YouTube Marketing and the Consolidation of Brand Equity in Consumers' Minds: Global Evidence and Secondary-Data Analysis, 2015–2026

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Received: 30/08/2026 ; **Revised:** 29/09/2026 ; **Accepted:** 05/10/2026

Summary: This study examines how YouTube marketing contributes to the consolidation of consumer-based brand equity in global markets. It adopts a structured secondary-data approach covering 2015–August 2026 and combines peer-reviewed research with official platform disclosures, regulatory filings, multi-country digital reports, and recent marketing surveys. The analysis evaluates platform scale, advertising-market growth, video-marketing adoption, consumer responses, creator-mediated persuasion, and documented campaigns by global brands. Results show that YouTube has evolved from a complementary social-video channel into a multi-format marketing infrastructure spanning short-form video, long-form content, connected television, search, creators, and communities. YouTube advertising revenue increased nearly fivefold between 2017 and 2025, while first-half 2026 data indicate continued growth. The evidence consistently links informative and entertaining content, precise audience relevance, creator authenticity, parasocial relationships, and interactive engagement with stronger brand awareness, credibility, search behaviour, and purchase intention. However, the magnitude of effects varies by product category, audience, creative execution, and measurement design. The study proposes an integrated framework connecting YouTube marketing inputs to cognitive, relational, and behavioural brand outcomes and outlines implications for global brand managers.

Keywords: YouTube marketing ; Brand equity ; Brand awareness ; Consumer behaviour ; Video advertising.
Jel Classification Codes : M31 ; M37 ; D12 ; L82

Résumé : Cette étude examine la manière dont le marketing sur YouTube contribue à la consolidation du capital-marque fondé sur le consommateur sur les marchés mondiaux. Elle adopte une approche structurée fondée sur des données secondaires couvrant la période allant de 2015 à août 2026 et combine des recherches évaluées par les pairs avec des publications officielles de la plateforme, des documents réglementaires, des rapports numériques multi-pays et des enquêtes marketing récentes. L'analyse porte sur l'envergure de la plateforme, la croissance du marché publicitaire, l'adoption du marketing vidéo, les réactions des consommateurs, la persuasion par l'intermédiaire des créateurs de contenu et les campagnes documentées de marques mondiales. Les résultats montrent que YouTube est passé d'un canal vidéo social complémentaire à une infrastructure marketing multiformat couvrant la vidéo courte, les contenus longs, la télévision connectée, la recherche, les créateurs et les communautés. Les revenus publicitaires de YouTube ont été multipliés par près de cinq entre 2017 et 2025, et les données du premier semestre 2026 indiquent une croissance continue. Les éléments recueillis associent de façon constante les contenus informatifs et divertissants, la pertinence précise de l'audience, l'authenticité des créateurs, les relations parasociales et l'engagement interactif à une notoriété, une crédibilité, un comportement de recherche et une intention d'achat plus forts. Toutefois, l'ampleur des effets varie selon la catégorie de produits, l'audience, l'exécution créative et le dispositif de mesure. L'étude propose un cadre intégré reliant les leviers du marketing sur YouTube aux résultats cognitifs, relationnels et comportementaux de la marque, et en dégage des implications pour les gestionnaires de marques mondiales.

Mots-clés : Marketing sur YouTube ; Capital-marque ; Notoriété de la marque ; Comportement du consommateur ; Publicité vidéo.
Codes de classification JEL : M31 ; M37 ; D12 ; L82

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I- Introduction:

Online video has moved from a peripheral promotional format to a central element of contemporary marketing communication. YouTube is particularly important because it combines paid advertising, creator content, searchability, recommendation systems, comments, sharing, long-form storytelling, short-form video, live content, and connected-television viewing within one platform. This architecture changes the logic of brand communication. Instead of treating an advertisement as a short-lived exposure, brands can create persistent video assets that remain searchable, can be redistributed across networks, and can accumulate views, comments, associations, and user-generated responses over time. These characteristics correspond to the core advantages commonly emphasized in practitioner guidance on YouTube marketing—interactivity, audience targeting, concise creative execution, cross-platform sharing, and the strategic use of creators—and the present article re-examines those ideas in the light of contemporary platform evidence and peer-reviewed research.

The scale of the platform makes this issue economically significant. Google's advertising tools indicated potential YouTube ad reach of 2.53 billion users per month in January 2025, although this figure should be interpreted as advertising reach rather than a direct count of monthly active users (Kemp, 2025). YouTube also reported more than 20 million video uploads per day in April 2025 and more than 200 billion daily Shorts views by June 2025 (Mahesh, 2025; Mohan, 2025). At the same time, Alphabet's filings show that YouTube advertising revenue rose from USD 8.15 billion in 2017 to USD 40.37 billion in 2025 (Alphabet Inc., 2020, 2026a). The platform therefore represents not only a communication environment but a mature global advertising market in which brand and direct-response objectives coexist.

The strategic question, however, is not whether YouTube is large. A large audience does not automatically produce durable brands. Brand-building depends on how exposure is transformed into mental availability, meaningful associations, trust, engagement, and eventual behaviour. In customer-based brand equity theory, a brand becomes stronger when consumers can identify it, retrieve it from memory, associate it with favourable and distinctive meanings, and respond to it with stronger preference or loyalty (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). YouTube can contribute to this process through repeated audiovisual cues, narrative elaboration, targeted relevance, social proof, creator credibility, and community participation. Yet the same platform can also produce irritation, clutter, weak attention, or low credibility if the advertisement is intrusive or the creator-brand fit is poor.

