

CASUAL · CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE · OCTOBER 2026

We audited more than 1,600
company YouTube channels.
This is what we found.

A year of uploads from the channels of the Fortune 500, the Global 2000 and the FTSE 100, plus 129 fast-growing brands.

72%

of the views on big companies' uploads look paid for. The films people chose to watch tell a different story.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026 (1,492 company channels read through the YouTube API).



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most company YouTube views look paid for. Earned views come with followers.

We searched for the YouTube channels of 2,086 companies in the Fortune 500, the Global 2000 and the FTSE 100, then read a year of uploads on 1,621 channels, 129 of them fast-growing brands. The company channels drew 70.7bn views.

72%

of the views on big companies' uploads look paid for.

About 7x

the subscribers per view on channels that earn their views.

\$52m

estimated worth of earned reach. Views that look paid for probably cost \$550m.

1.56%

likes as a share of views on B2B channels, against 1.58% on consumer channels.

12 of 17

how-to series beat the rest of their channel. Event series: none of 13.

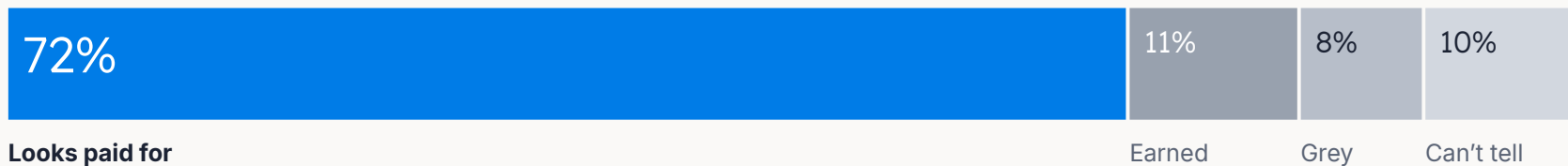
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of the filings we read, from about 815 companies, put a figure on what YouTube brought in.

Every figure is sourced on its own page. Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026. Looks paid for: 5,000+ views with likes under 0.1% of views, a signal that proves no spend. The \$52m and \$550m are estimates. Links between measures show no cause.

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72% of the views on big companies' uploads look paid for.



50.7bn of 70.7bn views, on uploads from the past 12 months.

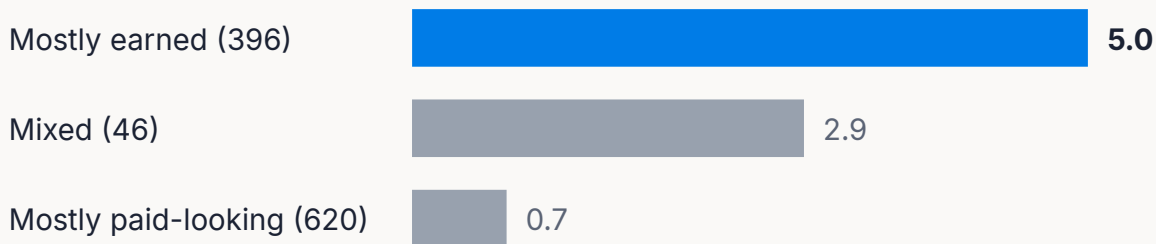
A channel's total views say little about whether its films work.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026 (1,492 company channels read through the YouTube API). Looks paid for: 5,000+ views with likes under 0.1% of views, a signal rather than proof of spend. Grey: 100,000+ views with likes from 0.1% to 0.5%.

WHAT WE FOUND · 02

Channels that earn their views have about seven times the subscribers per view.

SUBSCRIBERS PER 1,000 LIFETIME VIEWS, MEDIAN



Earned views come with followers. Views that look paid for mostly come alone.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026 (1,492 company channels read through the YouTube API); 1,062 channels with 100,000+ lifetime views whose likes could be read. Wayback growth study, 29 September 2026: 270 channels with an archived subscriber count from about October 2025. Links between measures, which show no cause.

