

## **Anatomizing Popular YouTube Channels of English-speaking Countries**

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### **Abstract**

*YouTube, the online video streaming platform, has become popular and influential around the globe. Due to the development of science and technology, people without expertise in filming can now easily produce their videos with unique content. Many people are more eager to become a popular YouTube creator because they can earn money by placing commercials or Products in Placement (PPL) in their video clips. However, it is yet unknown what genres of YouTube videos are popular. YouTube creators have their channels where they upload videos of a certain type of genre. This study investigates video genres of the top 250 YouTube channels in English-speaking countries (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia) using Social Blade, which is a research website. The ranking is set based on the number of times people watched a video (“Video Views”). We handsomely analyze popular genres of the channels and also the YouTube ecosystem, and it will be meaningful for today’s new media era.*

**Keywords:** *YouTube, Popularity, Online Community, Culture, New Media*

### **1. Introduction**

A famous scientist Thomas Kuhn (1922~1996) came up with the concept, Paradigm Shift, which indicates a fundamental change in trends, concepts, and experimental practices within scientific disciplines. A paradigm shift occurs when the scientific community accepts any new paradigm, which eventually leads to the era of new normal science. Kuhn also argued that new and old paradigms were “incommensurable” and thus could not be compared. Well-known examples of paradigm shifts are the shift from classical to relativistic mechanics and the shift from classical statistics to big data analytics [1].

This concept of paradigm shift can also be applied to the field of media communication as users generate their own media contents. Also, Fang claimed that there have been six information revolutions: Writing, Printing, Mass media, Entertainment, the Toolshed (Home), and the Information Highway [2]. The new media realm, including online video streaming platforms, such as YouTube, could be counted as the seventh information revolution. YouTube not only makes nonexpert users generate their contents but also people can easily watch varying contents that are generated all around the globe. The YouTube industry now needs to be examined in depth. This study thus investigates genres of popular video channels in 4 English-speaking

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Manuscript Received: August. 7, 2020 / Revised: August. 14, 2020 / Accepted: August. 18, 2020

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countries (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia) that have a relatively higher number of views.

## **2. YouTube**

YouTube is the online video-sharing platform that was founded in 2005 in the United States. People can share and watch videos within the platform. Some videos are created by YouTube users, while others are from other sources. The influence of YouTube is extensive and dominant; it affects politics, celebrities, video games, learning, and advertising [3]. The use of YouTube has expanded. For instance, sports industries manage their YouTube channels and provide useful information to their fans [4]. Like TV programs, YouTube channels, and contents nowadays should also be considered as one of the public services, since the influence of YouTube has augmented [5]. The success of YouTube is ongoing; a professional YouTube creator is now regarded as one of the jobs and many people are willing to become one. Moreover, there are no rival companies and YouTube monopolizes the market.

## **3. Method**

This study researches video genres in popular channels of 4 English-speaking countries (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia). The research website, Social Blade (<http://www.socialblade.com>), provides popular YouTube channels in a specific country. The website labels the type of a channel, which is referred to as 'genre' in this study. The website provides the channel rank, which is sorted by the number of times people watched videos of a certain channel. Research questions of this study are:

*RQ #1: What are popular video genres of YouTube channels in English-speaking countries?*

*RQ #2: How many videos are uploaded for each genre?*

To answer these questions, we visited Social Blade for two days and collected data: October 10, 2020, for the United States and Canada and October 11, 2020, for the United Kingdom and Australia (The full list of collected data is not listed in this paper due to the page limitation). Figure 1 represents top 250 YouTube channels of the United States. As mentioned above, Social Blade handsomely provides popular YouTube channel with several standards.