Research has increasingly examined these mechanisms. Dehghani et al. (2016) found that entertainment, informativeness, and customization were among the strongest positive drivers of YouTube advertising value, while irritation was negative; advertising value in turn affected brand awareness and purchase intention. Lee and Watkins (2016) showed that parasocial interaction with YouTube vloggers shaped luxury-brand perceptions and purchase intentions. Later work has strengthened the role of source credibility, authenticity, homophily, trust, and parasocial relationships in influencer-led persuasion (Munnukka et al., 2019; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020; Liu & Zheng, 2024; Garg & Bakshi, 2024). These findings suggest that YouTube branding is not only a media-planning problem; it is also a relational and cognitive process.

A gap remains between platform-level statistics, which demonstrate scale and commercial adoption, and consumer-behaviour research, which explains why certain campaigns work. Many managerial reports emphasize views, reach, or return on investment, whereas academic studies often focus on a single category, country, or influencer context. A useful synthesis therefore requires the integration of macro-level platform trends with micro-level mechanisms of brand formation. This article responds to that need by combining official platform data, global survey indicators, peer-reviewed research, and documented global-brand cases in one secondary-data framework covering the period from 2015 to August 2026.

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I.1. Research problem, question and hypothesis

The central research question is: To what extent, and through which mechanisms, does YouTube marketing strengthen consumer-based brand equity—particularly brand awareness and salience, brand image and credibility, engagement, and purchase intention—in global markets?

The study tests a directional synthesis hypothesis: H1: YouTube marketing exerts a positive influence on consumer-based brand equity when its content and delivery generate attention, relevance, trust, interaction, and repeated memory cues; these mechanisms are expected to strengthen brand awareness, brand image and credibility, engagement, search behaviour, and purchase intention.

Because the article uses heterogeneous secondary evidence rather than one newly collected consumer sample, H1 is not tested through a single regression coefficient. It is assessed through convergence across financial trends, global survey evidence, peer-reviewed empirical studies, and documented brand outcomes. This distinction is important for maintaining methodological transparency and avoiding causal claims that the available evidence cannot support.

I.2. Conceptualizing brand consolidation on YouTube

In this study, brand consolidation refers to the strengthening and stabilization of a brand's position in consumer memory and evaluation. It is broader than simple exposure. Brand awareness concerns whether consumers recognize or recall a brand; brand salience concerns how readily the brand comes to mind in relevant situations; brand image concerns the network of meanings and associations attached to the brand; brand credibility concerns whether brand claims are considered believable; and behavioural response includes search, engagement, purchase intention, recommendation, and loyalty. This view draws on Aaker's (1991) multidimensional conception of brand equity and Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity framework.

YouTube offers several mechanisms that can reinforce these dimensions. First, audiovisual storytelling combines verbal, visual, musical, and symbolic cues, increasing the number of retrieval paths through which a brand can be remembered. Second, algorithmic and paid targeting can increase perceived relevance by linking content to demographics, interests, search behaviour, remarketing lists, topics, channels, and devices. Third, comments, likes, shares, subscriptions, creator responses, and fandom practices turn exposure into interaction. Fourth, videos remain searchable and indexable, allowing older content to retain value beyond the original campaign period. Fifth, creator partnerships introduce human sources whose authenticity, expertise, similarity, and social attractiveness can transfer to the endorsed brand. Finally, YouTube's multi-format structure lets brands combine Shorts for rapid reach, longer videos for elaboration, and connected-TV inventory for high-attention viewing.

These mechanisms also clarify why creative quality matters. Practitioner guidance has long emphasized attracting the user from the first viewing, choosing accurate keywords, using short and focused content where appropriate, selecting the audience, controlling campaign budget, and choosing influencers carefully. Those principles remain relevant but require refinement. Contemporary evidence shows that there is no single ideal length: short-form video can maximize fast reach, while long-form branded storytelling can outperform category norms when the content is sufficiently engaging (Nelson-Bogle, 2024). The appropriate creative strategy therefore depends on the stage of the customer journey and the cognitive task the video must perform.

II- Methods and Materials:

The study uses a structured secondary-data review and descriptive analytical design. The observation window extends from 2015 to 17 August 2026, while some financial time series begin in 2017 because Alphabet did not separately report YouTube advertising revenue for earlier years. The objective is explanatory synthesis rather than meta-analysis: the included sources use different samples, measures, countries, categories, and research designs, so their coefficients cannot be pooled into a statistically valid common effect size.

Four source categories were used. First, official corporate and regulatory sources were used for platform economics and current operating indicators: Alphabet annual and quarterly filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Alphabet investor-relations transcripts, the official YouTube Blog, and Google Ads documentation. Second, DataReportal was used for advertising-reach estimates derived from Google's planning tools; these are explicitly labelled as advertising reach and not as a direct substitute for monthly active users. Third, Wyzowl's annual State of Video Marketing series was used to illustrate long-run business adoption and recent marketer/consumer perceptions. Its 2026 edition surveyed 266 unique respondents in late 2025, which makes the data useful for current directional insight but not a population census. Fourth, peer-reviewed articles were selected when they directly examined YouTube advertising, vloggers, social-media influencers, parasocial relationships, brand awareness, brand credibility, brand attitude, or purchase intention.

Inclusion criteria were: direct relevance to video or creator marketing; transparent publication date and identifiable source; preference for peer-reviewed or primary corporate/regulatory evidence; and sufficient methodological information to interpret the reported result. Promotional statistics without a traceable methodology were excluded. Brand cases published by Google or Alphabet were retained only as illustrative managerial evidence and are explicitly treated as advertiser/platform-reported outcomes rather than independent experiments.

