



YouTube Scaling Playbook

2025 Demand Gen

How Performance Marketers Can Still Get The Most Out Of
Youtube In The Wake Of Platform Changes

Why You Should Care About This Playbook

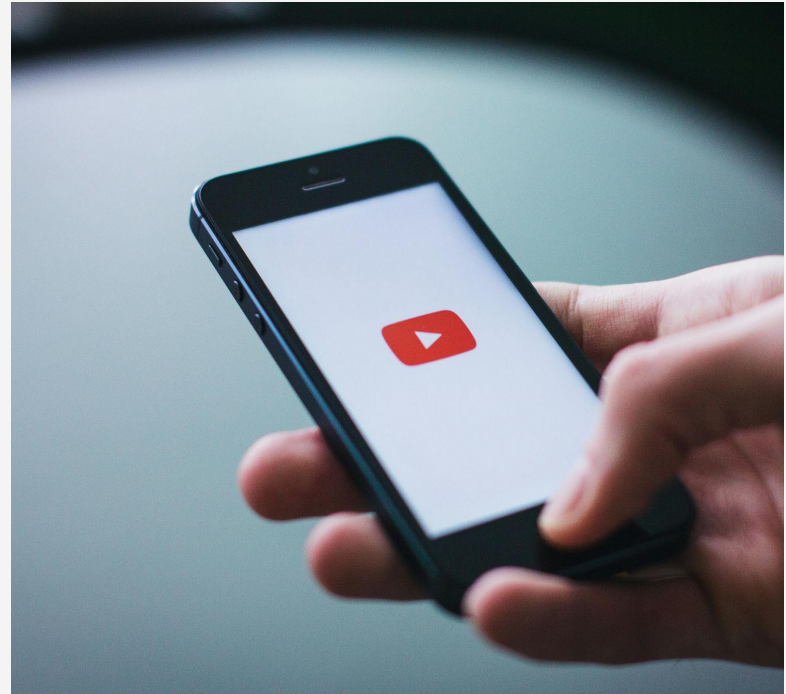
Two recent changes on Google left anyone using YouTube as a conversion channel in a completely new landscape.

June 2024, Google updated their algorithm and advertisers felt policy shockwaves immediately.

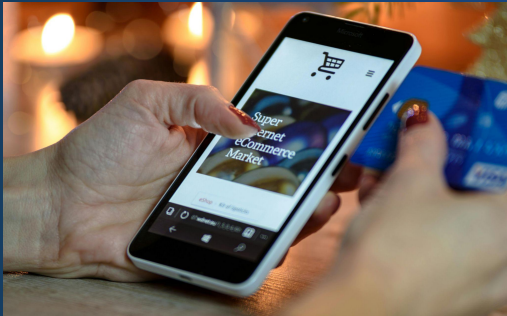
April 2025, Google removed the ability to create new Video Action Campaigns, and in **July 2025** they'll auto-migrate existing VACs to Demand Gen.

Between compliance shifts and Demand Gen becoming mandatory, how can performance marketers achieve the scale and conversions they previously did?

This Playbook shows you how.



Who This Playbook Is For:



eCommerce Marketers



Media Buyers



Health & Wellness Brands

What This Playbook Aims To Do For You:

Use this as your mandatory reference for transitioning to Demand Gen, avoiding policy pitfalls, and unlocking scalable growth on YouTube in the new era.

1

Why Demand Gen matters now and what's at stake

2

How to architect campaigns—from objectives and budgets to AI-powered audiences

3

What creative strategies win in 2025, and how to stay compliant

4

How advanced tactics like product-blind ads can still work fit (and how they're riskier than ever)

5

When and why you must iterate, optimize, and diversify beyond a single playbook

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1. YouTube Demand Gen 101

Demand Gen is Google's all-in-one campaign type to reach all placements: YouTube, Shorts, Gmail, Discover & Video Partners.






In this playbook, we focus on YouTube video ads, but recognize adding Gmail or Discover can improve results further.

