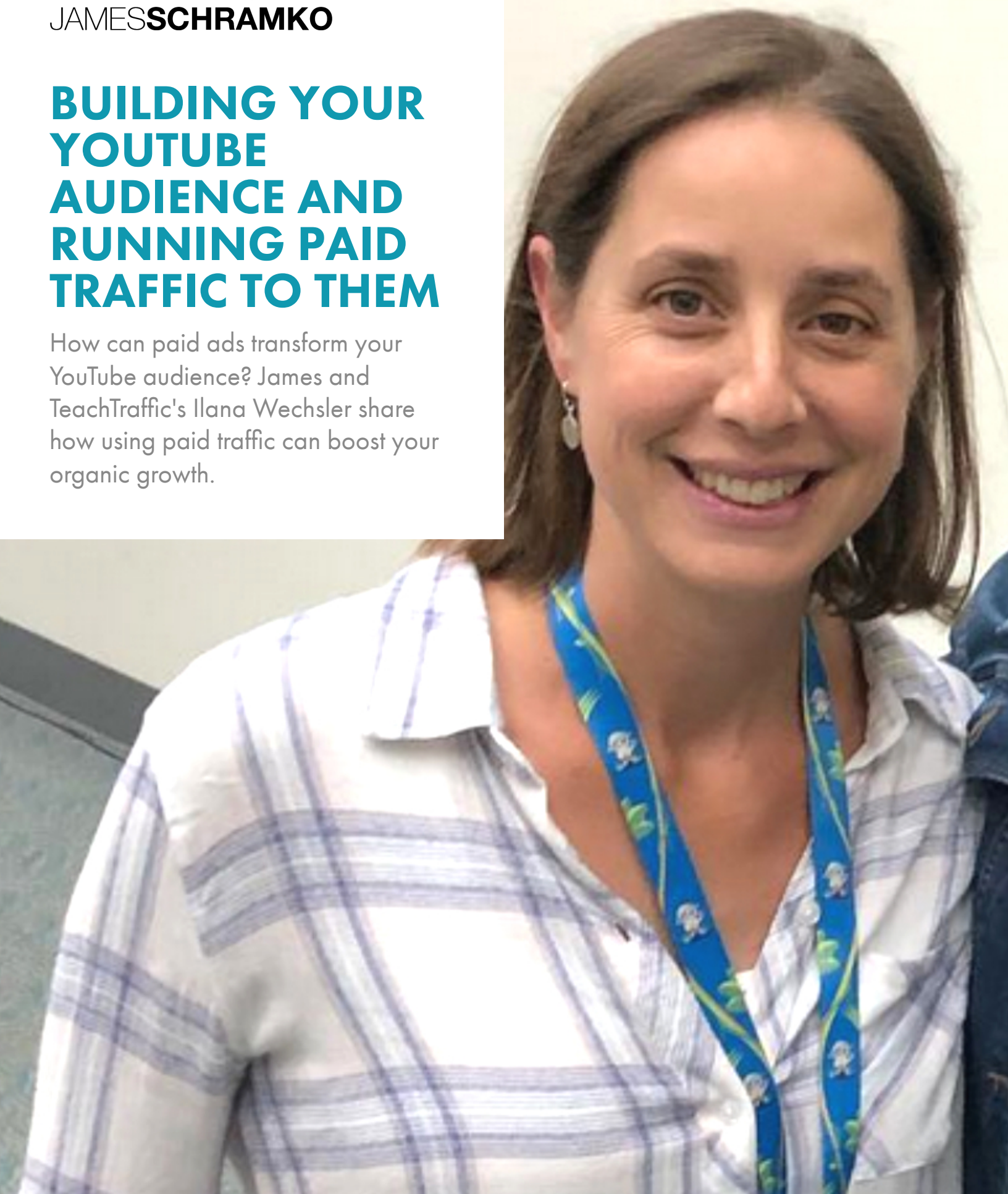


JAMES **SCHRAMKO**

BUILDING YOUR YOUTUBE AUDIENCE AND RUNNING PAID TRAFFIC TO THEM

How can paid ads transform your YouTube audience? James and TeachTraffic's Ilana Wechsler share how using paid traffic can boost your organic growth.





