

CULTURE & TRENDS

REPORT 2022

**POP CULTURE JUST
GOT EVEN MORE
PERSONAL**

YOUTUBE CULTURE & TRENDS REPORT 2022

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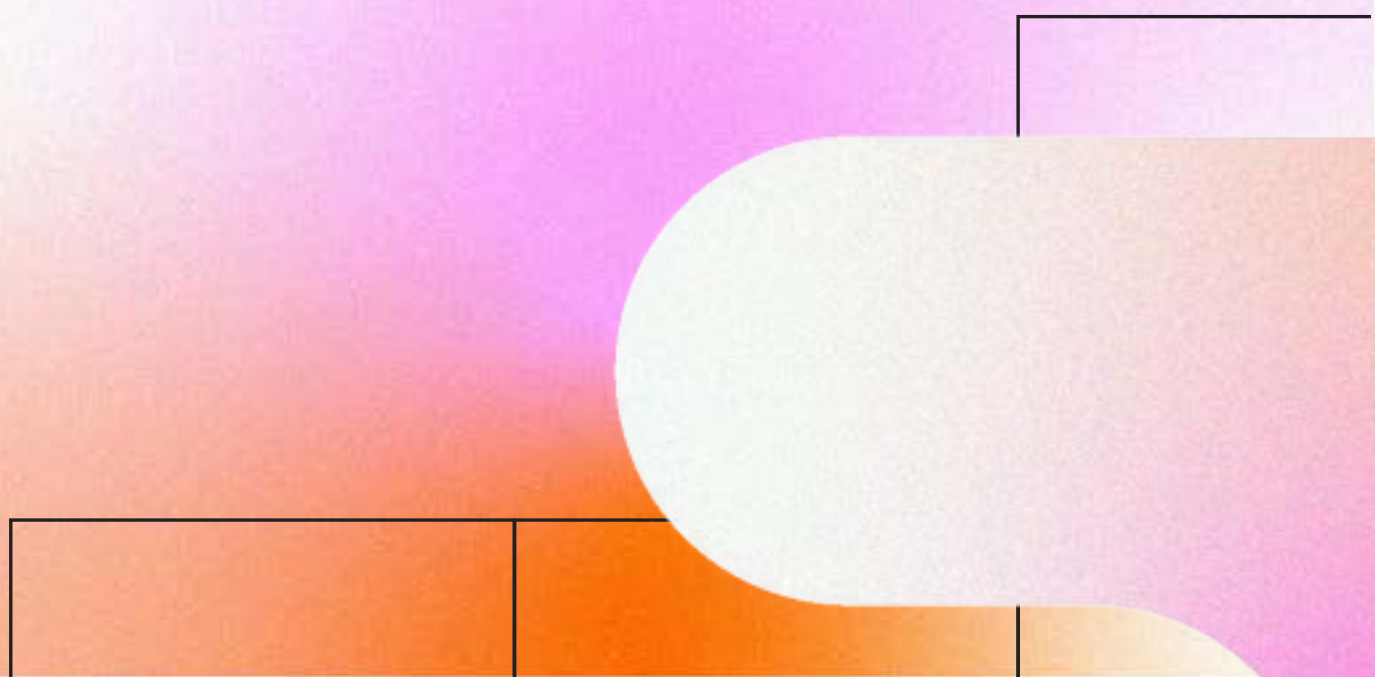
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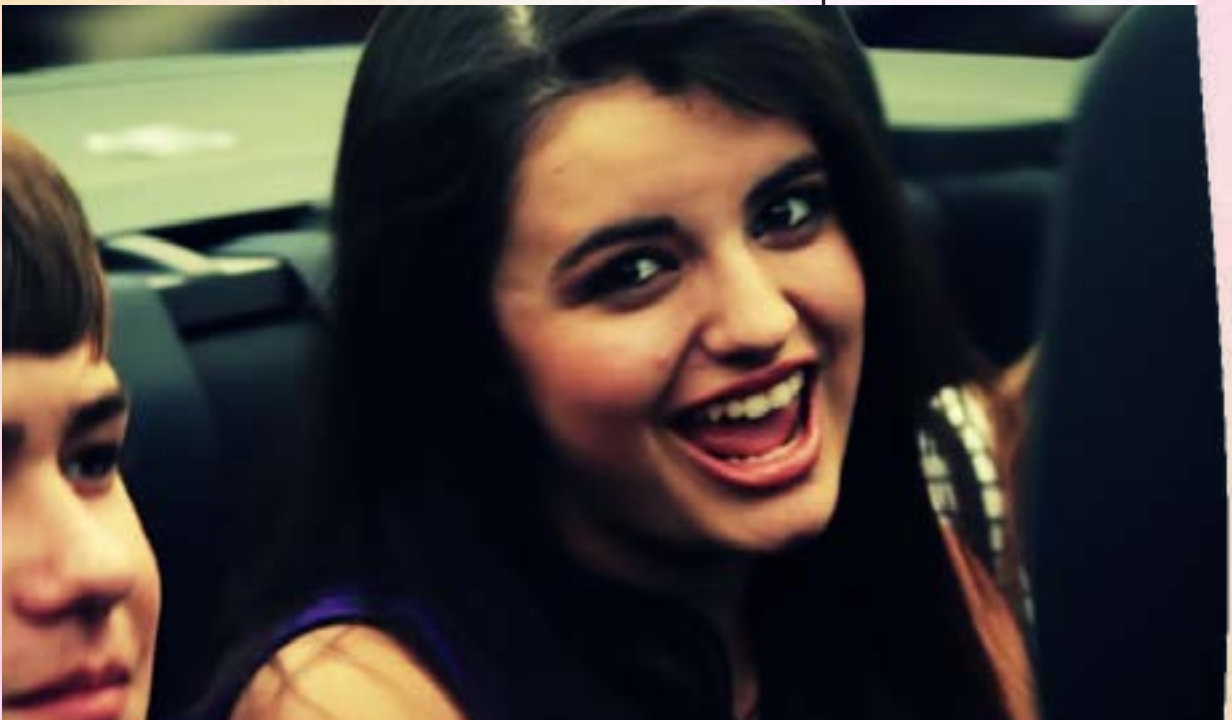