Moving Forward With Demand Gen:

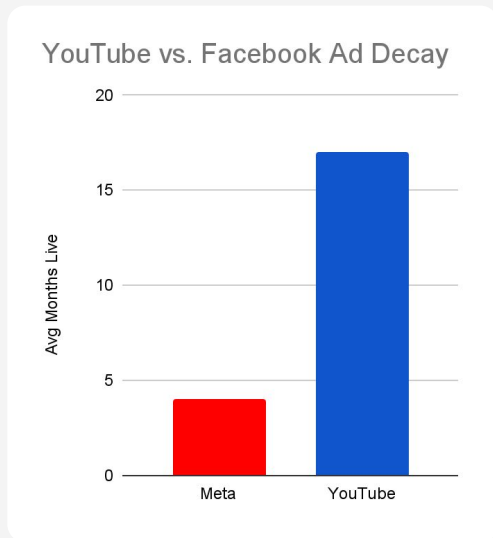
- Auto-migrating VAC campaigns is fast but sub-optimal.
- Manually rebuilding yields stronger performance, and using the multi-assets capability can unlock full potential.

Brands scaling Demand Gen saw:

- **32 %** better blended revenue growth year-over-year.
- **18 %** more new customer conversions vs. paid-only benchmarks.
- **~70 %** more room for profitable spend.

Upside	Downside
 Manual duplication	 Auto-migration
 Full-funnel reach	 Limited potential
 Blended revenue growth	

2. Conversion Powerhouse



When comparing creatives lifespan to Meta, YouTube ads had up to a 4x greater lifespan.

The Four Pillars of YouTube's Enduring Edge:

- **Intent-Driven:** Viewers aren't on YouTube just mindlessly doom scrolling, they're actively seeking solutions and edutainment. They want information.
- **Creative Format:** VSL style, educational ads anywhere from 2 to 20 minutes convert extremely well on YouTube.
- **Ever-Expanding Real Estate:** It doesn't stop with new channels and videos popping up daily. YouTube's algorithm effectively finds new audiences for *existing* content, creating even more ad placements as it finds viewers for the content.
- **Creative Longevity:** YouTube ads run profitably for 12+ months with minor tweaks. It's a level of creative longevity advertisers don't see on other platforms.

YouTube Performance Improvements Over 12 Months

49%

Increase in spend

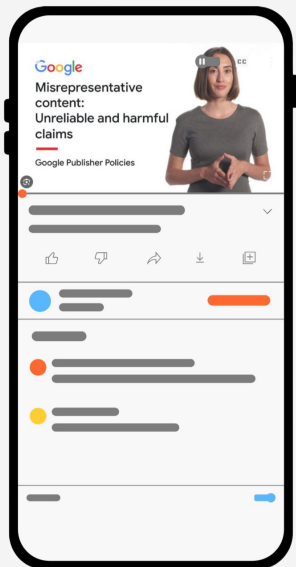
38%

ROAS lift

19%

Lower CPA

3. YouTube Policy Shockwave



Since mid-June 2024, YouTube advertisers saw a seismic policy crackdown, especially in health and wellness.

- **Top Flags:**
 - Unreliable Claims
 - Improper Content
 - Exaggerated/Inaccurate Claims
- **Real-World Impact:**
 - Direct-response creatives that once drove conversions stopped or were disapproved outright.
 - Pure YouTube funnels ground to a halt—anyone relying solely on VSL ads felt the squeeze.

⚠ Watch Out: If your ads lean heavily on bold promises, expect these flags. Also, expect to rebuild them with verified proof points, disclaimers, and toned-down language before re-launching.

4. Overcome the Policy Shockwave

Here's what we changed to bounce back to 93% approvals:

Reword Bold Claims: Swap “treats” or “fixes” for softer, benefit-driven terms

- “Reduces visible signs of aging”
- “Supports hair health”

Replace Risky Visuals: Remove before/after shots and images of circled problem areas