Ilana Wechsler

James: James Schramko here, welcome to episode 1054. Today, we have [Ilana Wechsler](#) from [TeachTraffic.com](#). Hello, Ilana.

Ilana: Hi, James, how are you going?

James: Better now. I've been doing a lot of organization around my business. And I've seen a lot of shifts in my client's businesses and my partner's businesses. Of course, we've had previous guests on, like [Charley, talking about YouTube being important](#). I wanted to bring you on and have a similar conversation, but with a really interesting perspective.

And that is, from your experience of what's been going on with YouTube, how to build an audience on it. From your perspective, the way that you research, I think, will be unique being a former data analyst, and the fact that you're a traffic educator. So your job now is to look over the shoulders of people who are running campaigns, building up traffic to their websites to figure out, where should they be getting traffic? How should they be getting traffic? What do they do with that traffic?

Where you've always been strong is that [traffic puzzle](#), like if you can get traffic somewhere, there's a really good chance you can use that information to get traffic somewhere else. That's what we're highlighting in this episode. So why don't we start with your experience with switching on to the idea that YouTube is important?

Realizing YouTube is important

Ilana: Yeah. I think your listeners should know I'm talking about YouTube organic today, but specifically, combining YouTube organic progress with ads, you know? Because so many people ask me, you know, Ilana, what ads should I run? Or they think that ads is, like, the only piece of the puzzle, right? Or it's the only piece of the pie. The truth is it's an important piece. But there's a whole other traffic component, and an organic component, with combined with ads, it's like one plus one equals three, really, when you combine organic with paid.

James: I'm going to share, actually, a plus five, because I think today, we're going to talk about organic, paid, and referral, and authority type opportunities that come, and I'll tell you why that is, I'll sort of share that first, and then back to your story. Today, I got contacted by someone who is a surfboard shaper, a local manufacturer of surfboards, and he sent me pictures of something he's been building, and he wanted to share it with me, he wanted to actually send it over to me, drop it off for me to try and to share my experience about trying this equipment.

So that came about from a YouTube video that I posted. And some of the socials that have been shared of local surf manufacturers on my surf brand. So what I've noticed off a tiny, tiny channel, and we're talking about just a few weeks ago, and he had 84 subscribers, gone from that to having people sending stuff.

So I'm now a surf influencer, [laughs] which is kind of hilarious, right? But it's a fact. The fact is, I think we can go beyond just organic audience building and paid traffic on top. I think this actually generates the next level of authority and opportunity. So with that in mind, let's go back to what happened to you in the beginning with YouTube.

Ilana: Yeah, it's interesting. Like, I've had my channel for a really long time. I looked in my analytics, I think it was 2016, I created it, but I did nothing with it, like most people, sort of felt like a bit of a daunting channel, you know, process, and I thought, I'm not really sure about it. And then I actually went to speak at a conference in Bali, like pre-COVID, forever ago, and I met this guy there who was a fellow speaker, who has a pretty big YouTube channel, and he's also an educator.

His name's Julian from MeasureSchool, you might have heard of him. He's like a real Analytics, Google Tag Manager, kind of guy. Great guy, lovely guy, really super, super smart. Anyway, we kind of got chatting and hit it off. And he suggested I create some content for his channel. And I'm like, Sure, I'd love to. Anyway, so I created a couple of videos for him. I think in the end, in total, it was maybe like five or 10 videos.

But the response I got from these videos was insane. And I thought, wow, like, this is obviously what it's like to have a big channel, and he's got, you know, I think over 100,000 subscribers. So I was astounded, actually, at the response, not only within my videos, but I generated a huge amount of subscribers to my own channel. Like you, I probably had, like, 84 at the time.