BACK IN THE DAY^{ooo}



that is to say, the late 2000s and early 2010s, digital culture was largely defined by viral video experiences.

The pop culture landscape was varied, and a new type of online video creator was rising in prominence, but everyone experienced digital culture in basically the same way.



NOW, POP CULTURE IS ALL ABOUT YOU

We still have viral videos, but single videos are comparatively less likely to achieve broad cultural breakthrough.

Internet culture has become popular culture and popular culture has become more individualized.

As a result, breakthrough pop culture moments have evolved.

SO WHAT'S DRIVING THIS?



NEW VIDEO FORMATS AND TECHNOLOGIES HAVE EXPLODED IN THE PAST 5 YEARS

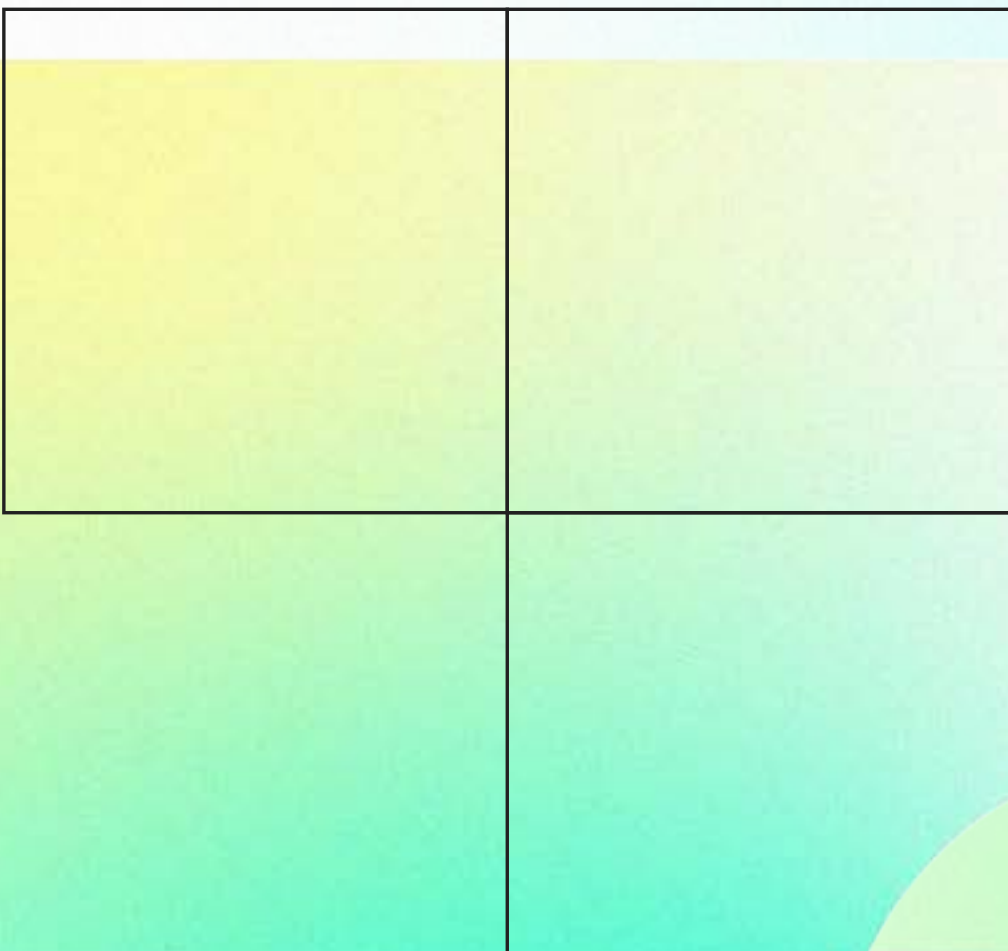
and a new generation of digital natives have come of age.

85%

of Gen Z have posted video content online

PLATFORM RECOMMENDATIONS ARE ENABLING MORE PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES

Meanwhile, the pandemic has reshaped our relationship with video and accelerated a number of long-term trends.



THE EVOLUTION OF POP CULTURE = PERSONAL RELEVANCE + DEPTH OF EXPERIENCE

And this still-evolving pop culture equation is being realized largely through video technologies.

65%

of Gen Z agree that content that's personally relevant to them is more important than the content that lots of other people talk about

Many of the things we view as big, breakthrough trending phenomena are experienced deeply and personally – and are therefore more complex than they look.



FRAGMENTATION OF CULTURE CAN LEAVE PEOPLE FEELING OVERWHELMED

Many younger users are opting out of the watercooler discourse.

Instead they're gravitating towards what's personally relevant to them, even when it's less connected with the perceived zeitgeist.

55%

of Gen Z agree that they watch content that no one they know personally is interested in

To understand this changing creative landscape, the YouTube Culture & Trends team analyzed hundreds of trends and ran Ipsos* surveys in markets around the world.

The forces we found driving pop culture's evolution took three distinct forms.

* Ipsos is one of the world's largest market research companies, operating in 90 markets.

**COMMUNITY
CREATIVITY**

**MULTI-FORMAT
CREATIVITY**

**RESPONSIVE
CREATIVITY**

**COMMUNITY
CREATIVITY**

**MULTI-FORMAT
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**RESPONSIVE
CREATIVITY**



Communities – groups who actively participate in a shared identity or interest online – are increasingly influencing creativity and cultural conversations. On YouTube, there are communities around everything, from choreography to watch collecting and fragrance reviews.

