

YouTube was the top streamer for 12 months in a row, cementing its dominance

Article

The news: YouTube was the most-watched streaming service in January, marking 12 consecutive months at the top of the list, according to Nielsen.

- Viewers spent 36% of their time with video on streaming last month, and YouTube accounted for 8.6% of total time spent with video (Netflix came in second at 7.9%).

YouTube published a [blog](#) celebrating its yearlong reign as the number one streaming service, revealing additional information about its video business.

- **Global viewers now watch more than 1 billion hours of YouTube on their TVs daily.** YouTube also said the number of “top” creators who receive the majority of their viewing time on TVs grew by 400%.
- YouTube’s effort to bolster **Shorts** viewership by bringing it to TV screens is also seeing results: From January to September 2023, YouTube Shorts views on TVs [more than doubled](#).

Streaming powerhouse: YouTube’s prominence as a streaming service is no secret, but Nielsen’s data shows just how much power it wields in the market.

- Despite its web-based origins, YouTube consistently ranks as one of the most-viewed video platforms across devices, often eclipsing legacy video players. In 2024, US viewers will spend [36 minutes daily with YouTube](#), per our forecast—just above **Netflix** at 34 minutes, but far above the 9 minutes with **Disney+**.

Larger moat: That strong viewership means the company is in a powerful position to reshape the streaming measurement and advertising processes according to its own needs.

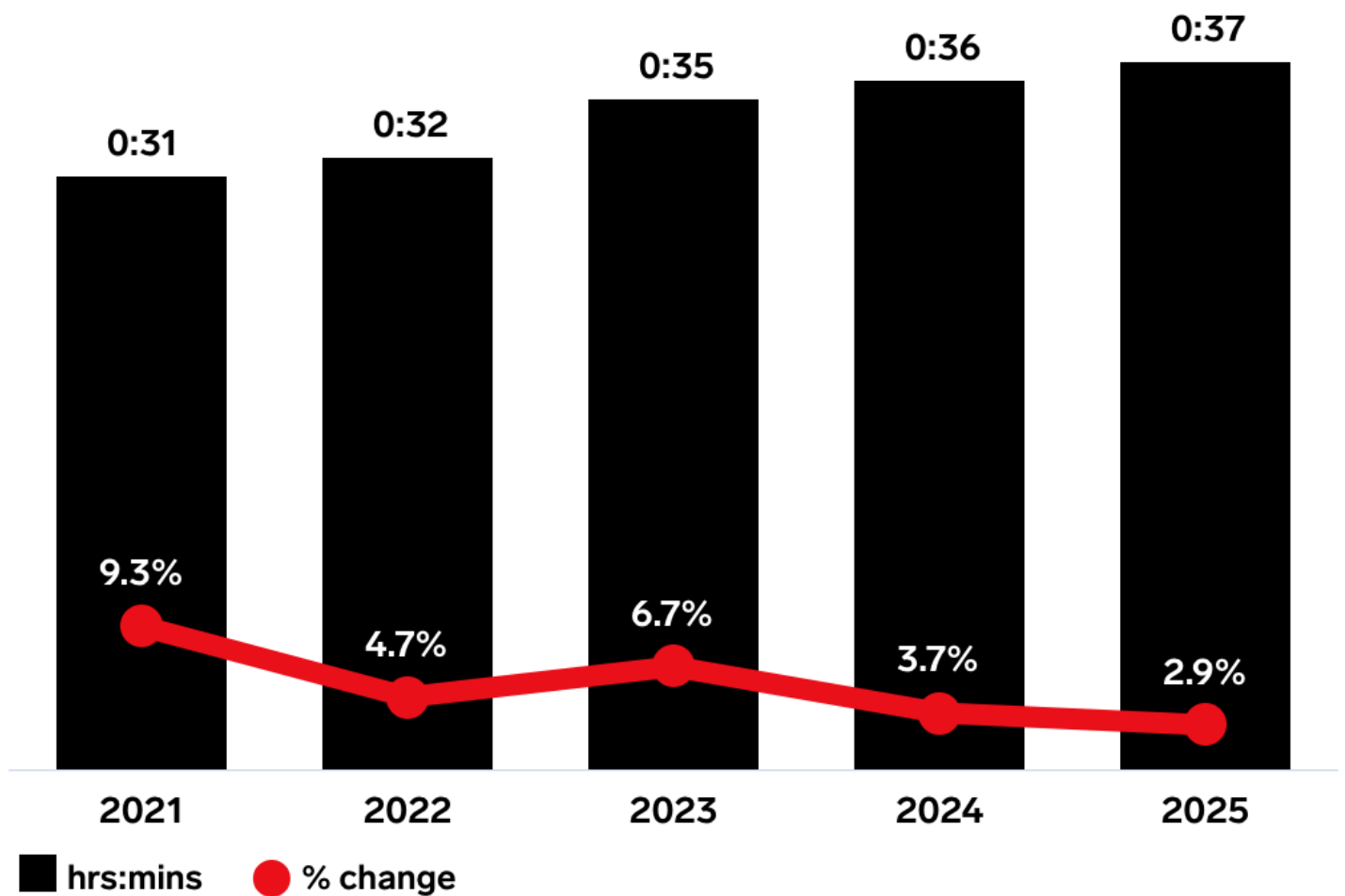
- Despite competing with established services and networks like Disney, Netflix, and others, YouTube has repeatedly drawn lines in the sand to differentiate itself during efforts to standardize streaming measurement.
- Several streaming services and networks came together last year to form the **Joint Industry Committee** (JIC), an industry group making an effort to standardize streaming advertising amid the [growing number of measurement companies](#).
- YouTube (and Nielsen) has [repeatedly declined to join](#) the organization due to disagreements over how “premium” content should be treated versus user-generated content—though the JIC and YouTube have found [a more recent middleground](#) via GroupM.

Our take: Nielsen’s report strengthens YouTube’s position in negotiations with its video competitors. The company still has a natural incentive to work across the aisle to establish

streaming advertising standards, but so long as it's at the top, the company has little pressure to cave to competitors' efforts.

Average Time Spent per Day with YouTube

US, 2021-2025



Note: ages 18+; includes all time spent watching video on YouTube via any device; includes YouTube TV

Source: Insider Intelligence | eMarketer, February 2024

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