The analytical procedure involved five steps. First, a chronological series of YouTube advertising revenue was assembled and annual growth was examined; the compound annual growth rate from 2017 to 2025 was calculated as (40.367/8.150)^(1/8) – 1, which equals approximately 22.1%. Second, selected platform-scale indicators were summarized with definitional caveats. Third, video-marketing adoption and current consumer-response indicators were compared descriptively. Fourth, peer-reviewed findings were coded into recurring mechanisms: content value, targeting relevance, credibility/authenticity, parasocial relationship, interaction, and brand outcomes. Fifth, global-brand cases were interpreted against the conceptual framework. No individual-level causal estimate is inferred from platform revenues or survey percentages.

Reliability was strengthened through source triangulation. When financial data were available, SEC filings were treated as the primary record. For current platform usage, official YouTube announcements were distinguished from third-party advertising-reach estimates. For behavioural interpretation, peer-reviewed evidence was prioritized over company case studies. This approach reduces the risk of presenting a single commercial dataset as universal evidence of consumer response.

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Table (1): Evidence base and analytical role

Evidence type	Examples used	Role in the study	Main limitation
Regulatory / corporate filings	Alphabet 10-K; 2026 Q1–Q2 SEC results	Advertising revenue and current financial trend	Financial growth is not itself a measure of brand effect
Official platform sources	YouTube Blog; YouTube CEO announcements	Uploads, Shorts views, format and ecosystem scale	Platform-reported metrics
Digital audience reports	DataReportal / Google ad-planning data	Potential global advertising reach	Ad reach ≠ monthly active users
Marketing survey	Wyzowl State of Video Marketing 2026	Adoption, perceived ROI, brand-awareness and consumer-response indicators	266 respondents; self-reported perceptions
Peer-reviewed research	Computers in Human Behavior; J. of Business Research; J. of Retailing & Consumer Services; Humanities & Social Sciences Communications	Mechanisms linking content, creators, trust and brand outcomes	Context- and sample-specific effects
Brand case studies	Urban Decay, Samsung, Louis Vuitton, Depop, McDonald's	Illustrative search lift, brand lift, watch-time and view-through outcomes	Heterogeneous, platform/advertiser-reported metrics

The source: Author's synthesis based on the sources listed in the References section.

III- Results and Discussion:

III.1. YouTube's scale and economic consolidation as a marketing infrastructure

The first result is structural: YouTube now operates simultaneously as a social platform, search destination, creator economy, streaming service, connected-TV environment, and advertising marketplace. DataReportal reported potential advertising reach of 2.53 billion users per month in January 2025, equivalent to 45.5% of the world's internet users, while warning that ad-reach figures should not be interpreted as unique monthly active users (Kemp, 2025). YouTube itself reported more than 20 million daily uploads in April 2025, and its CEO reported more than 200 billion daily Shorts views in June 2025 (Mahesh, 2025; Mohan, 2025). These figures indicate both an enormous supply of content and a highly fragmented attention environment.

This scale has two implications for branding. On one hand, YouTube provides global distribution and granular audience access. On the other, the abundance of content increases the competition for attention, making creative distinctiveness and relevance essential. The persistence of searchable video means that a campaign can produce long-tail exposure after its paid flight, but discoverability depends on titles, thumbnails, metadata, audience response, and recommendation dynamics. Consequently, the platform rewards a combination of media investment and content quality rather than one factor alone.

The economic trend is equally clear. Alphabet first disclosed a comparable historical YouTube advertising series for 2017–2019, reporting USD 8.15, 11.16, and 15.15 billion respectively (Alphabet Inc., 2020). Revenue then rose to USD 19.77 billion in 2020 and USD 28.85 billion in 2021, before slowing to USD 29.24 billion in 2022. Growth resumed in 2023–2025, reaching USD 40.37 billion in 2025 (Alphabet Inc., 2021, 2023, 2024, 2026a). Across 2017–2025, the compound annual growth rate is approximately 22.1%. The 2022 plateau demonstrates that growth is not mechanically linear; macroeconomic conditions, foreign-exchange effects, advertiser demand, format innovation, and the mix of brand versus direct-response advertising all matter.

The first half of 2026 shows continued expansion. YouTube advertising revenue increased from USD 8.927 billion in Q1 2025 to USD 9.883 billion in Q1 2026, and from USD 9.796 billion in Q2 2025 to USD 11.055 billion in Q2 2026 (Alphabet Inc., 2026b, 2026c). This corresponds to

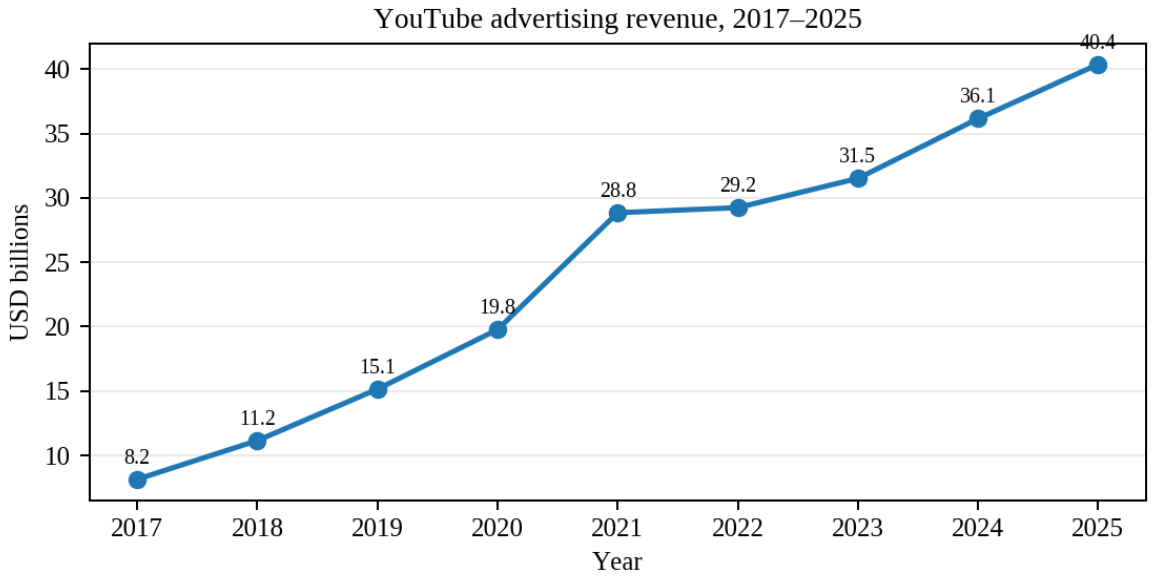
approximately USD 20.94 billion in first-half 2026 advertising revenue, up about 11.8% from the comparable 2025 period. The figures are especially relevant for brand strategy because Alphabet attributes part of YouTube advertising growth to brand advertising as well as direct response. Moreover, YouTube's combined advertising and subscription revenue exceeded USD 60 billion in full-year 2025, confirming a diversified ecosystem that extends beyond ad-supported viewing (Alphabet Inc., 2026d).

