

Community Hubs in YouTube

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UX Deliverable Project

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What is YouTube?



- **The definitive primarily video-sharing platform, featuring short, medium, and long-form content**
 - Designed for content consumption, monetized through advertisements
 - Utilizes like/dislike ratings, comment sections, and various community features
- **Specific features include:**
 - Videos
 - Shorts
 - Likes & Views
 - Comments/Discussions
 - Polls
 - Images
 - Auto-Generated Topics

The UX Challenge



- Various underutilized features exist in YouTube
- There is a high amount of content and many content creators, but only a certain amount of them can be accessed and discovered
- Discovering new content may be difficult
- Auto-generated topics should help in organizing content, but are not easily available and are confusing and messy to navigate

How might we...

- Address the limited amount and use of community features?
- Help new users navigate and find content easier?
- Assist long term users get exposed to new content and new creators?

Approach

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Competitive
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Usability Test

Competitive Analysis



- **Goal: to observe and compare how competitors utilize features**
 - Additionally, to understand what features they use and how they use them
- **4 core competitors:**
 - Vimeo
 - Reddit
 - TikTok
 - Tumblr

Platform	YouTube	Vimeo	Reddit	TikTok	Tumblr
Primary Content	Videos	Videos	Discussion Threads	Short-Form Videos	Text Posts & GIFS/Images
Audience Engagement & Interaction	Likes, Comments, Subscriptions	Limited like & comment Features	Upvotes, Downvotes, Comments	Likes, Comments, Shares	Reblogs, Likes, Comments, Subscriptions
Algorithm and Recommendations	Personalized based on watch history and engagement	Curated, professional content, less algorithm driven	Content surfaces based on subscriptions and upvotes, not very personalized	Highly personalized "For You Page", algorithm learns fast	Based on followed blogs and interests
Community Hubs	Limited to creator-driven hubs	No hub features	Subreddits are dedicated hubs	Trends and hashtags, no centralized hubs	Tag-based, user built hubs

In-Depth Interviews



- Goal: to understand user needs and generate opinions regarding the best way to implement the community hubs
- Sample:
 - 5-6 casual YouTube watchers (Less than 3 hours a week)
 - 5-6 frequent YouTube watchers (More than 7 hours a week)
 - 8-12 YouTube creators
- Research Questions:
 - What do individuals like and dislike about YouTube comments and discussions? How do they interact with them?
 - What are individual's attitudes towards YouTube community features?
 - Who would benefit the most from organized community hubs?

YouTube Watcher Question Guide

* User's consumption time would be gauged before interview selection

- Where do you usually watch YouTube?
- What type of content do you consume?
- How long is one session of watching?
- Do you usually watch short-form or long-form content? Do you prefer short-form or long-form content?
- How many different genres of content do you watch?
 - Do you switch from one genre of content to another in one sitting or watching session?
 - When watching a genre of content, do you select the most viewed and/or liked videos/shorts, or do you not pay much attention to that?
- Do you read the comments section while/before/after watching a video? Why? Why not?
 - Do you read the comments section while/before/after watching a short? Why? Why not?
- Do you use YouTube's community features? Which ones?
 - If so, what do you like and dislike about them?
- Do you use Reddit, TikTok, Tumblr, or Vimeo?
 - If so, what do you like? What do you dislike?
- What does the idea of a community topic hub about specific topics on YouTube where you can see the most popular videos and shorts for a specific topic, with spaces for discussion, polls, and other community features elicit for you?
 - What would the pros and cons be?
 - How specific would you expect topics to be for these community hubs? Why?

