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# YOUTUBE: TURNING A PASSION INTO A JOB

By Hunter Penning

**W**hen the first YouTube video was uploaded in 2005, it was just

someone at the zoo talking to the camera.

No one thought that in 2019, a person could make \$18 million in one year posting online for a new type of job; a YouTuber. YouTube

Hunter Penning

in 2020 is a different place than what it was in its early days. Some YouTubers are as famous as some celebrities, appearing on talk shows, tv shows and, even the occasional cameo in movies. YouTube videos garner millions—occasionally billions--of views every year, and it shows no sign of slowing down. Entertainment and education are a big part of the internet, and YouTube plays a big role for many sites online, uploading videos to communicate with their customers.

## **A New Career**

For the few who don't know, a  
YouTuber is someone  
who does uploads  
videos of various  
different topics, from  
blogs to playing video  
games. YouTube was  
never imagined as a place where someone  
could make living—much less get rich.  
However, as YouTube has gotten older and  
more popular, many different ways for users  
to generate revenue have appeared. The two  
most common ways of creating revenue on  
YouTube are from ads and crowdfunding  
campaigns (more on this second). Thanks to

*"Oh, heck no. I came on here to make funny videos with my friends, and for some reason people watched them. Now, here we are."*

Hunter Penning

this, some lucky few have been able to dedicate their full time to creating more elaborate content as a job, rather than just a hobby.

## **Making a Living on YouTube**

As it stands today, depending on the maturity level of a video, certain advertisers are willing to sell their ads to YouTubers and their videos. The criteria for “maturity level” include uses of profanity; references to drugs and alcohol; and references to sex or violence. If a video is family-friendly and of the right production quality, it is likely that advertisers will partner with a creator. A YouTuber is then born.

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## Results of Pandering to Advertisers

Unfortunately, this comes with some troubling issues. Since YouTube does not manually check each of the thousands of videos uploaded per day for their advertiser-friendliness, it falls to self-automated computer programs to do this job. As long as the video is “safe” by this program's standards, it is able to make plenty of ads. As a result, a number of different people have created channels with the express

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purpose of exploiting children, such as and “Ryan’s World”. Some channels exploit their own children to create “family brands”, which use their own children to make content that appeals to other kids. Other videos recycle a



**Ryan’s World, formally “Ryan’s Toy Review”**

majority of their videos and put very small changes on them

such as Videogyan, which takes nursery rhymes and just changes the characters in the video, resulting in YouTube being flooded

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with low effort videos that make a ton of money and garner billions of views.

## A Change in Content

As a result of this current advertisement system (and simply time passing), the types of YouTubers present and the new types of content they create on the site have changed drastically over the years. When the site first began, it was, as said, a place for people to upload clips of family moments. Soon after, it was discovered by the general public. It became a place where people would upload more broad videos, like blogs about their daily lives, video game

Hunter Penning

playthroughs, and some animations and music created by users. As time went on, the site exploded and became a place where all sorts of people joined, uploading indie films, music videos, (illegal) tv clips and the like. Eventually, large, traditional media wanted their slice of the cake ; talk shows, sports, full movies and tv shows, along the content of old, were uploaded. All of these groups and their migration to the site has caused YouTube itself to tighten its user's ability to make money, as well as what they allow to even be upload online.

**Moving outside of YouTube**



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Some older YouTubers don't like how strict YouTube and its restrictions have gotten in terms of earning money from the site, and as such have turned to other things. A Lot of YouTubers (especially these last two years) have migrated to live streaming sites like *Twitch.tv* and *Mixer* to livestream a variety of things, like video games and painting. Others have pursued music, leaving YouTube all together and uploading their content to other sites such as sound cloud, Spotify and Apple Music.

Some content creators have gotten big enough to do things outside of YouTube. Some, like "Pewdiepie" and "Markiplier", who

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have tens of millions of followers, have appeared on late-night television shows in front of live audiences. Other YouTubers have made their own movies (such as the three-part *Fred* movie series produced by Nickelodeon studios) or made cameos in both small and big films. For instance, Miranda Sings was featured in *Ralph Breaks the Internet*.

To see how a YouTuber feels about the site as a job, and how it has changed over the year, I posed some questions to YouTuber Gus Johnson.

## **The Work Life of a YouTuber**

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Q: How much time  
everyday do you  
spend on the site?

Making/editing  
videos?

A: Uh... I spend a lot  
of time on it [the site].



**Gus Johnson**

I love supporting my friends who also do it, and  
some of the content on here is just fun to watch. As  
per editing, my videos take a good portion of the day  
to edit (all though not all day). It isn't a literal "all day"  
activity but it certainly feels like a job some day

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Q: Did you start doing YouTube with the intent to make money, or was it something that just happened naturally?

A: Oh, heck no. I came on here to make funny videos with my friends, and for some reason people watched them. Now, here we are.

Q: Are you ever influenced to make certain videos due to audience demands?

A: I mean... not intentionally? No one really asks or tells me what to make, except for the occasional video idea from friends and family. You can see what video series people like based on some metrics like

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likes, and that does make you inclined to make sequels or continuations to certain videos.

Q: Do you work with other content creators online?

How important is doing so to success on YouTube?

A: Oh yea, I work with others all the time. Sure, it does help with increasing yours and their audience, but I really just want to work with people that I think make good content. It probably is important for some YouTubers, but not me.

Q: How do you go about making a video? Is there a script writing or any planning, or do you just get an idea and run with it?

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A: Well, normally what happens is I'll think of an idea, tell Eddy [a friend and YouTuber] or Sabrina if I feel like it needs someone else in there, then go from there. A lot of the time we have a general idea of how it should go, but a good bit of the stuff is improvised on the spot.

## The End of the (YouTube) World

YouTubers as a job is a risky venture, especially with the "adpocalypse" threatening many creators. Most creators are forced to turn to sponsorships or crowdfunding to keep it going full time. As the site regresses to some, it can't be denied that it just keeps

Hunter Penning

getting bigger every year, with a lot of  
different types of content.