

# Quick, easy ways to make YouTube work harder for your brand

 By [Michael Walker](#)

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YouTube is the most popular video site in South Africa, attracting views every month from more than 4.5 million users or 36% of our online population.

For that reason, every major brand should claim a channel for itself on YouTube and work to grow and retain the audience it attracts to this valuable piece of social media real estate.

With this in mind, here are a few proven tips that will help you to attract more fans and subscribers to your YouTube channel and make them more excited about the video content you make available on YouTube.



## Setting up your channel

A branded channel on YouTube gives you the freedom to choose visuals and artwork that reflect your brand story and identity. Choose something that reflects your brand and make sure that it will look good whether a user is viewing it on a smartphone, tablet or traditional PC. While you're looking at the channel art, make sure that your channel icon-the avatar which overlays your art banner and repeats throughout your video assets when users watch your videos- is used correctly and reflects your branding.

[Check out the technical specs](#)

Once you're happy with the artwork in your channel, it's time to start looking at the content on your channel landing page. Start out by creating a short but compelling introductory video that tells users what your channel is all about and what they can expect from it. This video will only be displayed to new, unsubscribed users that are viewing your channel, so it's a big chance to convert them into subscribers.

In addition to the front page, have a close look at the 'about us' section, which many brands overlook when they're setting up a YouTube channel. Write a brief but enticing description of what your channel will offer and put up links to your other social properties, your Web site, and the YouTube videos of which you're proudest. This is a great way to lure in subscribers, but it's also good for optimising search engine results across your YouTube channel and your other Web properties.

## Create playlists

Once you are happy with the basics, start looking at creating and organising playlists on your channel. Organise your playlists by themes and user interests so users can quickly find content that is relevant to them. If you do a good job of curating your playlists, you can capture a user's attention for a long time, since a new video loads when a user has finished watching the proceeding clip.

When compiling your video playlists, make sure that your descriptions are interesting, accurate and optimised for search engines. Select an attractive thumbnail for your video rather than using the first frame of the video - something that will pique the user's interest so he or she will play the video.

Of course, video content is expensive to create and you probably don't have an endless supply of fresh TV adverts and corporate videos to leverage on your channel. That doesn't mean that your YouTube content needs to be thin, outdated and boring-you can curate interesting content on your playlists from other sources to keep your channel fresh. There is plenty

of good stuff on YouTube, so look for the nuggets that relate to your channel audience and resonate with your brand to keep your subscribers coming back for more.

## Start using annotations to drive subscribers

My last tip is to use annotations - the clickable areas on or in your videos - [read this link to learn more about them](#).

Annotations can be used to create non-linear video stories, drive users to your site, get users to subscribe to your channel, and more.

Using them is a simple and effective way to encourage users to perform a desired action. They are easy to set up, flexible and powerful, so start using them and reap the benefits. After all, YouTube is not a sit back medium like television. It's a social, interactive and user-controlled medium, so use it as such.

If you're still hungry for more tips and tricks, head over to the [YouTube Creator Academy and enrol](#).

## ABOUT MICHAEL WALKER

As Director of Search and Analytics at 25AM, Michael heads up the search engine marketing team and helps clients to maximise their use of search and analytics in their online marketing strategies. He has 11 years of experience in the online world, including eight years with leading e-commerce site Kalahari.net. In 2012, Michael was the winner of the individual Bookmarks award for best paid search marketer.

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