Table (2): Selected current indicators of YouTube's global marketing scale

Indicator	Latest observed value	Period	Interpretation / caveat
Potential monthly advertising reach	2.53 billion users	Jan. 2025	Google ad-planning reach; not a direct MAU count
Daily video uploads	>20 million	Apr. 2025	Average daily uploads reported by YouTube
Daily Shorts views	>200 billion	Jun. 2025	Average daily Shorts views reported by YouTube
Daily TV watch time	>1 billion hours	2024	Global daily YouTube viewing on television screens reported by Alphabet
YouTube ad revenue	USD 40.367 billion	FY 2025	Audited/reported advertising revenue
Total ads + subscriptions revenue	>USD 60 billion	FY 2025	YouTube annual revenue across ads and subscriptions
Q1 2026 ad revenue	USD 9.883 billion	Q1 2026	11% year-on-year increase
Q2 2026 ad revenue	USD 11.055 billion	Q2 2026	13% year-on-year increase

The source: Alphabet Inc. (2026a–d); Kemp (2025); Mahesh (2025); Mohan (2025).

Figure (1): Long-run growth in YouTube advertising revenue



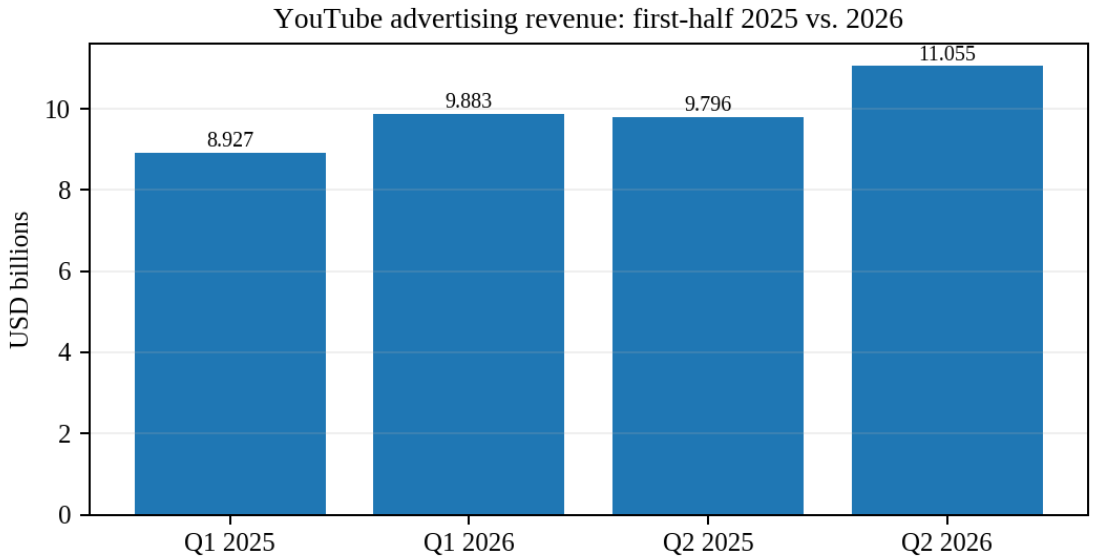
The source: Author's calculations from Alphabet/SEC filings (2017–2025).

Figure (1) visualizes the transformation of YouTube's advertising business. The important interpretation is not that revenue proves brand effectiveness; rather, sustained advertiser spending signals that firms increasingly treat YouTube as a scalable marketing infrastructure. The sharp acceleration in 2021, the near-flat 2022 result, and renewed growth thereafter also caution against simple extrapolation. Brand managers should therefore evaluate YouTube with outcome-specific

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metrics—brand lift, search lift, incremental reach, qualified engagement, conversion, and customer value—rather than assuming that industry growth guarantees campaign success.

Figure (2): YouTube advertising revenue in Q1 and Q2, 2025 versus 2026



The source: Alphabet Inc. (2026b, 2026c).