YouTube Creator Question Guide

* User's consumption time would be gauged before interview selection

- What is the process of YouTube content creation?
- What type of content do you create?
- How long does making a video usually take?
- Do you usually create & consume short-form or long-form content? Do you prefer short-form or long-form content?
- How many different genres of content do you watch? Create?
 - When watching a genre of content, do you select the most viewed and/or liked videos/shorts, or do you not pay much attention to that?
 - How about when creating content?
- How deeply do you engage with the comment section of videos you make? Why?
 - How about the comment section of other creators and their videos?
- Do you use YouTube's community features? Which ones?
 - If so, what do you like and dislike about them?
- Do you use Reddit, TikTok, Tumblr, or Vimeo?
 - If so, what do you like? What do you dislike?
- What does the idea of a community topic hub about specific topics on YouTube where you can see the most popular videos and shorts for a specific topic, with spaces for discussion, polls, and other community features elicit for you?
 - What would the pros and cons be?
 - How specific would you expect topics to be for these community hubs? Why?
 - What impacts would it have on you as a creator?

In-Depth Interviews



- **Two participants were ran for initial data collection**
 - One frequent watcher
 - One creator
- **Common Pain Points:**
 - Community features are not, or do not feel important
 - Not much purpose to use, only using every so often
 - Difficult and out of the way to access
 - Comment section is not highly appealing to use
 - Usually feels unintuitive/pointless to comment
 - Reading is generally a good experience
 - Explore page is broad and random
 - Not much new content exposure

- **Different values:**
 - First interviewee valued comment sections
 - Second interviewee cared significantly more about being exposed to new content and creators
 - Type of content consumed had some overlap, but topics were highly different
- **Future directions:**
 - First interviewee was slightly on the fence for the proposed hub
 - Second interviewee was interested
 - Hubs compiling videos can be a strong feature
 - Discussion may not be as important
 - Could have merit as a tool for new users or individuals trying to get into new contents/topics

In-Depth Interviews



“I could discuss all three together. Doesn’t Reddit do that? But actually, I don’t want to go on Reddit. If YouTube had this, maybe I would comment an opinion based on all 3 creators/videos?”

- Interviewee #2 (With regards to multiple videos within potential topic hubs)

User Journey Map

Curious Charlie (25, Male)

Charlie likes to learn things fully, challenge his views, and dedicate his time to things that interest him. Videos and podcasts are his go to way of learning and obtaining information, since he commutes to work daily.

Scenario

Charlie's friends have been discussing economics more in-depth lately. Charlie realizes he is not as familiar with economics or business as he thought he was, so he wants to use YouTube as one source to gain more knowledge and better discuss with his friends.

User Action

Goals

Touchpoints

Emotions

Pain Points
Opportunities

Interest

- After meeting with his friends, Charlie decides he wants to learn more about economics and bring more to conversations.

To set out to find desired and related information.

Explore

- Charlie goes on YouTube to start finding related content.
- He looks and scrolls around his home page, but it is not useful as he has no related prior searches, filter recommendations and gets no video recommendations of use, leading to him searching on his own.

To quickly and easily find economics related content without much effort.

Home Page

Search Bar

Recommended Videos

Filter Recommendations

Search

- After searching "economics", Charlie is flooded with hundreds of videos.
- Filters are available, but it is not very helpful as he does not know what length & quality of content is good with regards to "economics" videos.

To find useful content related to the search.

Search Page

Filters

Filter Recommendations

Search Bar

Find

- While everything is overwhelming, Charlie sees a button labeled "Curated Insights Hub" (my proposed addition; name still not fully decided) right above the first video.
- He hovers over it and it says that it is great for beginners, so he clicks on it.

To find an alternative still related to the original search.

Search Page

Filters

Filter Recommendations

Curated Insights Hub

Search Bar

Interact & Learn

- Once he is in the hub, he quickly notices a button labeled "Beginner-Friendly".
- Charlie also sees discussion boards where users who have badges that show their experience are sharing advice, tips, and recommendations for videos.
- Charlie clicks on his first of many curated videos he can watch.

To begin delving into related and useful content through the hub.

Curated Insights Hub

Filters/Tags

"Beginner-Friendly"

"Intermediate"

"Expert"

Search Bar



The home page does not give the opportunity to explore new topics. Even the "New to you" filter recommendation provides newer content related to previous interests or content watched, not an actual new topic or domain. This is usually not a problem, but it can create a bubble for users and limit their ability to discover.

Having a home page that allows for easy access to new content can help the user effortlessly and quickly delve into new topics.