- Consider lifestyle footage or product demos

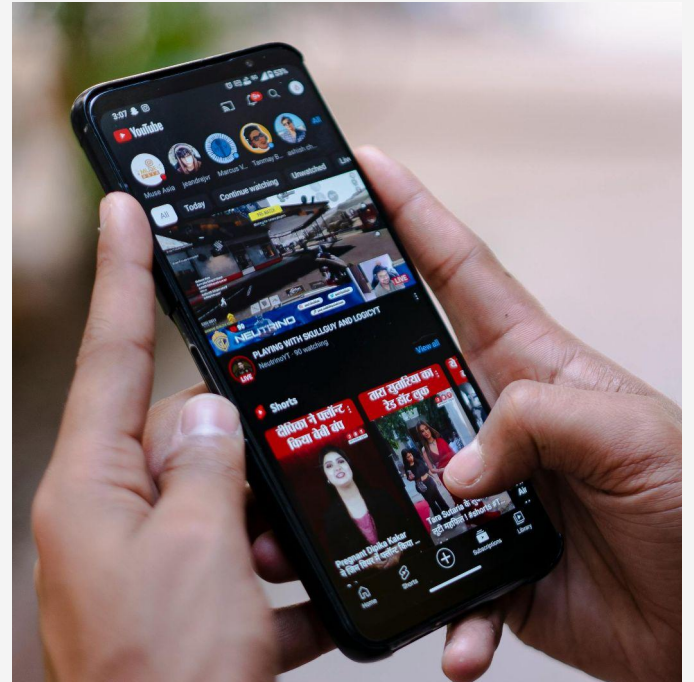
Reframe the Visuals: Avoid extreme face and body close-ups

- Tone down the close ups and widen your shot

Escalate to Google Support: Ditch the appeal button and talk to a compliance rep

- Advocate your ad's compliance with a reviewer
- Accounts for creative nuance and context

 **Action:** Seek “less aggressive” ways to achieve the effect the media or copy aims to do.



5. Campaign Setup Best Practices

Getting your foundation right means faster scale and fewer wasted dollars.



6. Creative Strategy That Converts

Your ads live or die on creative. Here's how to win attention and action

ABCD Framework:

- **Attention** (0–5 s): Open with a bold hook.
- **Branding**: Show your logo/product immediately.
- **Connection**: Solve a pain point or build emotion.
- **Direction**: Strong CTA in voice and on-screen text.

Multi-Format Asset Mix:

- **3 Video Ads + 3 Images**
- **Aspect Ratios**: 16:9 (in-stream), 9:16 (Shorts), 1:1 (flex)
- **Mobile First**: Captions, centered key visuals

Direct-Response Power Moves:

- **Demo**: Show product in action within 10s.
- **Offers**: Urgency (“Today only!”)
- **Proof**: Testimonials or “100K+ sold” overlays
- **Pacing**: Rapid cuts, chaptered scenes

7. Iteration & Optimization

Launching is just the start. Here's your cycle for continual gains:

1. Dive into Metrics

- **View Rate (over 30 seconds)**, Watch-time quartiles
- **Asset Report:** Learning / Low / Good / Best

2. Refresh Regularly

- Pause bottom 20 % performers weekly.
- Add 1–2 new creatives, don't reset the entire batch.

3. Maintain Your Creative Library

- Log your top hooks, formats, offers.
- Reuse winning elements in new campaigns and combine them for compounding wins.

4. Fight Fatigue

- Monitor frequency & saturation
- Test fresh concepts weekly.
- Rotate winners every 4–6 weeks.

8. Emerging Trends & Pitfalls

Trends to Embrace:

- **Shorts & Vertical:** Outpacing TikTok engagement.
- **Creator-Style UGC:** 98% of people trust authentic creators.
- **Long-Form Stories:** 44% top ads are longer than 15 seconds; engage well.
- **AI Tools:** Auto-crop images; generate video variants.

Pitfalls to Dodge:

- **Under-creating:** AI starves without assets.
- **Over-segmentation:** Strangles reach.
- **No backups:** One creative pause can kill campaigns.
- **Last-click bias:** Kills upstream demand; use view-through metrics.

9. Product-Blind Ads (Niche, High-Risk)

Product-blind ads are commonly used when advertising Video Sales Letters (VSLs).

The ads typically have three main qualities:

- They tease a big “secret” or “discovery”
- They share powerful results that seem unlikely, but still believable.
- They tease but do not reveal the product.

Clickers go to a 30- to 40-minute VSL that only reveals the offer about two thirds of the way through. This classic direct response funnel is powerful but risky.

These ads were the type hit hardest by the policy updates of June 2024.

Virtually overnight, advertisers were plagued by *Unreliable Claims*, *Exaggerated/Inaccurate Claims*, *Clickbait*, and more.

So here's the big question:

In the wake of the compliance crackdown and a shift away from the VAC campaigns, will direct response VSL advertisers ever achieve the level of scale they once had?

10. Scaling Product-Blind Ads in 2025

Recipe For Success on Demand Gen:

- Pair with compliant image ads.
- Test a transparent variant alongside your blind ad.
- Use a pre-landing page with clear branding & disclaimers.
- Always have Search/Shopping/PMax campaigns as backups.

