

SAHIL'S SEVEN

COMEDY: Burning Love

- Red Hour, Abominable Pictures, Paramount's Insurge Pictures.
- Distributed on Yahoo.
- Written by Erica Oyama and directed by Ken Marino.
- Starring: Ken Marino, Michael Ian Black, Adam Scott, Paul Scheer, Ben Stiller, Kristen Bell, and more.

To put it bluntly, this show is really funny.

Erin McPherson, Head of Video, Yahoo: "Based on our internal data, we know that reality TV content performs really well on Yahoo. It's what initially attracted us to this show. We were able contextualize it and promote it just like we would with actual reality TV. And we roundly define it as a hit. We actually saw audience growth as the season went on, which is contrary to the more typical viewing pattern where the first episode does well and then viewing drops off from there."

REALITY: Ultimate Surprises

- FishBowl Worldwide Media.
- Distributed on Yahoo.
- Hosted by Cameron Mathison.
- A special episode featured the cast of The Five-Year Engagement, including Jason Segal and Emily Blunt, who helped with a marriage proposal.

Reality television is not normally my cup of tea, but I found myself binge-watching this show. I'd see a sweet marriage proposal and then notice a link to another episode, and I couldn't help but want to check it out.

Bruce Gersh, President & CEO of FishBowl Worldwide Media: "We always knew this was a great opportunity. On television, love and money seem to have the biggest stakes. When we developed this show for the web, after originally developing it for TV, we added a bunch of new opportunities because the online audience is a little bit different."

Erin McPherson: "We were attracted to this show based on search and performance data on our home page. We would publish a story about a real engagement or something similar, and the numbers would go through the roof. So it just made sense to create a show around it."

MUSIC: VEVO Go Shows

- VEVO, The Gunslingers
- Distributed on VEVO platforms
- Featuring: Fabolous, J. Cole, Kid Cudi, Demi Lovato, many other artists.

There are a lot of music performance videos across the web, but there aren't any others that feature an artist (Fabolous) performing on the Brooklyn Bridge. It's a cool concept. If you're a fan of any of the artists already featured on the show, you'll enjoy watching them do something different in front of shocked and/or ecstatic fans.

Scott Reich, VP/Original Content & Programming, VEVO: "We wanted to create a better experience for users but also take into account what the artist wanted to do. Usually we have a conversation with the artist or his management team and ask them 'What is important to you that you haven't been able to execute?' That's why we have the story element in there so the artist can explain why they are doing it."

DRAMA: Blue

- Distributed on WIGS, a YouTube original channel focusing on female characters.
- Written and directed by Rodrigo Garcia.
- Starring: Julia Stiles, Uria Shelton, Jeanne Tripplehorn, and others.

Drama can be a tough gig on YouTube, but by structuring each episode around a particular character or scene, replete with its own twists and turns, the show really pulls you in and sticks with you from one episode to the next.

Rodrigo Garcia: "The conventional wisdom is that YouTube is for younger people. Adult women (30+) are one of the most underserved segments on the web in that sense. However, we didn't launch WIGS because we thought it was attractive from a marketing standpoint. Jon (Avnet) and I just love to tell stories about female characters. It pleased us first. Then it was a challenge of doing something that was more worthwhile. The web, especially a few years back, had a lot of stuff that was amusing or interesting, but felt largely disposable. Well, even in shorter installments, why can't it be more lasting? Why can't you create something that will make people want to watch over and over again?"

DOCUMENTARY: Home of the Brave

- Distributed on AOL and AOL On.
- Created by Neil Katz, produced and directed by Peabody- and Emmy-winning producer Shawn Efran.

This series offers a captivating look at what it's like to be inside of a warzone. The use of the Interrotron not only helps the filmmakers get a more personal interview, but draws the audience in as well, as the subject seems like he's talking directly to you.

Neil Katz: “I knew I wanted to find a way to honor American heroes on the page on our site. That was the kernel of the idea that became this show. We then had to hone it down and figure out how we could make this as dramatic as television, and that’s when Shawn came in and really helped us.”

Shawn Efran: “I feel like I have more freedom on the web. I don’t mean to denigrate television, but the web opened up different production values for us. We didn’t have to find an umbrella to fit this show under; it did not have to slide into a portion of the evening newscast or 60 Minutes. They’re just cool stories told by interesting people in an interesting way. So we got a chance to determine the look, the style, and the kinds of stories we wanted to tell. This was tremendously appealing to me.”

ANIMATED: Do’s and Don’ts: A Children’s Guide to Social Survival

- From Alloy Digital and Smosh.
- Distributed on Shut Up! Cartoons, an animated channel that consistently ranks high among the YouTube premium channels.
- Created by F. Ryan Naumann.

Barry Blumberg told me that anytime you put children in an adult situation, it’s funny. For the most part, I’d have to agree. For example, I particularly enjoy the episode where the show teaches you how to hide a body. It’s a thing every kid should be taught.

Barry Blumberg, EVP/Alloy Digital, President/Smosh: “Even when you have a really good show, it can be hard to get an audience. When assessing pitches that were coming in, we certainly looked at what would be compatible with Smosh, which is teen and young adult humor. This show has a certain absurdity and incongruity that you’ll find on a lot of Smosh content. It was the first to premiere on Shut Up! Cartoons. The views were initially helped by the Smosh association, but soon we found viewers came back on their own, because it made them laugh.”

NEWS/TALK: What’s Trending with Shira Lazar

- Created and produced by Shira Lazar and Damon Berger.
- Syndicated across YouTube, Huffington Post, Mashable, and Virgin America.
- Hosted by Shira Lazar, directed by Brett Register.
- Nominated for a Primetime Emmy (Interactive Media).

What’s Trending describes itself as a “talk show for the digital age,” and it’s very true. With a new viral video or trending news item around every corner, it’s nice to have a show that brings it to you with the hope that you’ll be the first to show it to your friends. It’s also nice to watch a show where a guest can be anyone from Mark Cuban to Snoop Dogg to Paul Scheer.

Shira Lazar: “When I originally came up with the concept in October 2009, the phrase ‘what’s trending’ was just entering the lexicon. I was consistently writing blogs about what was trending on the web, but I was very much interested in how we could create a show around these stories that I was blogging about individually. It was one of those things where I was just waiting for someone to hire me to do a show like this. But then, I just decided to create it by myself. It started out focusing on social media trends, but then we expanded it to cover the entire web, which allows us to talk about what’s on everybody’s mind—whether it’s a viral video or more adult material like the Egyptian Revolution. It gives us a type of range that the web really connects to.”