

# YouTube

Some people love YouTube, the video sharing website, while others hate it! With videos receiving a spectacular numbers of 'views', businesses are beginning to take notice of this internet phenomenon.

1 What do you think about YouTube? Look at the comments below. Discuss your thoughts with a partner.



2 Skim the article and match the headings (a–d) with the correct paragraphs (1–4).

**(a) Creativity**

**(b) Company profile**

**(c) Controversy**

**(d) Complaint**

[1] YouTube, the hugely popular video-sharing website, was created in February 2005. Much of the site consists of amateur content along with film and TV clips, and music videos. If you want to watch that amazing moment from your favourite film, the chances are it's on YouTube. In the phenomenon known as 'from zero to hero', many rather strange home-made videos have become international sensations, attracting tens of thousands of viewings. The company headquarters may be in California, but its services are known throughout the world. In 2006, YouTube was bought by Google for a staggering \$1.65 billion.

[2] The company receives endless criticism and has been banned on a number of occasions in a number of countries. One problem is the existence of videos with sensitive or inappropriate content. Another is the issue of copyright. Although users receive a message asking them not to upload videos containing material they do not own without permission, the company does nothing else to make sure that videos comply with copyright law. The site therefore contains many unauthorized clips.

[3] Perhaps being able to reach thousands of people was what inspired musician Dave Carroll to compose and sing 'United break guitars', film it and upload the video to YouTube. His song, in country-style, claimed that United Airlines had damaged his bands' instruments and then refused to pay any compensation. What became a Youtube hit was a public relations disaster for the airline who were forced to climb down from their position of not accepting responsibility. An example of 'People power' against a big corporation! Carroll's career wasn't harmed either.

[4] One creative venture using YouTube comes from the ad agency, BooneOakley. They created their own interactive website .... on YouTube! This clever trick demonstrates their alternative approach to marketing, setting them apart from bigger rival agencies located downtown. How many hits has their so-called website had? It's just topped a million! As with all popular services on the web, companies eventually recognize the benefits that ordinary people have already seen and taken advantage of. YouTube is no exception.

3 Read the complete article. Why is the company controversial? Which examples involving businesses are mentioned?

4 Identify the following words from their definitions:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| (a) something that is very impressive or surprising                        | (Paragraph 1) |
| (b) to obey a rule or law  | (Paragraph 2) |
| (c) not officially or legally allowed or approved of                       | (Paragraph 2) |
| (d) money that someone receives because something bad has happened to them | (Paragraph 3) |
| (e) a new business or activity   | (Paragraph 4) |

Definitions on or based on the Macmillan English Dictionary <http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>

5 Discuss the following questions in groups. Be ready to report back to the class.

- (a) Should YouTube be held responsible for unsuitable material posted on its site by users?
- (b) Does YouTube demonstrate that copyright law needs to be changed in the age of the internet?
- (c) How could businesses use YouTube to sell their products and services and communicate with customers?