But even from my business point of view, and much like my experience with podcasting, where, you know, I give away the farm, I was giving away the farm on YouTube. And also, people feel like they know me. So it's a great rapport builder, especially when you're just your true and authentic self, it really comes across in videos.

So that really opened my eyes to the power of what YouTube can be. And that's when I really thought, hang on a minute, this is something I really got to build myself. And just like the saying, you know, best time to plant a tree was yesterday, the second-best time is today, or I might be butchering that saying.

James: Well, I think it was 10 years ago or something like that.

Ilana: Or something like that, you know, whatever it is. The point is, it's like, I thought I missed the opportunity. But no, let's just do it now, you know, there's no time like the present. So that's when I really, really started focusing on it.

James: I paid attention to that. And you also referred me to Primal Video, a channel you're watching, and a lovely local guy, Justin Brown, who I subsequently met through another friend of mine, Michael Maidens, and we went and had lunch at a cafe. And I went to his studio, and he showed me his equipment, and his process, and his channel, and how it works, and his membership, and everything.

It was such a great opportunity, like, I'm blessed to be in a position where we can have peers like that, who openly share. And he really switched me on to that idea that it doesn't matter how many subscribers you have. YouTube wants to promote the content if you have the right keyword research. Almost everything he's doing is keyword-researched.

And he also told me that even subtle changes, trimming one or two words from a video, can dramatically change the watch rate, etc. So he's very sensitive to that, because he's amassed a lot of volume and data. Now, the other side of it, I was talking to another friend who was in the opposite end of the corner, he's more of a storyteller, emotional, passionate guy who doesn't care about the pew, pew, pew type videos and the fancy stuff or basically everything that's over-engineered starts to become inauthentic in his mind.

So I was trying to combine these things. And I came up with deciding, you know what, I'm going to try and make a couple of story-based videos for my [surf channel](#). And it started with actually just driving the car to pick up a board and documenting it, like over-the-shoulder thing. And that went really well. And then we upgraded the process to where I actually had a filmer, my wife, which was really handy.

And the next one we did that was storyboarded and, you know, thumbnail-vetted before we even started and concept-approved, went so well, that I think we had 4000 views really quickly. And considering I only had 84 subscribers, it's like, okay, I totally get this idea that the platform wants to promote good content. And for me, it was like, okay, I've had a [YouTube channel](#) way longer than you even, right? Both very early days.

I remember [Ed Dale](#) talking about YouTube, probably in 2008, or something like that. And, you know, pretty soon after they started. And I've never really got traction, because I wasn't making great content. And I always thought, it's basically, you have to do all or nothing. But now I've realized that if you can just do some things well, you can get a great audience. So I'm interested in that.

The gains that are possible

So you basically experienced it from the guest perspective and then started making your own. You were telling me a story the other day about a really micro video that you made to a tiny little audience that generated you a big sale. In fact, it would be, I won't say exact numbers, but it's thousands per month in revenue for you from one small video. Is that something you think other people could replicate?

Ilana: Absolutely. Honestly, I'm blown away. And I'm like you, James, I have a small channel. I mean, I've got more than 84 subscribers, I think the latest count is about 4000. But by YouTube's standards, that's negligible, you know, that's absolutely nothing. And yes, even despite that tiny subscriber amount, I do generate views, also small by YouTube's standards, but they're hyper, hyper relevant. They're hyper, hyper targeted.

The videos are straight to the point, and they talk exactly to the person's pain point and the information that they're trying to discover. And therefore, those little videos have a compound effect, because I've got lots of those little videos really, really add up to an amazing effect, businesswise.

So one might think, why would I do a video on such a micro niche topic that you think, who's going to be bothering watching something like this? Odds are, those type of videos are going to be really easy to rank for, because other people aren't going to bother wanting to create videos like that, because it doesn't have the massive amount of traffic volume to it.