Category	Rank	Rating	Channel Name	Subscribers	Views	Video Count
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	28th	D-	BabyDoll - ToyPudding	2,633	25.4M	14,923,710,895
SHOWS	29th	A	DisneyMusicVEVO	1,351	21.5M	14,811,540,012
SPORTS	30th	A	ArianaGrandeVevo	112	18.2M	14,751,441,959
TRAVEL	31st	A	MalumaVEVO	142	14.4M	14,416,444,759
	32nd	A	CookieSwirlC	3,255	14.2M	14,171,468,241
<b>ACTIVE GAINERS / CHARTS</b>	33rd	A+	BabyBus - Nursery Rhymes	1,465	19.7M	14,163,882,876
	34th	A	Markiplier	4,787	27M	14,115,708,773
TOP 500 YOUTUBERS (30 DAYS)	35th	A-	PopularMMOs	4,654	17.1M	14,083,534,384
TOP 500 YOUTUBERS (14 DAYS)	36th	A+	Nick Jr.	3,623	16.6M	13,789,901,378
TOP 500 YOUTUBERS (7 DAYS)	37th	A	Ultra Music	4,142	24.9M	13,693,995,568
TOP 500 YOUTUBERS (3 DAYS)	38th	A+	Like Nastya Show	369	32.7M	13,505,246,265
TOP 500 YOUTUBERS (1 DAY)	39th	A-	Family Fun Pack	1,804	9.42M	13,434,496,058
	40th	A-	David Guetta	543	22.1M	13,055,693,962
	41st	A	The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fa...	6,158	26.6M	12,989,476,266
WORST 500 YOUTUBERS (30 DAYS)	42nd	A-	Enrique IglesiasVEVO	128	13.2M	12,983,300,536
WORST 500 YOUTUBERS (14 DAYS)	43rd	A	LEGO	23,009	10.2M	12,578,273,627
WORST 500 YOUTUBERS (7 DAYS)	44th	A	Inside Edition	20,972	7.97M	12,548,840,790
WORST 500 YOUTUBERS (3 DAYS)	45th	A	Bruno Mars	72	28.3M	12,447,236,603
WORST 500 YOUTUBERS (1 DAY)	46th	A-	LuisFonsaVEVO	75	17.6M	12,385,806,651
	47th	A-	CalvinHarrisVEVO	146	12.2M	12,191,466,048

Figure 1. Top 250 YouTube channels of the United States

#### 4. Result

Results for RQ 1 are listed in Table 1, which demonstrates the number of channels by genre and by country.

Table 1. Popular genres of top 250 YouTube channels of English-speaking countries

Genre	United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Australia	Total
Autos & Vehicles	0	3	2	3	8
Comedy	9	12	7	15	43
Education	14	19	9	9	51
Entertainment	83	72	67	66	288
Film	14	13	18	17	62
Gaming	15	57	44	44	160
Science & Technology	0	7	2	3	12
Shows	0	0	0	0	0
How to & Style	4	10	2	15	31
Music	91	34	60	46	231
News & Politics	6	8	10	5	29
Nonprofit & Activism	1	0	0	1	2
People & Blogs	8	9	13	13	43
Pets & Animals	0	4	1	2	7
Sports	5	2	14	9	30
Travel	0	0	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>1000</b>

Results for RQ 2 are listed in Table 2, which shows the number of videos by genre and by country.

**Table 2. Number of videos of top 250 YouTube channels of English-speaking countries**

Genre	United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Australia	Total
Autos & Vehicles	0	25,031	2,668	4,718	32,417
Comedy	39,323	8,420	6,870	4,442	59,055
Education	16,998	18,927	88,124	4,793	128,842
Entertainment	276,999	95,658	158,467	54,659	585,783
Film	66,132	15,026	18,782	14,858	114,798
Gaming	191,475	175,402	135,297	55,091	557,265
Science & Technology	0	10,464	1,678	10,004	22,146
Shows	0	0	0	0	0
How to & Style	12,632	8,881	809	8,465	30,787
Music	38,357	19,249	74,870	30,907	163,383
News & Politics	366,945	161,061	298,716	102,314	929,036
Nonprofit & Activism	157,747	0	0	588	158,335
People & Blogs	22,882	4,329	10,560	9,245	47,016
Pets & Animals	0	970	1,873	1,473	4,316
Sports	137,668	25,380	82,999	21,830	267,877
Travel	0	0	3,434	4,242	7,676
Total	1,327,158	568,798	885,147	327,629	3,108,732

Table 3 represents the number of videos is divided by the number of genres and the result.