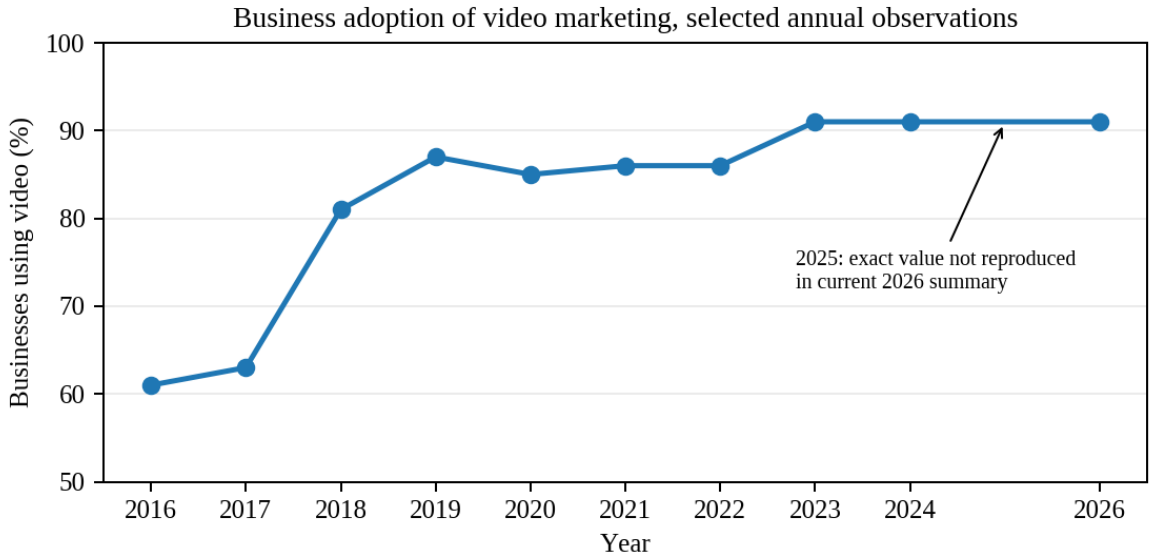
III.2. Video marketing adoption and contemporary consumer response

A second result concerns the normalization of video marketing across firms. Wyzowl's longitudinal survey series shows that the share of surveyed businesses using video as a marketing tool rose from 61% in 2016 to 63% in 2017, 81% in 2018, 87% in 2019, 85% in 2020, 86% in 2021 and 2022, and 91% in 2023 and 2024. The 2026 report again records 91%, after describing a slight dip in 2025 without reproducing the exact figure in its current public summary (Wyzowl, 2024, 2026). The omission of an exact 2025 value in Figure (3) is deliberate; inserting an inferred number would create false precision.

The latest survey also suggests that video's perceived role extends beyond awareness. Among video marketers surveyed for the 2026 report, 93% said video had helped increase brand awareness, 83% said it had directly increased sales, and 82% reported a good return on investment. Among consumers, 85% reported having been convinced to buy a product or service after watching a video, 84% wanted to see more video from brands in 2026, and 89% said video quality affects trust in a brand (Wyzowl, 2026). YouTube was the most widely used video platform in that survey, with 82% of businesses uploading video there, and 69% of those respondents described it as effective.

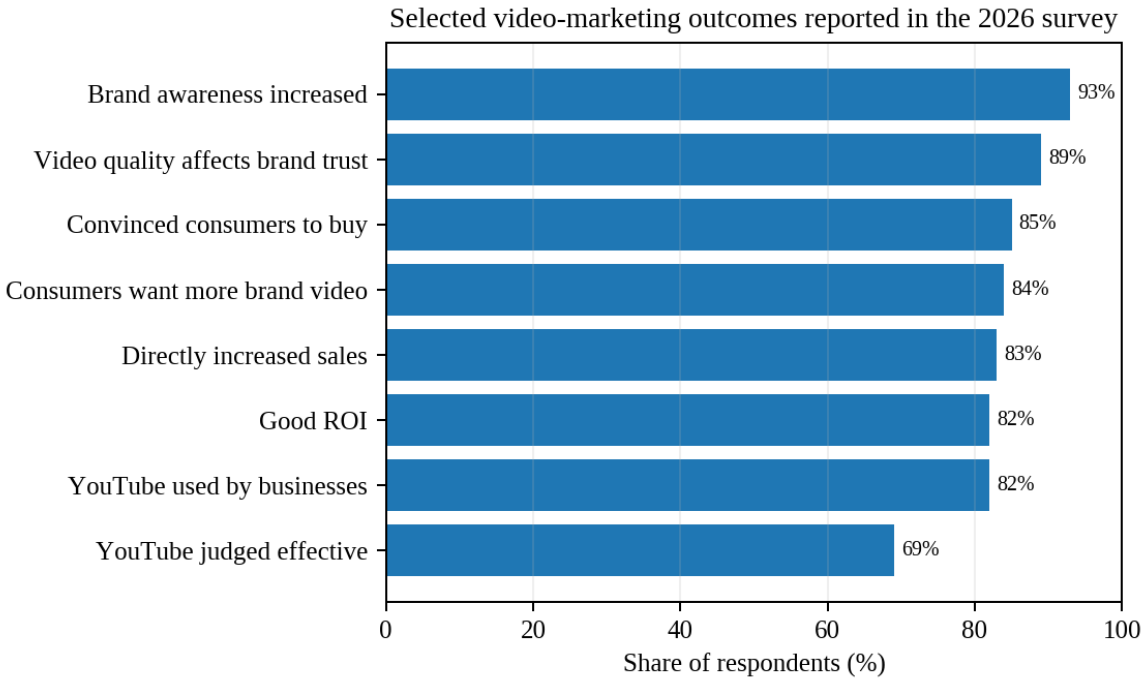
These percentages should not be read as causal probabilities. Wyzowl's 2026 sample included 266 unique respondents and combined marketing professionals with online consumers through screening questions. The survey therefore provides current market sentiment and directional evidence, but it cannot establish that 93% of all global firms achieve a measurable increase in brand awareness. Its value for this study lies in the consistency between the survey's high reported importance of video and the broader platform, financial, and academic evidence.