COMMUNITY CREATIVITY

**COMMUNITY
CREATIVITY IS WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN
PEOPLE PRODUCE
CULTURE TOGETHER...**



**...AND IT HAS
ALL KINDS OF
UNEXPECTED EFFECTS**

When Storm Eunice hit the U.K. in February 2022, Big Jet TV creator Jerry Dyer filmed the planes at Heathrow trying to land in high winds. The stream went viral with nearly a quarter of a million people watching live and millions more watching the replay.

10B+

views of flightspotting videos in 2021

Source: YouTube Data, Global, 2021. Videos related to airports, airplanes, or aviation and takeoff or landing, excluding gaming channels and videos related to flight simulations.

FANDOM IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL FORMS OF COMMUNITY

61%

of Gen Z agree that they would describe themselves as a really big or super fan of someone or something

On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,772.



Fan communities used to be a side effect of entertainment. Today, they are central to the entertainment experience.



COMMUNITY CREATIVITY

FANDOM IS CENTRAL TO K-POP



Growing fan formats include videos about how to start your own K-pop fan channel, while fancam videos – fan edits focusing on individual band members – have billions of views. K-pop labels have even started releasing these videos as official content.

COMMUNITY CREATIVITY

THE "PROFESSIONAL FAN" HAS ARRIVED



Over the past five years, professional fans have emerged to satisfy viewers' appetite for more nuanced, in-depth exploration of topics.

YouTube is a critical infrastructure for community culture on the internet and community creativity is a key place for culture to be spawned.

But communities of creators and engaged viewers are also now becoming the lens through which we make sense of pop culture itself.

**COMMUNITY
CREATIVITY**

**MULTI-FORMAT
CREATIVITY**

**RESPONSIVE
CREATIVITY**



As both watching and creating video become part of everyday life, trending concepts are spreading fluidly across different format and content types. As a result, how two people experience a trend may now be entirely different.

MULTI-FORMAT CREATIVITY

Producing and consuming remixable content – often as memes – is a major way that Gen Z and millennials participate in pop culture.

63%

of Gen Z followed one or more meme accounts in the past 12 months

Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022, n=5,722.

MEMES MATTER

57%

of Gen Z agree that they like it when brands participate in memes

These forms of highly interactive cultural expression are now an endless source of diverse creativity.

On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5722.



Consider: Teens in India began using a pop song from the Ivory Coast as part of a Shorts remix trend where they edited themselves into Bollywood scenes.

THIS CONCEPT IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO ANY ONE MEDIUM OR FORMAT TYPE

Cultural phenomena flow freely between short form and long form.

59%

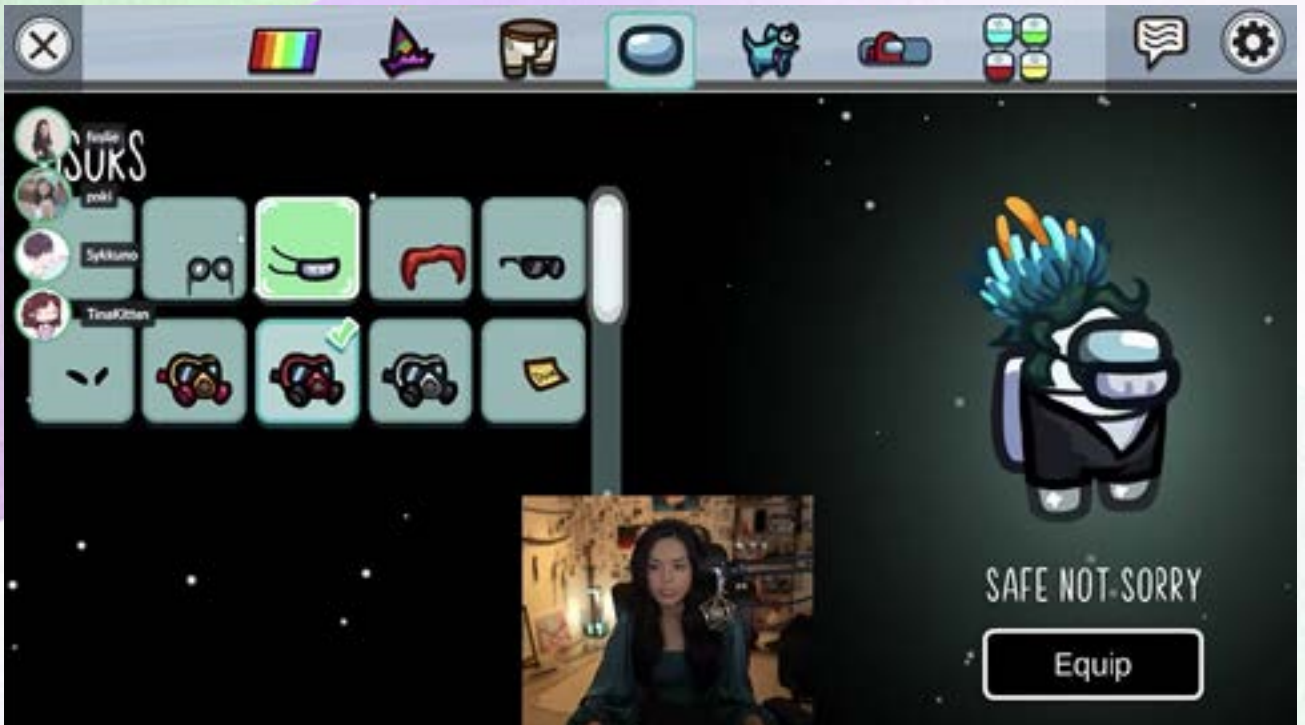
of Gen Z agree that they use short-form video apps to discover things that they then watch longer versions of