But that's exactly the point why I do want to, because the small people that do find hyper-relevant content on that topic will likely listen to my call to action at the end of the video. So yeah, I'm kind of creating niche-specific videos, be it plumbers, chiropractors, you know, for Google ads, and so those people who are typing that type of stuff in then find exactly that content relative to their market and their industry, and then go, Wow, Ilana's awesome. What else has she got? Let's get in contact with her.

James: Yeah, like anecdotally, I was on a coaching call in the last week. One of my clients is in the e-commerce business, he was telling me that his cost per lead has increased a little bit above where he needs it to be, to be really happy and comfortable and profitable. And then he told me that he's spending, like \$30,000 or \$50,000 a month in ads. And he said, you know, I'm not sure what to do. And I said, Well, is someone running your ads? He said, Yes. And they're doing a good job, but I'm not 100% sure.

And I said, Well, you know, it would be a really good idea for you to join [TeachTraffic.com](https://teachtraffic.com). Because for, I don't know what it costs, a few \$100 a month, or even 1000 or two a month, depending on what level, you can have someone who is a data analyst, cross traffic specialist, looking at your campaign to say, Oh, well, this box, you should untick this box, or you should create a new audience segment here, or replicate that campaign, or you should consolidate these, or this one here is where all the budget's going, but it's not generating you any sales.

They'll be the first to say whether you have your conversion tracking set up properly, whether you've got opportunities to cross-pollinate a different advertising medium, and so you will get a huge return on investment. Basically, if you could just dial that cost per lead down a few dollars, it would cover itself instantly.

Ilana: Especially spending at that level. Yeah, I like to think of myself as like the second-opinion doctor.

James: Exactly. It's like, the most important feature that I offer is my sounding board, just someone to chat to who actually gets it. And you know, a fellow alien, so to speak, in the world of humans. But if I can send that person to a video that you've made for an e-commerce person who spends \$30,000 a month whose lead cost is a little bit too high, then that is actually the conversion piece that is going to make such a difference.

Because it's, you know, I can say it, but then if they can see it, and get that demonstration, if you like, it reminds me of a test drive in a car. Someone can actually test drive you on YouTube, and see what you're all about. And you're actually doing quite technical, over-the-shoulder videos in some cases, right?

Ilana: Yeah, I am. But I mean, that's my market, right? Like, my ideal customer is somebody who wants to roll up their sleeves and learn how to create campaigns themselves so that they don't need an agency. So that's not everybody's market. That's just mine. So I create videos that are helpful, and help them achieve a certain goal. And they do.

So then they think, great, you know, what else can I learn from Ilana that I'm not otherwise implementing? But yeah, so but I would say for most people, other people's channels, it doesn't have to be technical content. It's just that's the nature of my audience. And I guess, you know, the help that I provide people.

James: And I think you can lean into different types of content even in different channels. So in the surfing market, there's a bunch of channels that do footage of people surfing, and then there's more technical stuff, like shapers, just filming them shaping a board in the shaping bay with no surfing, or a latest fin release with someone talking about the fin with no surfing in it.

I don't have a lot of surfing footage of me, and I'm not a great surfer so I tend to lean more towards me just discussing equipment, but that is a big part of the niche. And the thing I'm offering is showing them access, I've got access to equipment they haven't tried. So I'm like their next best chance of understanding what it might do before they make that purchase. So that's worked well.

A starting point for building an audience

I know you've identified, as I have, like you and I have been talking a lot about YouTube. Our friend, [Zac Mason](#), has also been stirring us up a bit, looking into market research, encouraging us for thumbnails and split testing and everything. And it's forced me to go back to the drawing board and completely redesign my whole content map of which I've released a playbook inside my membership.

And I'm basing it on the results I've been getting in the sporting channel and the business channel, because they're so different that anything that works in both of those, I think, is a pattern. And when we combine our knowledge, we've come up with some good stuff. But you've independently come up with your own five steps that you're breaking down as a course, I believe, in TeachTraffic.com. And it'll be out sometime soon.

