation successfully captured this early discovery attention by launching its own "What to buy the gamer who has everything?" holiday gift guide, helping buyers map out their purchases well ahead of the rush.

What to buy the gamer who has everything? [Holiday Gift Guide 2024]

2. Shop

Value quest

Once Black Friday hits, the focus shifts to getting the most from your money. Gamers and gift-buyers can feel overwhelmed in the face of console bundles, subscription discounts, and flash sales. To cut through the noise, shoppers rely heavily on creator-led deal roundups and deep-dive "Is it Worth it?" reviews. By comparing hardware discounts and breaking down the true value of Q4 game releases, creators give buyers the reassurance they need.



3. Experience

Press play

The holiday season is all about relaxing with loved ones, and for many, movies are a huge piece of that. Movie creators drive massive engagement by reviewing highly anticipated seasonal releases. Audiences also love to unwind with nostalgic listicles of favorite holiday films, or witness creators setting the seasonal mood with movie marathons.

Whether it's Mariah or Boney M, Christmas music dominates the season, with audiences keen to hear their favorite festive pop picks year after year.

Drag Queens Trixie Mattel & Katya React to Netflix Holiday Films



Pro tip:
Use a variety of video assets to tell your brand's story across every surface. Follow creative best practices for Demand Gen to achieve maximum performance.



Case Study

Nex Playground needed to efficiently scale its reach to new households during key seasonal periods. Knowing that parents and kids enjoy watching YouTube on the biggest screen in the house, the brand first drove awareness via **connected TV** then used **Demand Gen** to retarget those households with **YouTube** and **Discover** conversion ads. By reaching families on mobile devices while they were engaged with relevant content, Nex turned big-screen discovery into immediate action, driving:

3x increase in YoY sales

14x higher conversion than primary socials



YouTube



Automotive



1. Plan

Research the ride



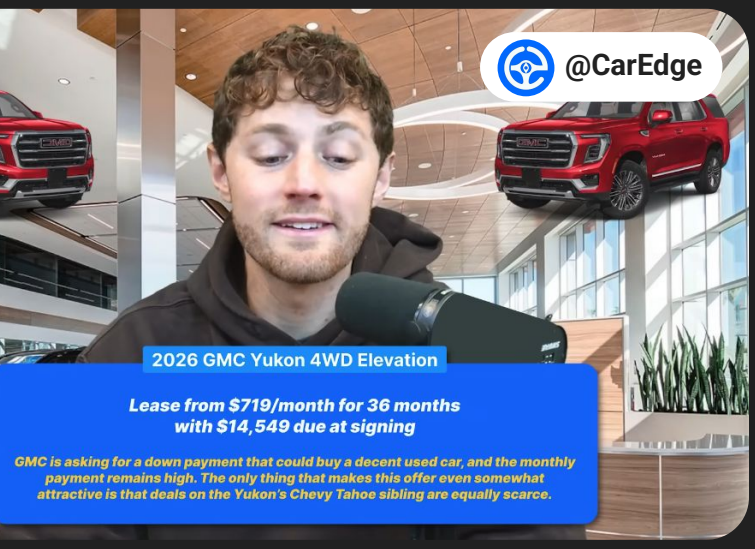


Buying a car is a complex financial decision and research starts well before the year-end sales. Buyers turn directly to YouTube, the #1 platform for complex purchase decisions, to compare models and specs. Creators guide them from initial curiosity to confident consideration, helping them determine which vehicle best suits their lifestyle.

5 Best Compact SUVs To Buy in 2026

2. Shop

Drive the deal



As auto sales events occur, buyers pair keywords like “Black Friday” and “Christmas” with high-intent hashtags like #carbuying to find trusted advice before they hit the showroom. By breaking down the best year-end deals and teaching buyers how to negotiate, creators give shoppers the clarity and confidence to drive away with their beloved new vehicle.

The 5 BEST & WORST Year-End Car Deals (2025)

3. Experience

Rule the road

The automotive experience no longer ends when you drive out of the dealership. Modern drivers want to experience their vehicle's full capabilities, especially when manufacturers roll out software updates in Q4. Creators feed this post-purchase excitement by testing and reacting to tech updates, or by showcasing how to get the best from your new vehicle.

Pack my car with me. Shop from my bio link idea list: CAR ACCESSORIES #packwithme #amazonfinds



Pro tip

Use custom segments to reach your ideal audience with relevant keywords, URLs, and apps. Leverage lookalike audiences to reach new users similar to your existing high value customers.