Figure (3): Growth in the adoption of video marketing by surveyed businesses



The source: Wyzowl historical survey series; 2025 is intentionally not plotted because the current 2026 public summary describes only a “slight dip” without the exact value.

Figure (4): Selected brand and consumer outcomes reported by the 2026 video-marketing survey



The source: Wyzowl (2026), survey of 266 unique respondents conducted in late 2025.

III.3. Why YouTube can strengthen brand memory, meaning and credibility

The third result is theoretical convergence around a set of mechanisms that explain why video can affect brand equity. Dehghani et al. (2016) provide an early YouTube-specific model in which entertainment, informativeness, and customization increase advertising value, while irritation reduces it. Advertising value subsequently contributes to brand awareness and purchase intention. This finding gives empirical grounding to the practitioner emphasis on selecting the right video, designing an attractive title and thumbnail, using relevant keywords, and matching campaign

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content to audience interests: such tactical decisions matter because they shape attention, relevance, and perceived value.

From a memory perspective, YouTube can strengthen salience through repeated and multimodal encoding. A brand name may be presented simultaneously through spoken language, product imagery, logo, colour, music, creator endorsement, demonstration, and narrative context. Repetition across Shorts, in-stream ads, creator videos, and connected-TV placements can create multiple retrieval cues. However, memory consolidation depends on distinctive and consistent brand assets. An entertaining video that is remembered without the brand can generate weak brand linkage. For managers, the implication is to integrate recognizable brand cues early enough to connect attention with the correct memory structure without undermining the natural flow of the content.

Searchability adds another dimension. Consumers often move from awareness to active information seeking. YouTube functions as a discovery environment for reviews, comparisons, demonstrations, tutorials, branded films, and creator recommendations. This creates a bridge between brand-building and demand capture: a campaign can stimulate brand search, and subsequent videos can provide deeper evidence that reinforces evaluation. Google-reported cases in Section III.5 illustrate this mechanism through increases in brand-related search following campaign exposure.

Interactivity further differentiates YouTube from one-way media. Comments, replies, likes, shares, subscriptions, community posts, and creator reactions give users visible signs of collective engagement. These signals may increase social proof, but they also expose brands to public criticism. Effective YouTube marketing therefore requires community management and responsiveness rather than simply publishing the video. The common recommendation to use comments and cross-platform sharing remains relevant, but it should be understood as part of an engagement system in which audience response becomes additional brand content.

Targeting is also more sophisticated than simple geographic selection. Current Google Ads video campaigns can use demographic and audience segments based on interests, habits, active research, and prior interactions with a business, alongside video-campaign content targeting options where supported (Google, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). This can increase message relevance, but excessive targeting may reduce reach and learning. For brand-building, broad reach within a strategically relevant category can be valuable because mental availability requires sufficient exposure. The optimal balance between precision and scale therefore depends on whether the campaign is seeking short-term action, category penetration, or long-term memory structures.

III.4. Creator credibility, parasocial relationships and trust transfer

Creator partnerships are among YouTube's most distinctive brand-building resources. They differ from conventional celebrity endorsements because the creator often has a history of frequent, informal, and interactive contact with the audience. Horton and Wohl's (1956) concept of parasocial interaction helps explain why viewers can experience a sense of relational closeness with media personalities despite the relationship being largely one-sided. On YouTube, comments, recurring series, live streams, personal disclosure, and direct address can intensify this perceived closeness.

Lee and Watkins (2016) showed that parasocial interaction with YouTube vloggers can shape luxury-brand perceptions and purchase intentions. Munnukka et al. (2019) similarly found that audience participation can improve the acceptance of vlog endorsements through parasocial relationships and perceived credibility. Sokolova and Kefi (2020) reported that credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intention in influencer contexts. More recent research supports the same chain of mechanisms: Liu and Zheng (2024) found that informativeness, authenticity, and homophily positively affect parasocial relationships, which then influence brand credibility and purchase intention. Garg and Bakshi (2024) found that trust partially mediates the effects of beauty vloggers' credibility attributes on purchase intention, while repeated parasocial interactions can contribute to consumer response when the vlogger is perceived as a credible source.

The managerial implication is that reach alone is an incomplete basis for creator selection. A creator with a smaller but coherent and trusting community may generate stronger brand effects

than a larger creator whose audience-brand fit is weak. Selection should therefore evaluate expertise, trustworthiness, authenticity, audience overlap, content style, previous sponsorship saturation, controversy risk, and the degree to which the creator can integrate the brand without violating audience expectations. This point refines the familiar recommendation to use influential YouTube personalities cautiously and to choose them carefully, and it is consistent with evidence that the informational value and credibility of influencer messages shape trust in branded content (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Trust transfer also introduces risk. If sponsored content is perceived as deceptive, overly scripted, or inconsistent with the creator's identity, persuasion knowledge can activate and reduce credibility. Disclosure is therefore not simply a regulatory obligation; it can be part of transparent relationship management. Brands should distinguish between creator voice and mandatory product claims, allow room for authentic demonstration, and avoid scripts that erase the creator's established style.