But I'd love it if you can give us an overview of how you look at it as someone who understands data, who's quite technically minded, and can easily see inputs to outputs probably in more clarity than most people. Because I think some people are just sort of bumbling around trying stuff out. If someone didn't want to just try stuff out, if they wanted some train tracks to roll down, what would be your prescription for the process to start tapping into building a YouTube audience and then doing something useful with it?

Ilana: Yeah. Okay. Being a longtime student of yours, James, your words always resonate in my ears, start with the end in mind. Okay, so applying that to this particular scenario, what my goal from this, my endpoint, is to have a beautiful audience of people in my market who want to learn Google ads, right? That is my wish list.

So that I can use that audience to leverage with paid search ads. Because Google owns YouTube, you can connect your YouTube channel to your Google Ad Account. And I build a list. So currently, my list is about, I think it's 60,000 people of anyone who's watched any video on my channel, and then I can advertise to only those people.

So I don't even engage with people who might not really be my target customer. The truth is, my videos to anyone who does not want to learn Google ads would be incredibly boring, right? So anyone who watches my videos, I know, is interested in learning Google ads. It's the perfect litmus test for them.

James: I guess you're just describing a remarketing list.

Ilana: Exactly, an engagement remarketing list.

James: This is the equivalent of watching an MMA fight and someone doing like a one-punch knockout in the first three seconds. You've just floored us. So we can now reach people who have watched our video and only those people, that's what you're saying.

Ilana: Correct. Yes, so you can't do that with banners on the Display Network. But you can do that with Google Search. So as I said, the end goal is to build an audience of my ideal potential customers to then create Google Search campaigns to only those people.

Now your listeners might be thinking, well, I'm kind of doing that on Instagram, right? Like, I'm kind of building my audience on Instagram, creating a Facebook engagement audience, and then showing them ads on Facebook. Right? I would say to those people, the difference here is the intent factor on YouTube. Building an audience on Instagram, you know, people are in, you know, they're looking for entertainment. Right?

James: That's interruption marketing, isn't it?

Ilana: Exactly.

James: It's like the display network over on?

Ilana: That's right. So you know, they're not actively in the mode, sleeves rolled up, ready to learn and implement, because they're scrolling through their newsfeed. And yes, your video was engaging somewhat, they've watched it. But that doesn't really mean they're ready to take action now. There's no intent there, as opposed to on YouTube.

They've gone to YouTube, they've watched a nine-minute video of me of how to set up button click conversion tracking in Google ads, incredibly boring if you don't want to do it. But if you do, it's incredibly helpful. And therefore, they are my target audience. So that's the end goal.

James: So to put that in perspective, we imagine someone's sitting there at their desk, they've looked at their to-do list and it says, set up AdWords campaign, or something like that. And so they go and click on their Pomodoro timer, and then they open up, and they start searching YouTube for how to such and such, you know, Google AdWords, versus setting their Pomodoro timer and then starting scrolling on Instagram. That's very different intent, isn't it?



Ilana: It's like someone wants it to be - and I really don't remember who it was because I would love to credit them - that the intent is all about moments, right? The moment somebody's in, so the moment somebody's in - when they're on Instagram is they're either avoiding doing a task they've got to do, or they're waiting in line for their coffee.

So the moment is like they're looking for entertainment, versus on YouTube for a lot of the content that's on YouTube. They're either in research mode, maybe, you know, researching twin fins versus single fins, in the case of your channel, James, or they're looking to learn how to do something, in the case of my content, they're stuck, and they need to learn.

Or there is a whole education component, absolutely. The people who get distracted and watch cat videos and all that kind of stuff. But if anyone watches one of my videos, I know that they want to learn Google ads, because you just, (A) wouldn't find it, and (B) wouldn't watch past five seconds. It's not something that's entertaining.



James: So if intent is important, I imagine that's made its way fairly high up your list of things that you need to take into account. I know it's on mine, like, we talked about this at some point, I mapped out my whole new playbook here. And as per, like you said, because I've said it, the first thing I have here, what's the point? The result that I want, and the result the customer wants. That is step one. If I don't start with that, then everything else, you know, I could be making content that might be fun to make, but it doesn't necessarily result in anything that would be useful.