On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722.

MEET THE HYBRID CREATORS



MULTI-FORMAT CREATIVITY

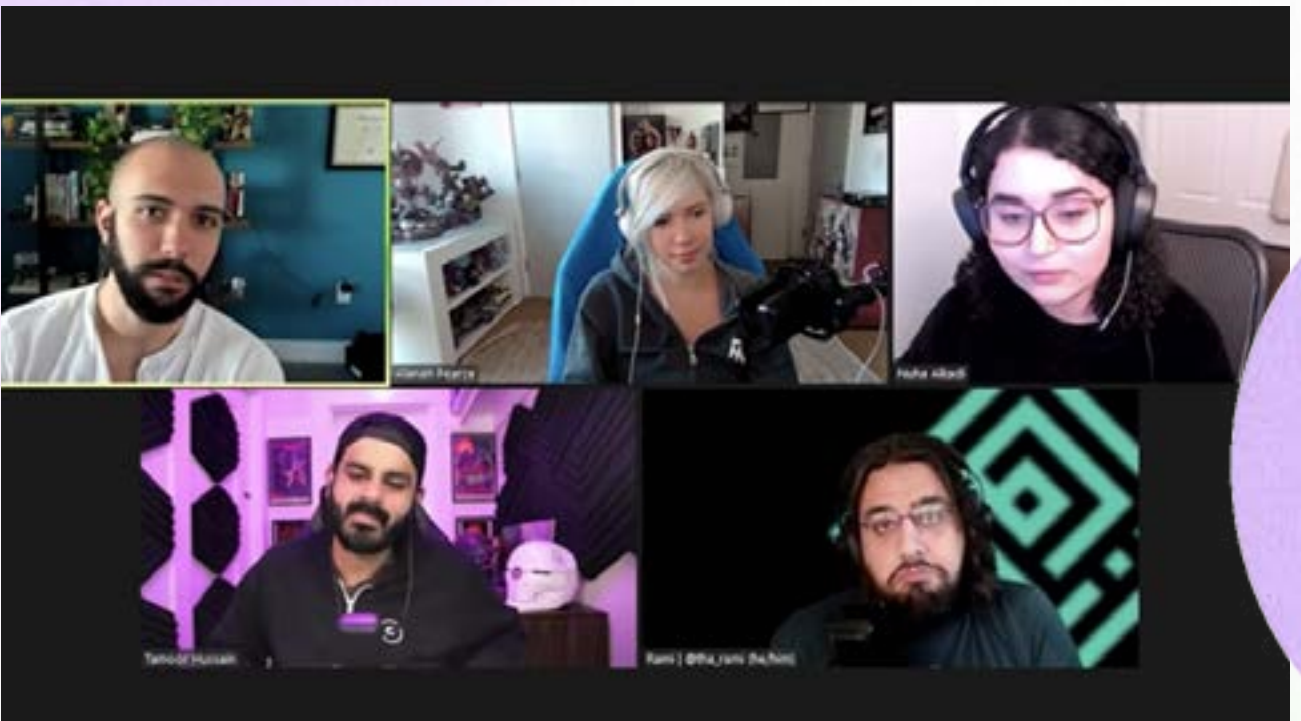


Hybrid creators are comfortable working across different mediums and use these to their advantage to grow their audiences and strengthen their relationship with those audiences.

MULTI-FORMAT CREATIVITY

The prominence of gaming technology in Gen Z entertainment is accelerating this multi-format reality – with gaming engines being used as production environments.

PEOPLE ARE EXPRESSING THEMSELVES THROUGH METAVERSE CONTENT



In the Middle East and North Africa, gamers live streaming during Ramadan carry their fasts over to their digital avatars.

Going forward, trends that matter will be born from creativity that is not restricted to any one digital video format or medium.

As a result, we can expect hybrid creators and continuously remixed trends to become the new norm.



**COMMUNITY
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Responsive creativity refers to creation and consumption trends that derive from the ways people adapt video platforms to suit their psychological and emotional needs.