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OVER THE PAST YEAR

7.7

Earned

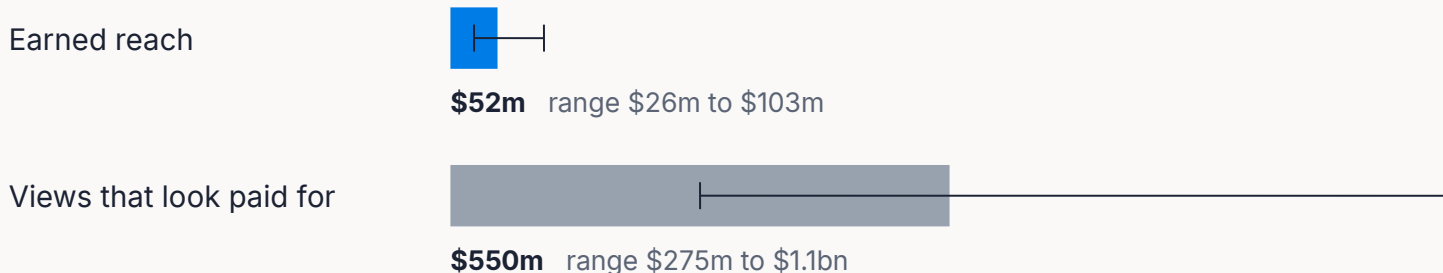
0.7

Paid-looking

new subscribers per 1,000 views, a wider gap than over a channel's lifetime.

Company channels earned reach worth about \$52m.
Views that look paid for probably cost \$550m.

1,492 COMPANY CHANNELS · VALUE OF A YEAR OF VIEWS, ESTIMATE



Nearly nine in ten companies filing with the US SEC earn YouTube reach worth 0.01% or less of the advertising spend they report.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, September 2026 (1,492 company channels read through the YouTube API). Casual estimates: views priced at Q1 2026 YouTube ad rates, scaled by market; the range runs from half to double. A replacement cost of reach, never revenue.

B2B viewers like what they watch as often as consumer viewers do.

LIKES AS A SHARE OF VIEWS, UPLOADS THAT DON'T LOOK PAID FOR



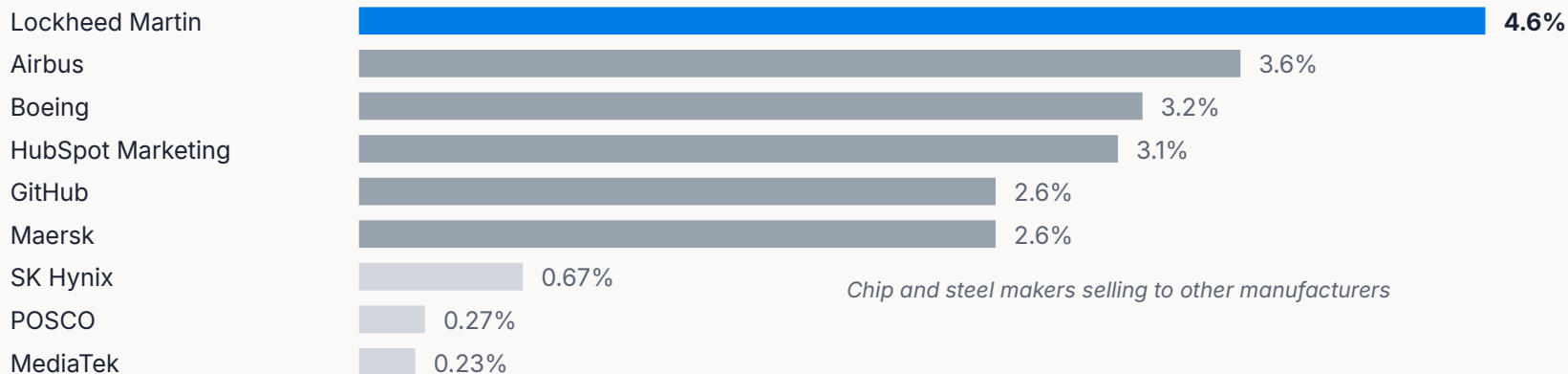
The clear difference is Shorts: 38% of B2B uploads, against 56% for consumer brands.

Being B2B is no reason for a channel to draw fewer likes.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, deep read of 177 channels, 26 September 2026: 45 B2B and 89 consumer channels with 20+ uploads that don't look paid for (likes); 53 and 110 channels (Shorts). Medians.

