



YOUTUBE

This information sheet is one in a series of nine sheets that were developed to assist seafood producers (fishermen and growers) with using specific tools and platforms to enhance marketing of their products. They are part of an educational publication entitled *Digital Marketing: A Guide for Seafood Producers*.

Each sheet provides an overview of a specific platform, information about using the platform and examples of how it could be used for seafood direct marketing. They are intended for educational purposes only. Prior to getting started with a specific tool/platform, current information - including the costs, requirements and included components - should be reviewed on the tool/platform website.

YouTube is a long-form video platform that features both entertaining and educational content. Videos can be posted as standard YouTube videos or as shorts, which are horizontally oriented shorter videos similar to Instagram Reels or TikTok. YouTube is commonly accessed across a wide range of devices including smartphones, tablets, computers, and televisions, but is most commonly used on smartphones.

Creating a YouTube channel is fairly straightforward and can take as little as 15 minutes. However, developing content for YouTube is time consuming, as recording and editing videos can be time intensive. The only required technology is a smartphone as videos can be edited and uploaded through YouTube's mobile apps (YouTube Create and YouTube). However, it may be valuable for your business to invest in a video camera (such as a GoPro), computer, and editing software to create videos in higher quality and with greater ease. Many seafood producers and ocean enthusiasts already create content on YouTube.

Content Types and Platform Features:
Videos, live streaming and comments.

AUDIENCE

YouTube is currently the most widely used social media platform, with an adult audience that ranges in age from 18-65+ years old. More than 80% of people have utilized YouTube, making this a great platform to reach diverse audiences. Content on YouTube can be viewed and shared without a YouTube account. Viewers who enjoy your content can subscribe to your channel and turn on notifications for when you post. New viewers may find your content by searching for it directly or having it suggested to them by YouTube's algorithm. YouTube has relatively limited direct engagement with viewers, however they can leave comments on your videos, which you can reply to.

COST

YouTube is free to join and use, but it has an optional paid subscription - YouTube Premium - which allows for ad-free and offline watching. You can also promote your videos by paying for YouTube Advertising.

ONLINE SALES

YouTube does not have an online sales feature.

MONETIZATION

The YouTube Partner Program allows you to earn money from your videos after meeting eligibility requirements. YouTube is currently working toward offering online sales, but this feature was not available at the time of this publication.

CONTENT PLANNING

Videos posted to YouTube may be edited to include background music, voice overs, and more. Since YouTube is the most widely used platform, there is an audience for all types of content. Some ideas for videos include bringing a particular species to market, how to handle and cook your product videos, and recipes. These types of videos will be informative for existing customers and have potential to drive new customers to you.

Viewers can find your videos by using the search feature, scrolling through their homepage, or using the suggested video tab. Video recommendations are tailored based on what one watched previously. This means that the YouTube algorithm will drive viewers to your videos if they've previously watched and interacted with similar videos. As such, diversifying the types of videos you post may drive a greater variety of people to your channel.

Since the YouTube algorithm favors engagement (as quantified through watch times and interactions such as likes and comments), it is best to prioritize quality over quantity when posting to YouTube. With this in mind, it's still recommended to keep your channel up to date by posting regularly. Often, YouTubers will choose a certain day of the week or month to post so that their followers know when to expect new content.

REVIEWING PERFORMANCE ANALYTICS

YouTube has built in analytics in YouTube Studio. This will tell you how well your content is performing and how your account is growing. The metrics you'll want to track are how many views, likes and comments your videos receive as well as how many people subscribe or unsubscribe to your channel. YouTube Studio will also provide you information about your audience including demographics, how they found your content and what else they're looking at on YouTube. It's most helpful to compare your posts' performance against other posts of your own and other accounts similar to yours.

Creating Engaging Thumbnails

A thumbnail is the still image associated with your video that appears on the homepage, search page, or suggested videos tab before a viewer clicks on your video to watch it. An engaging thumbnail can entice viewers to click and watch your video.

Consider the following:

Most thumbnails use a combination of photos and text.

- When creating your thumbnail, incorporate your brand (logo, colors, fonts) and ensure that your text is legible.
- Photos should be of something that draws your desired viewers attention. Consider using images of your crew, boat, or product.
- Text should be used sparingly and draw your viewer in, aim for less than eight words. The text on your thumbnail does not have to be all encompassing for the video, it can highlight a certain aspect instead. For example, if your video was titled "Catching Rock Crab in the Santa Barbara Channel", you may consider "Biggest crab of the season" or "So many crabs!" as potential text for your thumbnail.
- Be sure what you emphasize on your thumbnail is included in your video, since that's what your viewer clicked on your video to see.

In summary...

YouTube is best for individuals who want to create both long and short form video content.

BENEFITS	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reaches the widest audiences of any social media platform• Can potentially earn income by posting on YouTube• Requires a bit less engagement than some other social media platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Filming and editing long-form videos is time intensive• Short-form content is currently more popular with viewers, so building a following for long-form content may be challenging