RESPONSIVE CREATIVITY

The past two years have been a significant period of anxiety for young people, so it's no surprise to see popular content that directly responds to this trend.

90%

of Gen Z have watched a video that helped them feel like they were in a different place

Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722.

Highly aesthetic “vibe” content is especially good at helping people achieve that transported feeling.



Puerto Rican artist Bad Bunny released his new album accompanied by a series of 360-degree videos that enabled the viewer to vibe out with him and his friends on a tropical beach.

Soothing content is one of the most underrated forms of content right now.

83%

of Gen Z have used YouTube to watch soothing content that helps them relax

Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022, n=5,722.

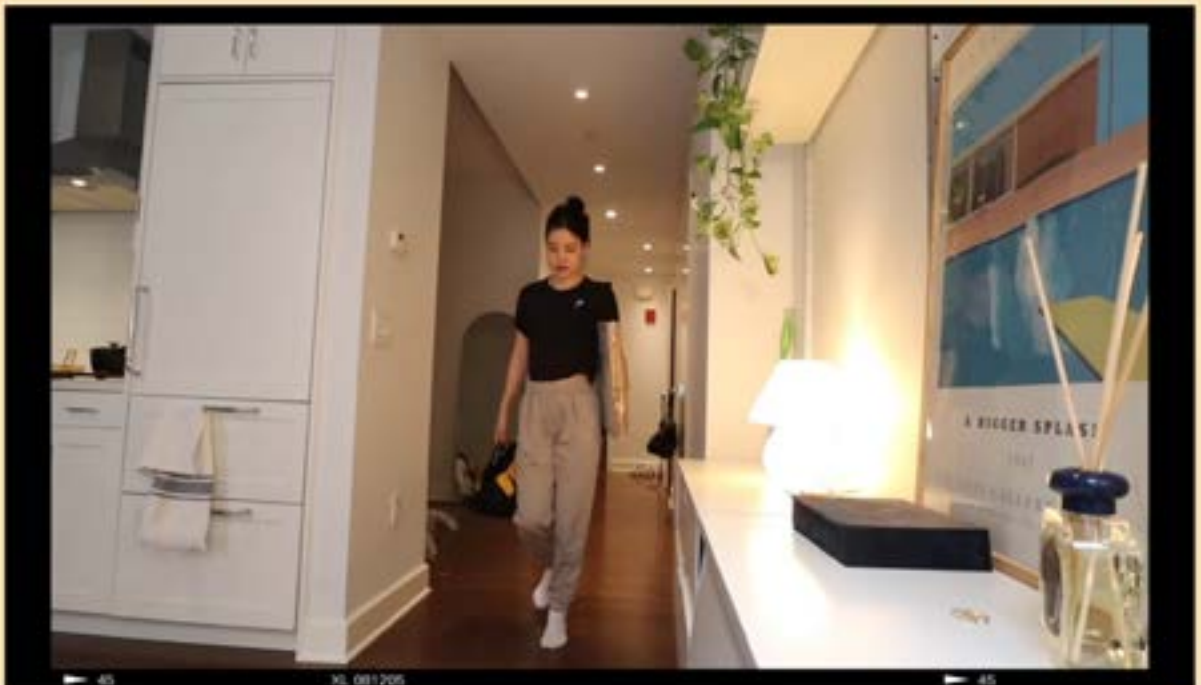
“Comfort creators” are a recent phenomenon where viewers identify individual creators whose familiarity offers comfort.