A subject people follow seems to count for more than the sector.

LIKES AS A SHARE OF VIEWS

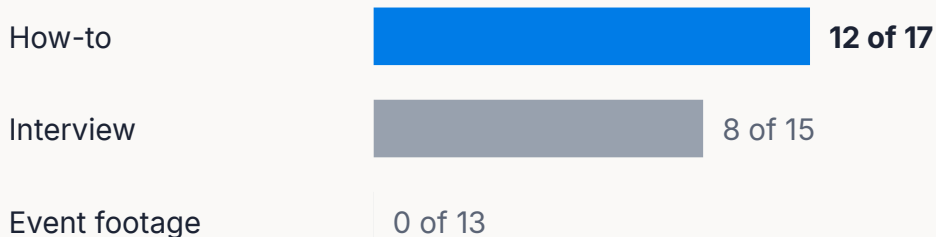


Find the machine, the build or the craft in your world.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, deep read of 177 channels, 26 September 2026: likes on uploads that don't look paid for, 12 months of uploads. A handful of named channels, so suggestive.

How-to series beat the rest of their channel in 12 of 17 tests. Event series did in none of 13.

NAMED SERIES THAT BEAT THE REST OF THEIR OWN CHANNEL

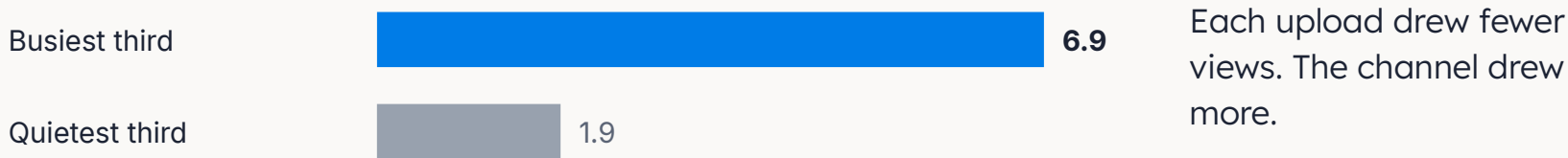


Teach the job your audience is trying to do. From events, film what teaches.

Sources: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark: deep read of 177 channels, and 46 fast-growing brand channels read in depth (31 shows on 21 channels). Uploads that don't look paid for, 12 months to September 2026, each series against the rest of its own channel.

The busiest channels earn 3.6 times the views per subscriber of the quietest.

VIEWS PER SUBSCRIBER OVER A YEAR, UPLOADS THAT DON'T LOOK PAID FOR



Plan a programme of films, with Shorts cut from every one.

Source: Casual Films, Company YouTube Benchmark, growth study of 793 channels: the 360 with 20+ uploads that don't look paid for, split into thirds by uploads a week. A link at one point in time.

The few companies that report a result from YouTube measured more than views.

ANNUAL REPORTS

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of the filings and reports we read, from about 815 companies, put a figure on what YouTube brought in.

A CLOSER LOOK AT 30

9 of 30

company channels carried a trackable link to a place to act on at least a tenth of their uploads.

AHREFS

29,000

people who signed up told Ahrefs they found it through YouTube, when it asked them (2022).

Sources: filings of 514 companies filing with the US SEC and 303 UK and EU annual reports; Casual YouTube Channel Objectives Audit, 29 September 2026 (30 company channels read closely, chosen for spread); Ahrefs' own sign-up survey, 2022.



WHAT THIS MEANS

Six habits the evidence points to.

01

Judge films on what they earn

Likes and new subscribers per view, beside the reach.

02

Teach the job

Answer what your audience is trying to do.

03

Find the subject people follow

The machine, the build, the craft.

04

Post every week

And cut Shorts from every film.

05

From events, film what teaches

Product walkthroughs; keep full sessions in one playlist.

06

Count the next step

A trackable link on every film, and ask new customers where they found you.

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Make films people choose to watch.



If you want to see how your channel compares, let me know.

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More of our research: casualfilms.com/research

Casual Films · Founded 2006 · 9,591 successful projects for 805 clients and counting...



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