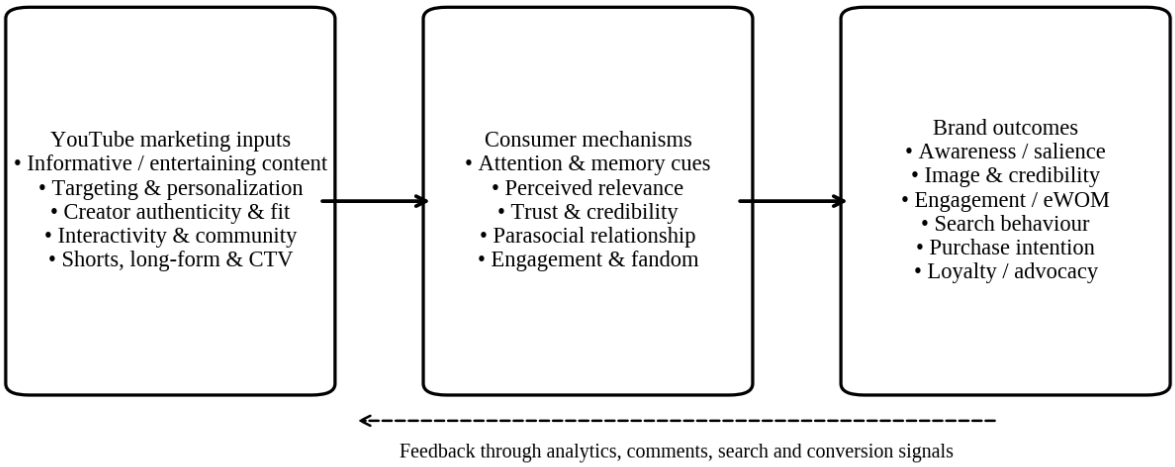
Table (3): Selected peer-reviewed evidence linking YouTube/creator marketing to brand outcomes

Study	Context / method	Key mechanism	Brand / consumer outcome
Dehghani et al. (2016)	YouTube advertising; young consumers	Entertainment, informativeness, customization; irritation negative	Advertising value → brand awareness and purchase intention
Lee & Watkins (2016)	YouTube luxury vlogs	Parasocial interaction, attractiveness, homophily	Luxury-brand perceptions and purchase intention
Munnukka et al. (2019)	Experimental vlog endorsement; 203 usable responses	Audience participation and parasocial relationship	Vlogger credibility and brand attitudes
Sokolova & Kefi (2020)	Instagram/YouTube influencers	Credibility and parasocial interaction	Purchase intention
Febriyantoro (2020)	YouTube marketing communication; millennials	Brand awareness and brand image	Purchase intention
Liu & Zheng (2024)	Social-media influencer model	Informativeness, authenticity, homophily → parasocial relationship	Brand credibility and purchase intention
Garg & Bakshi (2024)	Beauty vloggers	Trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness; trust; PSI	Purchase intention
Munir & Watts (2026)	Social-media influencer endorsements; 319 respondents; PLS-SEM	Brand awareness and perceived value as mediators	Purchase intention

The source: Author's synthesis of peer-reviewed studies. PSI = parasocial interaction.

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Figure (5): Integrated framework linking YouTube marketing to consumer-based brand equity



The source: Author's synthesis based on Aaker (1991), Keller (1993), Dehghani et al. (2016), Lee and Watkins (2016), Munnukka et al. (2019), Sokolova and Kefi (2020), Liu and Zheng (2024), and Garg and Bakshi (2024).

III.5. Global-brand cases: from views to measurable brand response

Global-brand cases provide concrete examples of the mechanisms discussed above, but they must be interpreted carefully because the metrics are heterogeneous and largely reported by Google or advertisers. Think with Google analyzed more than 13,000 high-performing YouTube advertisements from 2024 and identified creative freedom, creator involvement, and fandom participation as recurring features (Nelson-Bogle, 2024). The analysis found that 44% of the top ads differed from traditional 15-, 30-, or 60-second lengths, showing that effective YouTube storytelling does not have to follow legacy television duration conventions.

Urban Decay's campaign around the return of its Naked eye-shadow palette used YouTube beauty creators and reported a 3% increase in purchase intent and a 278% increase in searches. Samsung's campaign launch reportedly generated a 6% lift in brand searches attributable to YouTube. Louis Vuitton used an approximately 11-minute conversation-format video and achieved 20% higher watch time than the industry average. These cases illustrate different routes to brand consolidation: creator trust can affect consideration, distinctive storytelling can extend attention, and campaign exposure can stimulate active search behaviour (Nelson-Bogle, 2024).

Alphabet's Q2 2025 earnings call supplied additional performance cases. A Depop campaign using Shorts-only Demand Gen was reported to produce 80% higher brand lift and roughly double the click-through rate relative to benchmark performance, while McDonald's USA used Shorts partnership ads for its Minecraft Movie Meal campaign and achieved a view-through rate 3.3 times the industry benchmark (Alphabet Inc., 2025). Although these outcomes cannot be pooled into a single effectiveness coefficient, they demonstrate that YouTube can influence both upper-funnel and behavioural metrics when creative format, audience, and campaign objective are aligned.

Other global brands illustrate strategic rather than purely numerical outcomes. Coca-Cola has used music and fandom cultures; CeraVe has combined creators, long-form video, short-form video, and mass cultural moments; Nike has used major-event storytelling around sport; and brands such as Apple have experimented with longer Shorts-compatible creative. The common principle is not imitation of one format. It is the construction of distinctive content that feels native to the viewing context while preserving recognizable brand assets and a measurable business objective.

Table (4): Illustrative YouTube outcomes reported for global-brand campaigns

Brand	YouTube strategy / context	Reported outcome	Brand-equity interpretation
Urban Decay	Beauty creators + Shorts around Naked Palette relaunch	+3% purchase intent; +278% searches	Creator trust and salience translated into consideration and active search
Samsung	Multi-format campaign launch	+6% brand searches	Exposure stimulated brand information seeking
Louis Vuitton	~11-minute conversational branded content	+20% watch time vs. industry average	Long-form storytelling sustained attention
Depop	Shorts-only Demand Gen campaign	+80% brand lift; ~2× CTR vs. benchmarks	Short-form creative supported awareness and response
McDonald's USA	Shorts partnership ads, Minecraft Movie Meal	3.3× view-through rate vs. industry benchmark	Creator/native format improved completed/advanced viewing
CeraVe	Creators + long-form + Shorts around major cultural moment	High-engagement global campaign; multiple creative awards	Integrated creator storytelling strengthened cultural relevance

The source: Alphabet Inc. (2025); Nelson-Bogle (2024). Results are advertiser/platform-reported; actual results vary and metrics are not directly comparable.