69%

of Gen Z agree that they often find themselves returning to creators or content that feels comforting to them

Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022, n=5,722.

On YouTube, the effects of comfort media are heightened by the parasocial relationship that exists between the creators and their audiences.



In a similar vein, nostalgia has become increasingly valuable for young viewers.

82%

of Gen Z have used YouTube to watch content in order to feel nostalgic

Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722.

VIEWERS ARE ALSO FINDING COMFORT IN HORROR CONTENT

53%

of Gen Z agree that online horror content appeals to them



Source: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722.

It may seem antithetical but, like soothing content and comfort creators, horror content often serves as a kind of salve for anxiety and trauma.

MILLENNIAL AND GEN Z HORROR HABITS ARE NOT THE SAME

Millennial horror tends to be more about the adrenaline rush of the jump scare, while Gen Z horror tends to be far more atmospheric. Hence the rise of found-footage-style “analog horror” among young people.



Responsive creativity is a fascinating example of how personal experiences and in-depth content feed one another. **And this means creators and advertisers must also be responsive in how they directly meet the changing emotional needs (and horror tastes) of younger demographics.**

SPEAKING OF FEELLING SCARED



ALL OF THIS CHANGE AND FRAGMENTATION CAN FEEL TERRIFYING, ESPECIALLY IF YOU WORK IN A CREATIVE FIELD

Pop culture that emphasizes personal, in-depth experiences is inherently far more diversified and therefore hard to respond to. The sense that culture is “unknowable” is unsettling – but there are knowable themes here.

THE FUTURE OF CREATIVITY WILL...

- Exist in dialogue with digital communities
- Fluidly spread across format types
- Respond directly to the needs of the audience

The depth and personalization afforded by today's video technologies are evolving pop culture in front of our eyes.

78%

of people agree that they use YouTube because it serves them with content that's personally relevant to them



YOUTUBE CULTURE & TRENDS REPORT 2022

**In short, the ways
to forge meaningful
relationships with
Gen Z (and anyone else)
are through their
**COMMUNITIES,
FORMATS,
AND MOODS.****

**CULTURE
& TRENDS**

APPENDIX

Page 7: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722. Q text: Over the past 12 months, typically how often, if at all have you done each of the following? Posted video content online (e.g. to Instagram Stories, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat)

Page 10: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722. Q text: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements relating to online content? Content that's personally relevant to me is more important than the content that lots of other people are talking about

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Page 28: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722. Q text: Over the past 12 months, which, if any, of the following have you personally done online? Followed one or more meme accounts

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Page 42: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-24 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=5,722. Q text: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements relating to online creators? I often find myself returning to creators or content that feels comforting to me

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Page 52: On behalf of YouTube, Ipsos conducted an online survey of individuals aged 18-44 in U.S., U.K., AU, FR, DE, MX, IN, KOR, CAN, JP, BR, KSA, EGY, May 2022. n=23,609. Q text: [Among respondents who use YouTube] To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about YouTube? I use YouTube because it serves me content that's personally relevant to me