Case Study

general motors

General Motors needed to connect high-level brand storytelling directly to bottom-line performance across its portfolio. To reach buyers from when they start researching cars, to the moment they are ready to buy, the automaker deployed a strategic mix of high-impact premium formats and AI-powered solutions like **Demand Gen**. General Motors successfully turned engaged attention into measurable revenue, delivering:

3x average ROI across all four of its major brands (Chevy, Buick, Cadillac, and GMC) over a two-year period



YouTube



Food & beverage



1. Plan

Map the menu





The holidays and food go hand-in-hand. Early in the season, audiences look to be inspired by holiday dinners, parties, and baking ideas. With so much on, content that features stress-free and make-ahead food is particularly popular.

The Christmas Vacation Turkey | With Babish

2. Shop

Taste test

Black Friday and holiday deals are a powerful opportunity for consumers to snag the tech they've had on their wishlist. But cutting through the noise and finding the best deals can feel overwhelming. Which is why it's great when someone you trust can do the hard work for you. Audiences flock to curated videos sharing the best deals of the season, across all tech and electronics price points.

I Tried EVERY Holiday Fast Food Menu Item!







3. Experience

Savor the season



Once the kitchen prep subsides, audiences want to unwind and soak in the festive atmosphere through holiday vlogs and lifestyle content. Other audiences enjoy gamified food challenges, hosting taste wars and international holiday plate comparisons. This is an opportunity to keep products and restaurants top-of-mind, capturing this high intent as viewers look for post-holiday inspiration.



Black vs Black: We Try Each Others Christmas Plates: ALL STARS | Taste Wars

Pro tip

Boost engagement by adding dollar or percent-off discounts via Promotion Assets. These appear as bold, clickable tags and can be applied directly to existing campaigns.





Case Study Mondelēz International

To keep Philadelphia cream cheese top-of-mind for hosts during the holiday season, Mondelez partnered with IMA Ogilvy and six YouTube creators. The brand deployed long-form and short-form creator content amplified by **Video Reach Campaigns** (VRC) and **Creator Ads**. By boosting authentic creator storytelling with paid media rather than relying on brand-only assets, Mondelez achieved:

2.8x higher Shorts view-through rate

9.6% ad recall (+23% vs brand only)

YouTube



Subscribe to the YouTube Brand & Beyond newsletter

to stay informed on the latest video marketing insights, industry perspectives, and more.

Subscribe now





YouTube

Sources

1. **Source:** Google commissioned Ipsos Holiday Shopping, Oct 2025-Jan 2026, Online Survey, US consumers 18+ who conducted Holiday shopping activities in the past two days, n= 8237.
2. **Full claim:** According to meta analysis by Adelaide, in the US, YouTube ad placements rank #1 in attention versus ad placements on streaming, social, and linear TV (US, 2026).
   Source: Adelaide US attention meta analysis commissioned by Google in 2026; Research spanned 36 placement types representing over 54.71B impressions from 248 US campaigns across 92 advertisers from 30 verticals between 2025-2026; Adelaide's attention metric AU measures the likelihood of a placement to effectively capture attention and generate impactful outcomes.
3. **Full claim:** According to a survey conducted by Kantar, 87% of surveyed viewers in the United States say that YouTube introduces them to new things they wouldn't have discovered on their own, outperforming other online platforms (69%), which includes Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat (US, Jan 2026).
   Source: Google/Kantar, Future of Video, US, n=968 YouTube viewers, n=7621 weekly video viewers 18-64, fielded from 12/10/2025-1/12/2026. Competitive set includes 9 market competitors: Linear TV, Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Max, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat.
4. **Full claim:** According to a survey conducted by Kantar, 68% of surveyed viewers in the United States say that creators on YouTube provide helpful context or expertise that enable more confident purchase decisions (US, Jan 2026).
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   Source: Google commissioned Ipsos Holiday Shopping, Oct 2025-Jan 2026, Online Survey, US consumers 18+ who conducted Holiday shopping activities in the past two days, n= 4391 and watched videos on YouTube for shopping.
6. **Full claim:** According to a survey conducted by Kantar, 68% of surveyed viewers in the United States say that creators on YouTube provide helpful context or expertise that enable more confident purchase decisions (US, Jan 2026).
   Source: Google/Kantar, Future of Video, US, n=968 YouTube viewers, n=7621 weekly video viewers 18-64, fielded from 12/10/2025-1/12/2026. Competitive set includes 9 market competitors: Linear TV, Netflix, Disney+, Amazon Prime Video, Max, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat.
7. **Full claim:** According to a Meridian MMM study by Google in the US, YouTube Ads drove incremental views to organic content about a brand, making the brand's investment more effective and increasing iROAS by 16%.
   Source: Meridian MMM study, US, UGC - Sep '23-Sep '25 GQV - Apr '23 - Apr '25, ~400 brands.

