# YouTube evolves into the new television era



YouTube, a platform that has evolved significantly since its inception in 2005, is now the leading streaming service on connected TVs (CTV), a trend that has seen its CEO Neal Mohan refer to the platform as “the new television.” Recent statistics from Nielsen highlight that the consumption of YouTube among users aged 65 and older has doubled in the past two years, illustrating a shift in viewing habits that extend beyond the younger audiences traditionally associated with online platforms.

In an effort to adapt, YouTube launched Shorts in 2020, a feature designed to compete with the likes of TikTok. Since July 2023, the platform has reported more than 2 billion logged-in users actively engaging with Shorts each month. This growth comes at a time when the future of TikTok appears uncertain, suggesting further potential for user increases on YouTube.

The rapid emergence of podcasting has also positioned YouTube as a key player in that space, with company data indicating that over 1 billion viewers watch podcasts on the platform monthly. Kurt Wilms, YouTube's senior director of product management, stressed that the company aims to cater to diverse viewing preferences, providing content in various formats, including long-form videos, podcasts, and Shorts.

The diversification of content on the platform has led creators, brands, and publishers to adjust their strategies to maximise audience engagement across different formats. However, navigating the balance between short-form and long-form content presents challenges, primarily due to rising production costs.

Sharon Mussalli, CEO of media company NowThis, described YouTube's strategy as one catering to the evolving consumer attention spans, which she likened to engaging viewers across “big and little screen” formats. Mussalli has observed a positive trend in viewer engagement since adopting a more concise content strategy, leveraging Shorts for experimentation before committing to extensive production for longer series.

Despite the advantages of short-form content, some creators voice concerns over monetisation. Taylor Lorenz, a tech reporter and content creator, highlighted that monetising Shorts is less effective than long-form content and recognised the difficulties some creators face in establishing strong audience connections through shorter formats. Gianna Christine, who has been active on YouTube for a decade and boasts over 700,000 subscribers, echoed these sentiments, acknowledging the growth potential of Shorts while reaffirming the importance of long-form content in fostering a deeper creator-audience relationship.

Christine noted a significant increase in TV viewership for her content, indicating that by early 2024, nearly 18.3% of her total views were from TV screens, revealing a trend that aligns with data suggesting that videos over 30 minutes long accounted for 73% of total watch time on YouTube as of last October.

YouTube’s commitment to enhancing its TV content experience includes plans to introduce features that allow creators to organise videos into seasons and episodes, facilitating an increased level of engagement akin to traditional television series. This push towards structured content may also assist creators in appealing to more traditional advertisers.

The heightened competition on the platform, as traditional media outlets have begun releasing content, further complicates the landscape for creators. High production costs for long-form content continue to rise, as exemplified by chef Carla Lalli Music, whose production costs average around £3,000 per video, highlighting the financial challenges associated with creating content intended for substantial viewer engagement.

Brands, too, navigate similar budget restrictions in creating original content. Jones Road, a beauty brand, recently launched a series on YouTube, but CEO Cody Plofker noted that while the platform allows for deep audience connections, the financial implications of content creation necessitate sponsorships to cover production costs.

YouTube's push into video podcasts has yielded significant results, with the platform rising to prominence as the number one podcast medium within just two years. Brands are increasingly seeking to engage audiences in unique ways through video podcasting, indicating a shift in tactics to capture wider viewer demographics.

As YouTube continues to enhance its offerings with plans for improved monetisation and tools for podcasters, it reinforces its role as a central hub for both content creators and advertisers facing the challenges of an evolving media landscape. The company has invested over $70 billion in creators over the past three years, underlining its commitment to supporting the content ecosystem as it adapts to viewer preferences in an increasingly multi-faceted digital world.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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