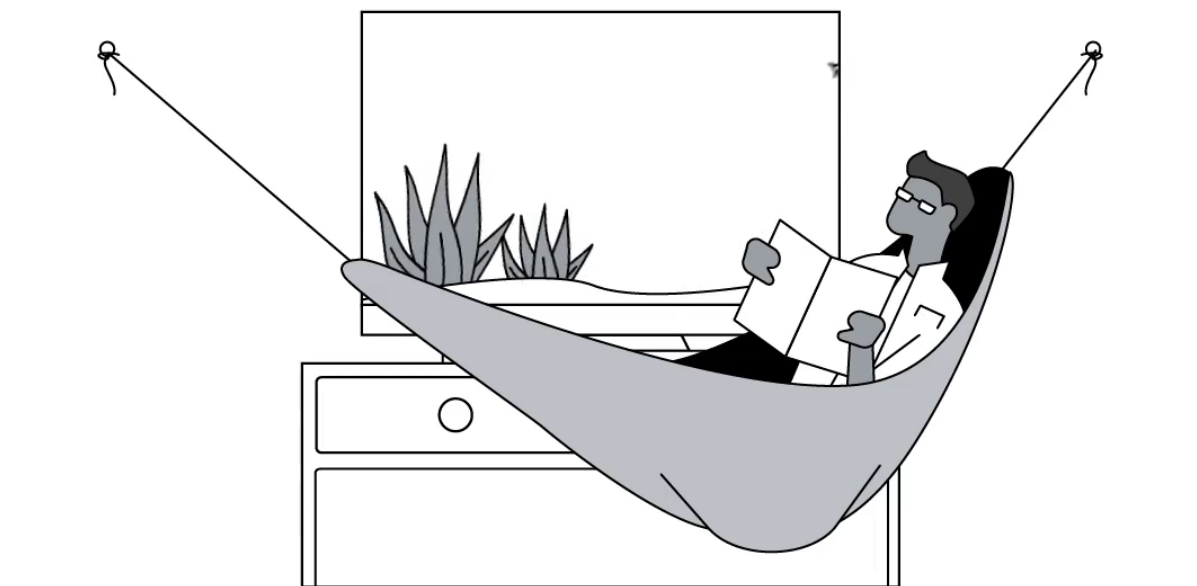




📍 GLOBAL

Soothing videos: The surprising trend capturing Gen Z's attention

Roya Zeitoune / September 2022



Roya Zeitoune oversees YouTube's Culture and Trends team for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Her team delves deep into YouTube viewing data to uncover emerging consumer trends.

Modern life is stressful. Everyone has their own coping mechanisms to calm down. We write in gratitude journals, take deep breaths, and, in many instances, we turn to soothing YouTube videos.



nature films, [cottagecore videos](#), and compilations of “[oddly satisfying](#)” clips.

Gen Z is a young cohort — the oldest ones are just 25 — but this generation is a major force in shaping international culture and consumption, both online and in-person. Being conscious of their needs and interests is key to creating relevant messaging and connecting with them on a deeper level.

Here’s what marketers need to know about this key Gen Z viewing trend to better understand this generation’s current mindset:

All-day comfort with nature live streams and 10+ hour-long videos

Armchair traveling has never been as easy — and tempting — as it is today. Transportive videos of faraway places are just one click away. For Gen Z, YouTube is the go-to destination for these journeys: 90% say they have watched a video that helped them feel like they were in a different place.²

YouTube has a huge library of soothing videos about faraway destinations and the natural world. Popular formats include [animal live streams](#) and immersive nature films that are 10+ hours long, often set to meditative music.

And, if the many comments underneath these calming videos are anything to go by, the ethereal visuals and gentle music can even help them fall asleep.