**Table 3. Number of videos of top 250 YouTube channels of English-speaking countries divided by number of genres**

Genre	United States	Canada	United Kingdom	Australia	Total
Autos & Vehicles	0	13,108	19,662	13,108	45,877
Comedy	4,369	3,277	5,618	2,622	15,885
Education	2,809	2,070	4,369	4,369	13,617
Entertainment	474	546	587	596	2,203
Film	2,809	3,025	2,185	2,313	10,331
Gaming	2,622	690	894	894	5,099
Science & Technology	0	5,618	19,662	13,108	38,387
Shows	0	0	0	0	0
How to & Style	9,831	3,932	19,662	2,622	36,046
Music	432	1,157	655	855	3,099
News & Politics	6,554	4,915	3,932	7,865	23,266
Nonprofit & Activism	39,323	0	0	39,323	78,646
People & Blogs	4,915	4,369	3,025	3,025	15,334
Pets & Animals	0	9,831	39,323	19,662	68,815
Sports	7,865	19,662	2,809	4,369	34,704
Travel	0	0	39,323	19,662	58,985
Total	82,002	72,198	161,704	134,390	450,294

## 5. Discussion

This study discovers several meaningful insights from the analysis of popular videos and channels. First of all, popular genres on YouTube are related to entertainment. As shown in Table 1, the most popular genres are 1) Entertainment (288) 2) Music (231) 3) Gaming (160) when summing the number of popular channels by genre in all four countries. It indicates that people watch videos for entertainment purposes. People like to play and to entertain themselves when they are on the platform.

Moreover, there are some differences between the four countries. In the United States, the music genre is very popular, and it may be because the music industry is the largest all around the world and people are fond of American pop music. Table 1 shows that video channels dedicated to Autos & Vehicles, Science & Technology, and Pets & Animals are not popular in the United States. It may be because music industries are big and other genres hardly survived. YouTube even launched the YouTube Premium service that the audience subscribe to listen to music more conveniently and use YouTube as a music streaming platform. This study also reveals that the number of videos does not guarantee its popularity. Table 3 demonstrates the estimated number of videos per channel by genre, and Nonprofit & Activism (78,646), Pets & Animals (68,815), and Travel (58,965) turned out to be the top three genres in terms of the number of videos per channel. Channels categorized in these three genres, however, as shown in Table 1, are not so popular in English-speaking countries. Likewise, selecting a popular genre is more important than the number of videos on YouTube, and YouTube creators should recognize that.

## 6. Conclusion

Our lives have changed and became more advanced, due to the continuous development of technology. The media industry is no exception; online video-sharing platforms, such as YouTube, have become popular and influential all around the globe. Therefore, in this paper, we are contributing to that it analyzes aspects of the popularity of the YouTube ecosystem and the outcome is meaningful. The new media industry changes rapidly, and it should be further studied.

However, this study has some limitations. First of all, this study is a cross-sectional study. Data were analyzed only for two days and this study does not observe how popular YouTube channels have changed throughout time. Secondly, this study researches based on Total Views, the number of times people watched a video. When investigating popular channels, there are two observable variables: (1) Total Views, (2) Subscribers. This study could have also investigated popular YouTube channels based on the number of channel subscribers, and then compared the result of total view-based popular channels and that of subscriber-based popular channels. Third, several channels contain multiple genres. Some YouTube channels upload videos that are diverse across genres, while others focus on a single genre. This study assumes that each channel focuses on a single genre. Lastly, the analysis of data lacks professionalism to some extent. The study could have included professional opinions to catch cultural differences more deeply.

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