There are too many videos with varying lengths, qualities, complexities, focuses, styles, and more. Someone who does not know a topic cannot properly navigate through these and thus can get overwhelmed.

Offering curated videos and shorts related to the topic can increase the user's interest and make their YouTube navigation experience better.

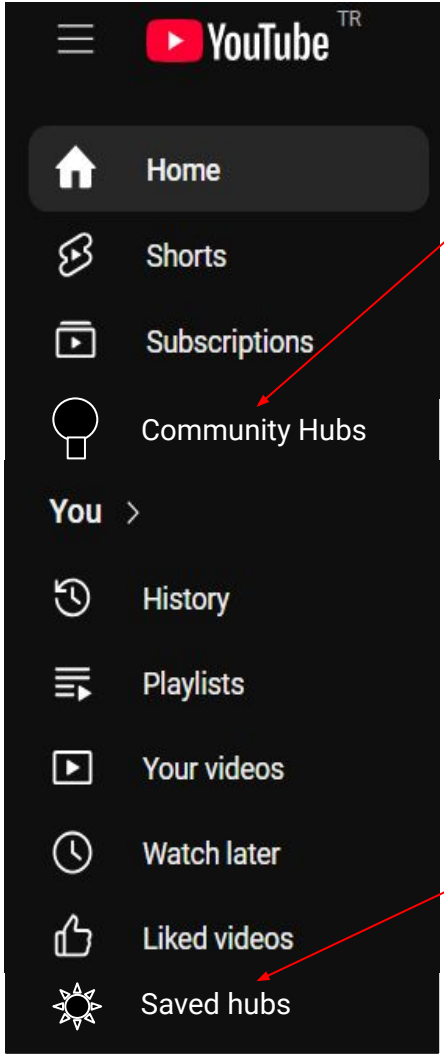
Might be a little convoluted for the user the first time they find it. Little pop-up when hovered can potentially aid in that issue. Other methods can potentially exist to streamline experience, such as a search function that directly leads to hub instead of videos.

Providing a hub where beginners, intermediate users, and experts can all interact with each other and interact with the content increases creator and user interaction.

Hub may be a little overwhelming with all the various functions, but the different familiarity (beginner, intermediate, expert) should streamline process. Adhering to already existing YouTube and other industry standards can make the hub page more digestible.

Providing various formats and tools for users to interact with in the hub ranging from videos, shorts, discussions, and community features can allow users to fully utilize the various features YouTube currently offers, engage more deeply and easily with new topics, and be more exposed to other users and creators.