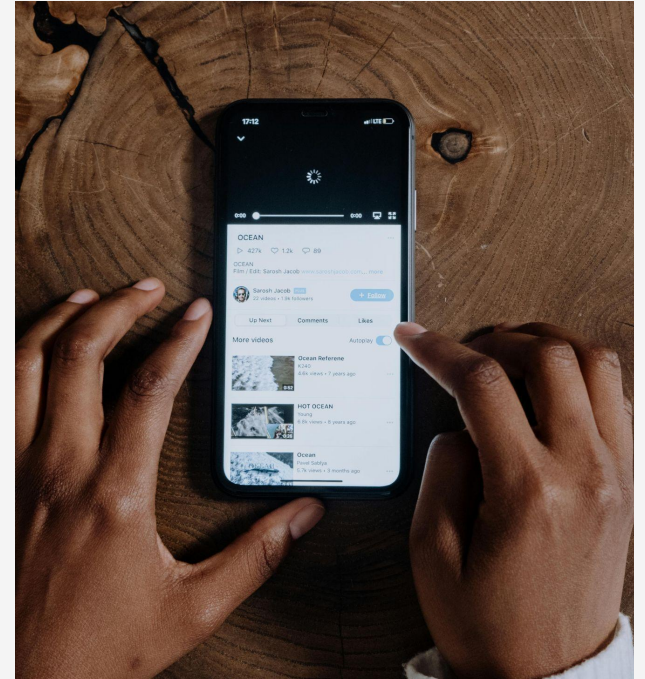
11. The Downside of YouTube

It wouldn't be fair to talk about the power YouTube conversion campaigns without mentioning the downside.

No matter how battle-tested our system is, there are no guarantees. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **System = Starting Point:** the system is the launch pad, but it's essential to adjust each piece as needed. Sounds obvious, but most flop because they try to use a playbook “plug-and-play.”
- **Stay The Course:** When the “standard” steps fall short, many pivot to a new strategy. The real magic comes from diagnosing which lever needs calibration and committing to the plan. Stay focused!
- **Every Offer Is Unique:** Product, audience intent, conversion rate, buyer's journey, back-end funnel metrics — they all affect the outcome.

🔧 **Action:** Start with the Playbook system, record your results, identify your biggest bottlenecks, then test one variable at a time. Iterate your way into scale.



12. Next steps

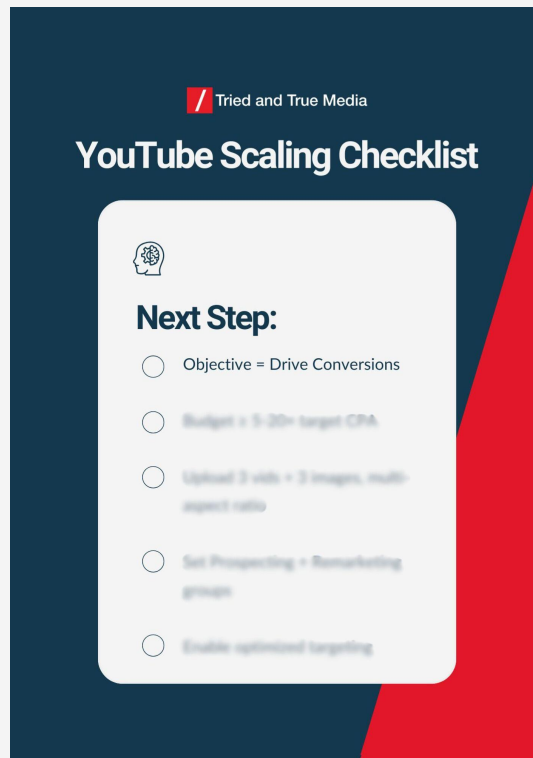
Ready to test this playbook on your YouTube campaigns?

You could go through this document page by page and outline all of the action steps, but you don't want to waste time on such a menial task...

You could upload this PDF to AI and have it summarize the steps, but you know AI is fallible — it can still miss important details...

So if you want the most accurate, consolidated list of our playbook steps to launch and scale your YouTube campaigns to 5 figures a day and beyond...

Click the link to download our [YouTube Scaling Checklist](#).





**Want to chat about a custom strategy
for your company?**

[Let's Chat!](#)