

YouTube How can publishers benefit?

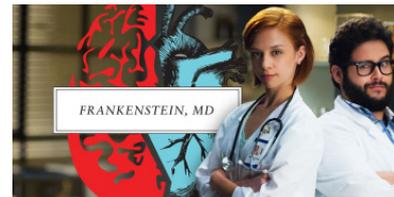
6th September 2014 was the day when many in the publishing industry woke up to the power of YouTube. 8,000 excited fans mobbed Waterstones bookshop in Piccadilly, central London, for a book signing by Alfie Deyes. The vast majority of people over the age of 25 have never heard of Alfie Deyes. He's a YouTube blogger, and after release his book went straight to the top of The Sunday Times bestsellers list.

Each month, more than one billion people visit YouTube, watching over 6 billion hours of video. There are now more than one million channels earning revenue through YouTube's Partner Program; partner revenue across YouTube increased by 60% over the past year. The IPA spoke to YouTube's **Jessica Elvidge** and **Pete Stower** about how publishers can take advantage of the channel's rapidly increasing reach.

IPA. How have book-related channels developed on YouTube?

Jessica/Pete: They've developed hugely over time, as YouTube has. The most successful channels out there are those that have been fan-created. They're successful because they're entertaining, specifically designed for YouTube and the people who make them are really obviously passionate about books and reading. Two of our favourites are:

Frankenstein, MD: a multi-platform web adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic novel, created by Pemberley Digital and produced in conjunction with PBS Digital Studios. Short (5-8 minute episodes) air twice weekly.



Wisecrack, inc. Thug Notes: an educational series which summarises and analyses classic works of literature in an original gangster style, presented by actor and comedian Greg Edwards. Recent episodes include Kafka's Metamorphosis, A Clockwork Orange and The Old Man and the Sea.

As well as this sort of channel, with scripted videos based on literature, there is also the huge "BookTube" community on YouTube. This is the name coined for a community of passionate readers on YouTube. They are, in essence, vloggers [or video bloggers] who make videos talking exclusively about books: diarising the books they buy and read, and reviewing and recommending. The most successful "BookTubers" have subscriber bases in the hundreds of thousands.

But publisher channels are also an important part of the YouTube book universe. One great example is **Epic Reads**, a YA-themed fan channel from HarperCollins. The channel has 35,000 subscribers and its videos have been watched over 3 million times.



IPA: How can a YouTube presence generate offline opportunities, i.e. book sales?

When Richard Wiseman's *59 seconds* was translated into a YouTube channel two years after the book's release, it coincided with a 50% uplift in UK sales, according to Pan Macmillan.

YouTube creators have the ability to link to an online store such as Google Play or Amazon, directly from their videos so there's certainly a lot of potential to drive additional sales.

IPA: What advice would you give to publishers who are keen to make the most of YouTube?

It's exciting that there's so much opportunity within the publishing industry, so many fantastic books and authors, and so much *passion* which could be translated for YouTube.

Publishers have expertise in storytelling as well as great archives of content. With that kind of creative collateral, there's far more publishers can be doing on YouTube than book trailers and author interviews! They can create engaging, shareable videos and channels, using the content of the books and the authors they already have at their disposal.

The challenge is in picking out the parts of the archives which will translate best into video. Great YouTube videos are likely to be shared and, as a result, receive more views than those that are not. Lots of things can make a video shareable: perhaps it's particularly *topical*, eg with relevance to a new release, or it's very *useful* to the person watching, or it's something which the viewer can *relate to*.

The main concern is related to the resources available to a publisher. It takes time and dedication to develop a successful channel but it's certainly possible on a low budget - just look at all the successful vloggers who just have a camera in their bedroom.



If publishers are concerned that they don't have the expertise or resource then there is plenty of help out there, eg from third party Multi-Channel Networks such as Rightster, Diagonal View, Little Dot Studios, Channel Flip and a whole host of others.

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