



# Building a YouTube Content Strategy: Lessons From Google BrandLab

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Mobile, video, and programmatic. These are all top of mind for brands. But where does content development fit in? Kim Larson, global director of Google BrandLab, shares how her team helps marketers improve and streamline their YouTube marketing strategies and feed the proverbial content monster.

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**A**s the director of Google BrandLab, where we help marketers think digital-first, there are three words that rule my day, every day: mobile, video, and programmatic. With [Mary Meeker](#) predicting that, by 2017, 74% of all internet traffic will be video, and with mobile watch time on YouTube already surpassing desktop in 2015,<sup>1</sup> the time for brands to make sense of what mobile means for their video content strategy is now.

At Google BrandLab, we get two primary questions from marketers about how they can keep up with the ever-increasing demand for video in this mobile revolution: “*What* video content should I make to best engage my audience while staying true to my brand?” and “*How* can I create that video content at scale?” In Part 1 of our “Lessons from Google BrandLab” series, I’ll answer both of these questions by taking you through two frameworks we use every day at the Lab.

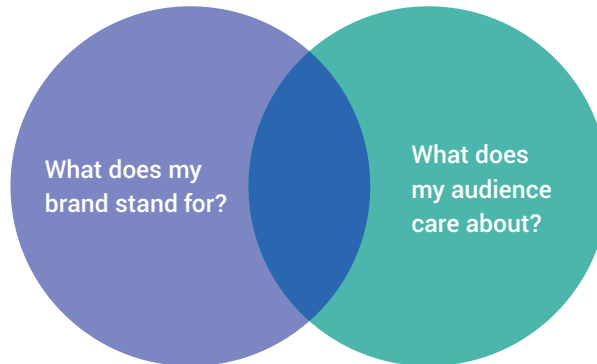
## What types of YouTube videos should I make?

To answer this question, we start with a Venn diagram. The first circle represents what the brand’s target audience cares about; the second represents what the brand stands for. To get to this kind of thinking, we ask folks in BrandLab to think about:

- “What’s truly unique and different about our brand?”
- “What’s truly ownable for our brand?”
- “What right does our brand have to play (and win) in this content space versus our competition?”

Once the answers are in the Venn diagram, the overlapping circles provide a window into the sweet spot for developing a video content strategy:

### Sweet Spot: Where Brands and Their Audiences Intersect

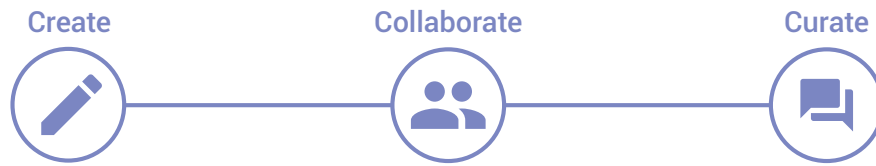


As you consider what your audience cares about, think about the [micro-moments](#) they might be experiencing. Micro-moments are the [I-want-to-go](#), [I-want-to-do](#), [I-want-to-buy](#), or I-want-to-know moments when people are turning to devices to find answers, discover new things, or make decisions. Johnson & Johnson Consumer, for example, took these kinds of moments into consideration as it built its [video content strategy](#) for CLEAN & CLEAR®. The brand had always been about teen friendships, and the team's research showed that teen girls were turning to YouTube in moments when they needed inspiration, community, and support, so CLEAN & CLEAR® built a [channel](#) around the [confidence-boosting mission SEE THE REAL ME®](#).

### How can I create online video and other branded content at scale?

Here's the hard truth: There's no way a brand can create all the content needed to feed consumers' voracious appetite for video, especially on mobile devices. There isn't enough time, money, or resources.

The trick is to create content gradually and build an engaging library over time. That might sound daunting with a traditional production mind-set as a reference point. But to produce at scale requires rethinking that production process, and getting a little help while you're at it.



That's where the Create, Collaborate, Curate—or what we like to call “CCC”—content framework comes in. The idea is to use this framework to “feed the content monster,” so that content creation—video production, specifically—no longer feels like a barrier to entry into the video marketplace. As we take you through each “C” in the framework, we’ll share examples of how one brand, Mountain Dew, is using CCC to streamline its video creation and engage the mobile audience.

## Create

The first type of content in the CCC framework is created by the brand. It feels like the brand, captures the brand's tone, and offers a more traditional creative polish. It tells a story about the brand that's entertaining, educational, or inspiring. “Create” content might simply be entertaining video that gets people's attention, or it might deliver on the specific micro-moments we talked about earlier, such as how-to content in an [I want-to-do moment](#).

Mountain Dew®, for example, released an extended version of the brand's Kickstart™ [“Come Alive”](#) spot on YouTube, entertaining audiences with a longer, more interactive story than television allowed. But the brand team didn't stop there. They worked with our [Art, Copy & Code](#) team on the first [Unskippable Labs](#) experiment to figure out how to improve the video for mobile viewers and make it undeniably “unskippable” content people would choose to watch.

“Rather than using video exclusively as a storytelling mechanism, think of it as a tool for storymaking, in which consumers get to take part.”

### **Collaborate**

This content is the product of the brand’s collaboration with digital influencers. It’s often content that features a YouTube creator and is produced and promoted in partnership with the creator’s channel. Ultimately, the goal of “Collaborate” content is to help brands broaden their relevance and connect with a uniquely engaged fan base while leveraging the expertise of experienced creators.

[Devinsupertramp](#), for example, has more than 3 million subscribers on YouTube. Mountain Dew partnered with him to create a [series of stunt videos](#) for #DEWroadtrip. They cross-posted the videos on both Devin’s channel and Mountain Dew’s channel to engage Devin’s audience.

### **Curate**

The third and final content type is crafted by consumers and is the product of an audience call-to-action. Rather than using video exclusively as a *storytelling* mechanism, think of it as a tool for *storymaking*, in which consumers get to take part.

Audience participation keeps your message authentic and relatable and can be gathered across social channels. And consumers want to interact with brands: According to [brandshare 2014](#), 87% of people feel they should be able to communicate, share opinions, and interact with brands in real time. Mountain Dew got the message and made fan stories a critical part of its content strategy with the [“Art of Dew”](#) video series.

## Don't overthink your YouTube content marketing strategy

You already know *why* you should be prioritizing online video: because consumers are. As Mary Meeker pointed out in May, more than half of mobile data traffic is already from video.<sup>2</sup> Consumers turn to devices in all kinds of micro-moments; they're flipping to YouTube to help them feel entertained, complete tasks, and make purchase decisions. And yet, Meeker also says advertisers aren't putting their money where consumers are. Even though mobile commands about a quarter of media time, it only accounts for about 8% of ad dollars.<sup>2</sup>

Where's the disconnect? I suspect it's twofold, actually. First, I don't think brand marketers are sure *what* content to make. And second, they aren't sure *how* to make it. Don't waste time overcomplicating it: *Video* is what consumers want on mobile. Make more of it with a little help from the Venn diagram exercise and the CCC framework.



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## Sources

- 1 YouTube Global Data, 2015, phone and tablet.
- 2 Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, "2015 Internet Trends Report," May 2015.