

A guide to YouTube's video ad formats

Article

Key stats: YouTube will hit \$7.36 billion in US ad revenues this year, per our forecast, compared with TikTok's \$6.19 billion. YouTube will have 236.1 million US users this year compared with TikTok's 102.3 million.

YouTube is lengthening its ad breaks and limiting ad controls for creators. Its recent moves make what was already a powerful ad platform even more promising. Here's our guide to what the Google-owned site has to offer.

Skippable in-stream ads

These ads play 5 seconds of an ad before, during, or after the video before allowing users to skip the ad. **Advertisers are charged per view** or per impression.

There's no maximum length for these ads, but keep in mind users may be inclined to click "skip" for longer ads.

Skippable in-stream ads are familiar to viewers, since they play on YouTube and on other websites that use Google video players.

Nonskippable in-stream ads

These ads also play before, during, or after videos, but unlike the above format, users cannot skip. For this reason, nonskippable ads are 15 seconds or less. Advertisers are charged based on impression.

These ads can feel a bit intrusive, but they help get an advertiser's full message across.

Once again, users are familiar with these ads, which play on YouTube and other websites using Google video players.

Bumper ads

Bumper ads are another nonskippable ad format that play before, during, or after a video, but unlike nonskippable in-stream ads, they're super short at 6 seconds or less. **Bumper ads can be automated**, keeping lift low for advertisers. Advertisers are charged based on impressions.

For viewers, these feel a lot like nonskippable in-stream ads, just a bit less intrusive. Since advertisers only have 6 seconds to make an impact, they'll need to make sure their messaging is super strong.

In-feed ads

In-feed ads show up next to YouTube videos, in search results, and on the mobile homepage. These ads present a thumbnail for a video, and encourage users to watch the videos they feature. Advertisers are charged when users click the thumbnail.

Since these ads push to other YouTube videos, they're best for marketing content and boosting brand awareness.

Outstream ads

These mobile ads don't show up within YouTube, but instead appear on websites and apps that use Google video players. Outstream ads feature muted videos, which users can tap to turn on sound. Advertisers are charged when users play a video for at least 2 seconds.

Like in-feed ads, they're best for promoting content and boosting awareness by reaching viewers outside of YouTube.

Masthead ads

These are the ads at the top of YouTube's Home feed. They feature a silent autoplay and push users toward the YouTube watch page for the video. These ads are special in that they must be bought through a Google sales representative.

Bonus: Native content

Native ads aren't a YouTube ad type, but they're important on the channel all the same. Advertisers can work directly with creators to market within videos, the way online coupon company Honey has with **one of YouTube's biggest creators, MrBeast**. Native content isn't as likely to be skipped because it's embedded within a video itself.

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