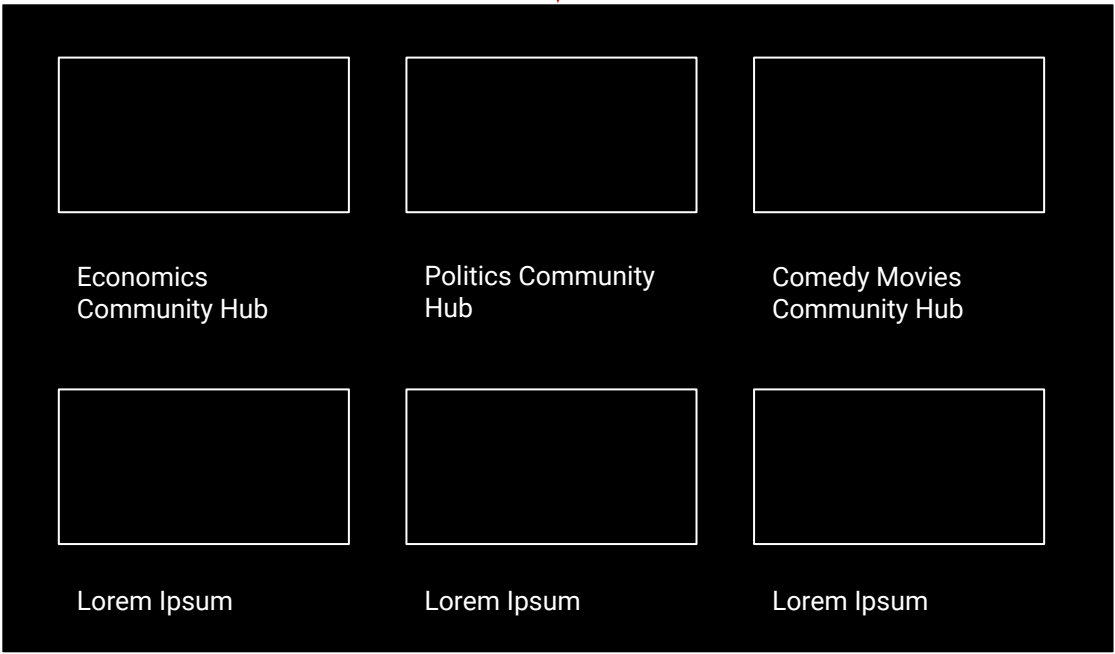
Wireframes



Community hubs is an added feature to browse various community hubs in a central location.

Saved hubs is an added feature for users to find and access their subscribed/saved hubs. Functions similar to "Watch later" and "Liked videos".


Example of where the community hubs feature takes the user to browse various community hubs.



Economics


All Shorts Videos Unwatched Watched Recently uploaded Live Mit Explained india Explained australia Explained uk Degree > Filters


Economics Topics Community Hub: Find and Explore Economics Related Content
* Great for beginners


 Economics Explained
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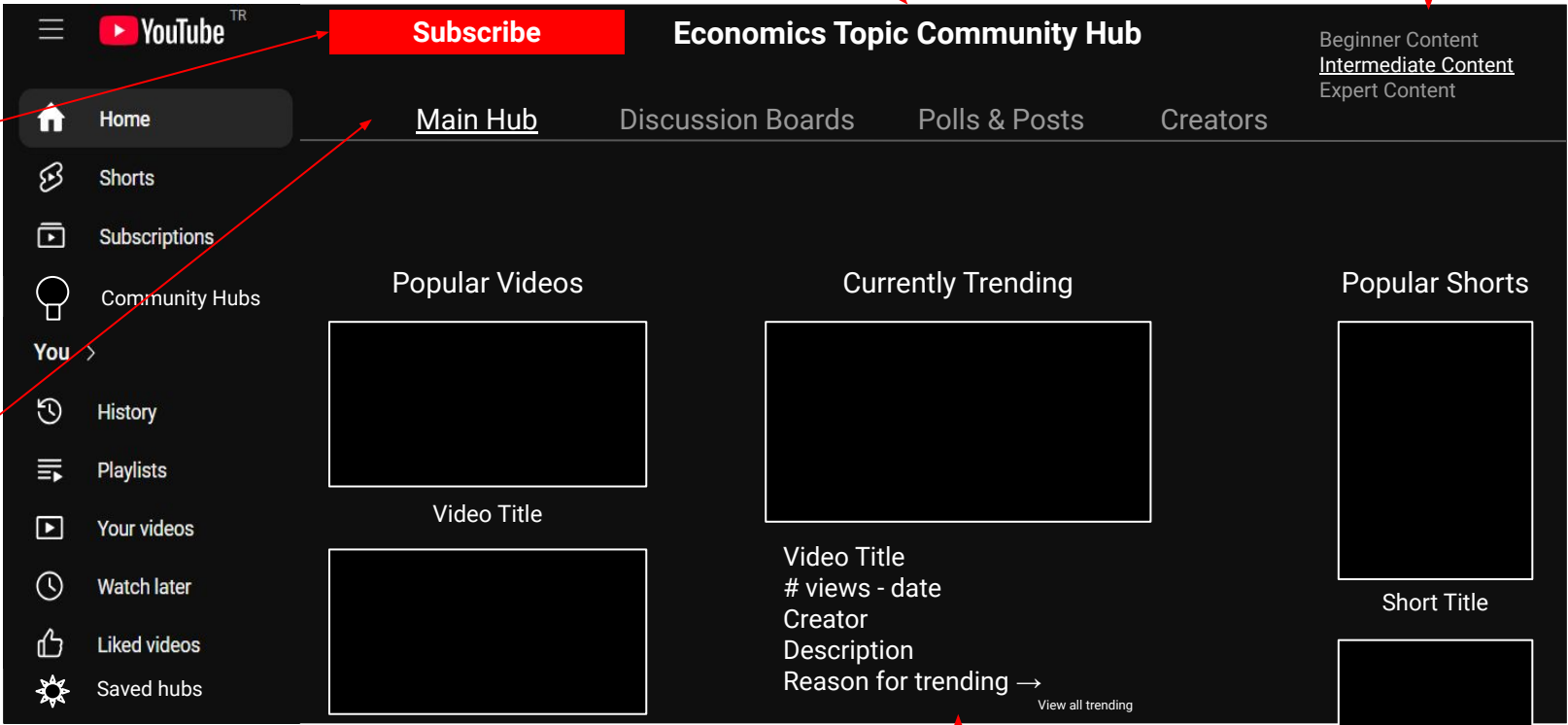
Added hub feature that will pop up on top of the videos and channels that are recommended and listed when a user searched for a topic. The "Great for beginners" text appears for this user as they are searching for the topic of "Economics" for the first time.