III.6. Assessment of the hypothesis and managerial implications

Taken together, the evidence supports H1 directionally. YouTube marketing is consistently associated with outcomes that form or reinforce consumer-based brand equity: awareness, salience, image, credibility, engagement, search behaviour, and purchase intention. The evidence is strongest when several conditions converge: the content provides entertainment or useful information; the audience perceives the message as relevant; brand cues are distinctive; creators are authentic and congruent with the brand; and the campaign invites interaction or further information seeking. This conclusion is consistent across early YouTube-specific advertising research and newer influencer studies.

The support is not equivalent to a universal causal effect. Platform financial growth shows advertiser adoption, not brand lift. Wyzowl's survey is self-reported. Google's brand cases use different metrics and are selected examples. Academic studies often focus on specific categories or countries. Therefore, the appropriate conclusion is conditional: YouTube provides a powerful architecture for brand consolidation, but effectiveness depends on creative execution, audience fit, frequency, creator-brand congruence, product involvement, competitive context, and measurement quality.

For global brands, five managerial priorities follow. First, define the memory objective before the media plan. A campaign should specify whether it needs to increase recognition, unaided recall, category entry-point associations, credibility, consideration, or search. Second, design a multi-format creative system rather than a single video. Shorts can provide fast reach and repeated cues; longer videos can demonstrate, explain, or build narrative meaning; connected-TV placements can deliver high-attention viewing; creator videos can add trust and social proof. Third, preserve distinctive brand assets across formats so that attention is correctly attributed to the brand.

Fourth, treat creator selection as a credibility and audience-fit decision rather than a follower-count purchase. Brands should assess audience overlap, expertise, authenticity, historical sponsorship patterns, comment quality, and reputational risk. Fifth, use a measurement architecture that connects upper- and lower-funnel outcomes. Views should be complemented by reach and frequency, brand-lift experiments, search lift, engagement quality, website behaviour, leads, sales, and—where data permit—incremental return. Wyzowl's 2026 survey itself shows why this matters: marketers use views and engagement most often to quantify return, while fewer use brand awareness or bottom-line sales, which can create a gap between easy metrics and strategic value.

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Campaign governance is equally important. Practitioner guidance rightly emphasizes budget control, audience selection, concise titles and descriptions, and the option to adjust or pause campaigns. Today these operational controls should be integrated with brand-safety filters, disclosure rules, copyright compliance, first-party data governance, and iterative creative testing. A professional YouTube strategy therefore combines media buying, content production, creator relations, community management, analytics, and legal/ethical oversight.

III.7. Limitations and directions for future research

This study has four main limitations. First, secondary sources differ in methodology and population. Advertising reach, marketer surveys, financial reports, and consumer experiments answer different questions and should not be interpreted as one homogeneous dataset. Second, corporate case studies may be affected by selection bias because successful campaigns are more likely to be publicized. Third, the literature is concentrated in categories such as beauty, fashion, luxury, and influencer marketing, which may not generalize to high-involvement industrial services, public-sector brands, or older audiences. Fourth, the platform changes rapidly; recommendation systems, artificial-intelligence tools, connected-TV consumption, creator monetization, and advertising formats in 2026 may alter relationships observed in earlier studies.

Future research should therefore use longitudinal and experimental designs that connect actual exposure to validated brand-equity measures. Cross-country studies are particularly important because creator credibility, advertising avoidance, disclosure interpretation, and fandom practices are culturally contingent. Researchers should also compare Shorts, long-form creator content, skippable in-stream formats, and connected-TV placements within the same brand and audience. Finally, studies should separate incremental brand effects from short-term conversion so that managers can understand when YouTube creates future demand rather than simply harvesting demand that already exists.

IV- Conclusion:

This article asked to what extent, and through which mechanisms, YouTube marketing strengthens consumer-based brand equity in global markets. The evidence indicates that YouTube can contribute meaningfully to brand consolidation because it combines exceptional reach with persistent searchable content, audiovisual storytelling, algorithmic relevance, creator relationships, interactivity, and multiple viewing formats. Its commercial growth is substantial: YouTube advertising revenue rose from USD 8.15 billion in 2017 to USD 40.37 billion in 2025, and first-half 2026 results continued to expand. Current survey evidence also indicates widespread business use of video and strong perceived effects on awareness, trust, sales, and consumer purchase response.

The more important conclusion is mechanistic rather than numerical. YouTube strengthens brands when exposure becomes meaningful memory and relationship. Informative and entertaining content improves advertising value; distinctive cues reinforce awareness and salience; targeting increases relevance; creator authenticity and homophily encourage parasocial relationships and trust; and interaction converts passive viewing into engagement, search, electronic word of mouth, and purchase intention. The reviewed global-brand cases demonstrate that these mechanisms can appear in very different creative forms—from brief Shorts to long conversational videos.

For managers, the platform should therefore be treated as an integrated brand system rather than a repository for advertisements. Strategy should align creative format with the intended brand outcome, preserve recognizable brand assets, select creators for credibility and fit, coordinate paid and organic distribution, and measure both memory effects and behaviour. The hypothesis is supported by convergent evidence, but its effect is conditional rather than automatic. Future research should use longitudinal cross-market designs and experimentally compare YouTube formats to determine how exposure, attention, creator trust, and repetition combine to create durable brand equity over time.

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