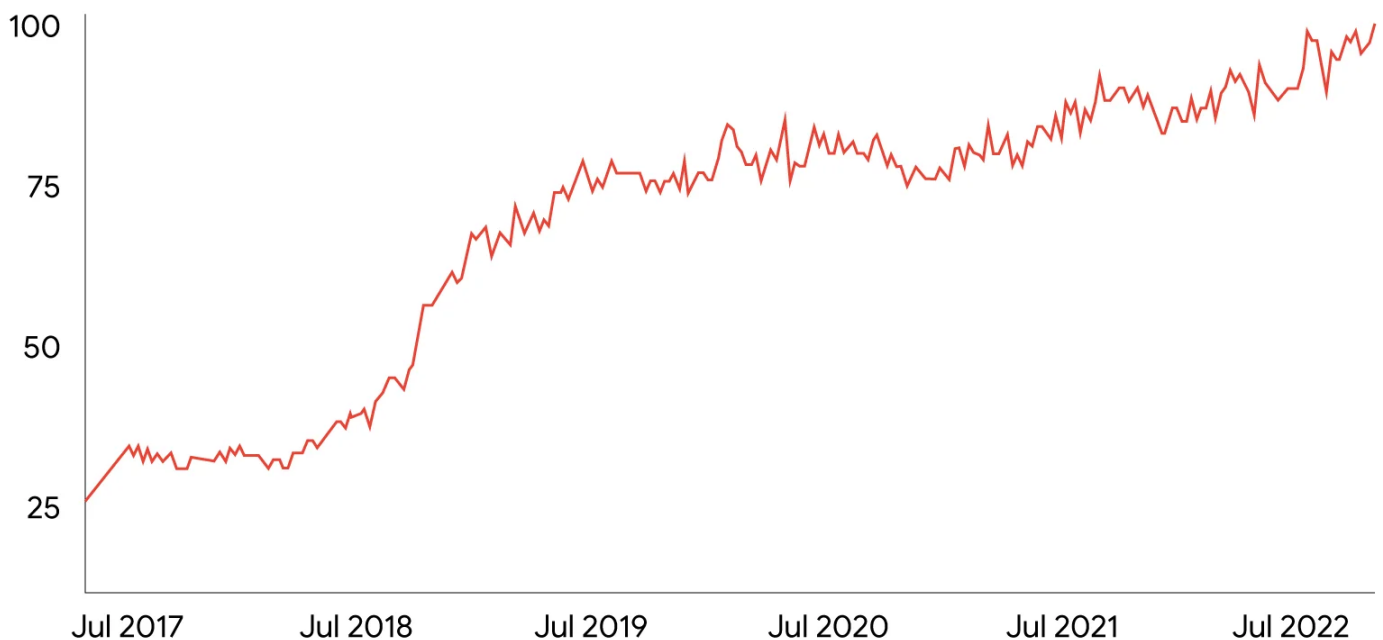


ASMR videos continue to hit the spot, figuratively and literally

ASMR is short for autonomous sensory meridian response. When we talk about ASMR videos, we're talking about soothing, often sedative videos that typically include placid sights and sounds. This content often features people whispering (or making soft sounds), which can help listeners relax and give them a gentle tingling sensation across their scalp and body.

While this type of "brain massage" may be seen as obscure by some, the numbers tell a different story. In 2021 alone, there were more than 65 billion views of videos related to ASMR on YouTube.³

The rise in worldwide search interest for "ASMR" on YouTube



Think with Google

Source: Google Data, Global, Search interest for "ASMR" on YouTube. July 2017–July 2022.



sounds with artefacts from their collection.



Revisiting favourites, even to watch them go about their everyday lives

Our latest research has shown growing interest amongst Gen Z for nostalgia watching to get the ultimate comfort boost. They will revisit older videos and tune into their favourite channels, even if the creators are doing something mundane.

Sixty-nine percent of Gen Z say they often find themselves returning to creators or content that feels comforting to them.⁴ And 82% of Gen Z have used YouTube to watch content to feel nostalgic.⁵ Think of it like the YouTube equivalent of rewatching a favourite movie or TV show when you're feeling unwell.

Gen Z even (re)watches their favourite creators doing ordinary things for a long period of time. This means they tune into long-form vlogs, featuring a creator cleaning, reading, gardening, cooking, or drawing — often set to calming music.



What Gen Z viewing habits mean for marketers

The Gen Z cohort has grown up in the midst of an ongoing pandemic and a [climate emergency](#). These individuals are all too familiar with tension and anxiety.

This research gives us insights into a young generation that [copes with stress](#) by turning to soothing online videos. They see YouTube as a [safe space](#) where they can press “play” and relax.

Marketers need to be sensitive to this emerging reality, and aware of how Gen Z has formed new habits to cope.

Viewers will always look for relevant content that adds value to their lives. Now is the time to incorporate these nuanced insights into your campaigns to connect with Gen Z on a deeper level.

Be present where they are, for example by partnering with a YouTube creator who is known for creating long-form, soothing videos. Or rethink your creative plans for an upcoming campaign.

When you look to build connections with your young customers, ensure they feel safe and secure.

In the past, young generations were typically associated with loud music, risk-taking, and short attention spans. This research challenges those stereotypes and shows us that Gen Z are simply