An example hub for the topic of Economics. Hubs will start in the "Main Hub" section, where popular videos, popular shorts, and the Currently Trending video is located. Popular videos are the most viewed videos that are within the topic of the hub. The popular shorts section functions the same way. The currently trending is the most important video of the hub, as it is the video voted the highest each week by users of the hub.

Different complexity level for content. User can select the difficulty of the content themselves. Provides user with freedom, but tailors content better, reducing frustration.

Subscribe button saves the hub to the "Saved hubs".

"Main Hub" is currently selected. There are three other sections, all related to the content of the hub.



"Reason for trending" quickly explains to the user how the currently trending section works. View all trending lets users see how users who interact with the hub value and vote for various content. Creators and experts have more influence on voting and what trends, but every user can influence the trending videos. Showing all trending allows more user control and lets individuals view all the various videos. This provides smaller creators with more exposure as well.

Poster name will be displayed at the start of a discussion. The poster's level of expertise/interaction level is listed as well as the specific topic within the topic of the hub. Post text is visible and the post can be expanded to continue reading longer posts and/or view all comments.

Polls & posts have a similar format to this page, but instead of the discussions; instead polls & image community features related to the topic of the hub are showcased, with comments available under each of them. Creators tab showcases all creators related to the topic.

Sorting lets the user have more freedom and control. The sort options are utilizing the industry standards.

Subscribe

Economics Topic Community Hub

[Beginner Content](#)
[Intermediate Content](#)
[Expert Content](#)

[Home](#) [Main Hub](#) [Discussion Boards](#) [Polls & Posts](#) [Creators](#)

Home
Shorts
Subscriptions
Community Hubs
You >
History
Playlists
Your videos
Watch later
Liked videos
Saved hubs

Poster - Certified Expert* - Topic
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282 Comments – Expand to view replies

Poster - Creator* - Topic
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686 Comments – Expand to view post & replies

Poster - Beginner User* - Topic

**Sort - Hot
New
Best
Top**

Usability Tests



- **Goal:** to have participants directly interact with the proposed community hub
- Usability tests will directly help in understanding how individuals use the community hub, which features they prioritize, and what is missing
- **Research Questions:**
 - What are the difficulties?
 - What works well?
 - What can be improved?
 - What is missing or can be added?
- **A potential way to test the discussion boards is to push a rough version out as a beta**

Future Directions



- Following usability testing, deliberating which features should be improved, added, and removed from the hubs
- Exploring deeper ways in defining how to decide which topics qualify for hubs
 - Deciding how broad and specific hub topics should be is necessary to solving this UX challenge
- Delving more into mobile options
 - YouTube has separated certain features between mobile and computer, so deciding if this function belongs on mobile is important

Thank You!

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UX Deliverable Presentation

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