Ilana: That's right.

James: So step one?

Ilana's five-step process

Ilana: So yeah, so as I said, so step one is that's why we're going to try and build our views on our channel to build that audience that we can then retarget them with Google search. Okay, so then the question is, how do you build, what's the process to build the right audience on YouTube? And I do have a five-step process.

1 - Picking your niche

The first is, obviously, which should be easy for most people, is to pick your niche. That's pretty easy. Most people know what niche they're in. I'm in the paid traffic training niche, you're in the surf niche. And that's pretty self-explanatory.

James: It seems you're also in the organic traffic starting to happen now. Is that because organic gives you a stepping stone for your paid?

Ilana: Absolutely. And really, I'm just becoming more and more about the big picture of traffic, because it's a piece of the pie, the paid is not the entire pie.

James: You wouldn't have considered yourself an organic marketer, but you're actually pretty good at it. You're also good at writing emails, by the way, which I think is an important conversion piece. But as you're experiencing the results, and leaning into it, it makes sense to share what you've found.

Because even when you and I, like we can be having the same conversations and trying the same things. Like, we synchronize every couple of weeks, and we're in the same discussion group, working on these YouTube campaigns, but you bring this research-backed, technical understanding of it that's so brilliant.

So you've got your niche, your niche might be, you're a traffic specialist, for sure, you've absolutely been in the conversion and data analyzing side of it. And now you're leaning into the organic setup of it. But I guess understanding having good quality organic beats having a lot of organic. We're on the same page there. We've already discussed examples where you had micro videos. Same thing for me. I can have a couple of videos with a tiny little subscriber base, and then people start sending stuff. For me, that's proof in the pudding. So you've got your niche dialed.

Ilana: I do want to preface this by saying I am not a YouTube SEO expert by any means. I'm just sharing my process that has worked incredibly well for me that I know is working for others, because as you say, we're in the same discussion group. But yeah, full disclosure. I'm definitely not claiming to be an expert. I'm just sharing my process, which I know works for me.

James: Well, some of the people we're in the group with have had hundreds of thousands of views and some actually had millions of views. So some of the luck surface exposure we're having is being guided by people who do know these things, and will be fairly quick to point out. I love little subtleties, like having a look at it, you know, what time of the year is our market growing or not?

Ilana: It's today's message, wasn't it?

James: It was today's message. You know, it's such a subtle one, but it's something I wouldn't have thought to look at. But it makes sense because in the market that I've been practicing on, the northern hemisphere goes through summer during the peak time of that market. So it's pretty interesting to me to see that. So step two?

2 - Research

Ilana: Step two is research, which is very, very important, and this is going to give you the real content direction that you're going to go. So I'm a big fan of researching properly. And I kind of have a whole process.

Firstly, study your competitors. Know who you're up against. Have a look at their channel, have a look how many subscribers they have - but as we both mentioned, subscribers is not overly important - have a look at their videos to see, you know, across the board, how many views are they each getting, generally? Do they have any specific videos that have done, like, ridiculously well versus others? Are there any what's called, like, breakout videos?

So you've got to really understand your competitors. The next is I like to do a bit of a content brainstorm process where - and I'm sort of in the process of building this out for my course - but essentially, you've got to think about the various components of your market. So what does your market want to achieve?

So like, if you could wave a magic wand for your ideal customer, what does that look like? So in my industry it would be to get paid ads profitable, to really master Google ads, to generate more leads and more sales online and all that kind of stuff, right? Think about what they want to learn. What keeps them up at night? What are they trying to do? What are their pain points and challenges?

So for my market, it's people who are spending a whole bunch of money and not generating any leads and wasting ad spend. That's their real pain points. And then think about, if you were your target customer, and you went to YouTube, what would you be typing in, you know, if you were that target audience?

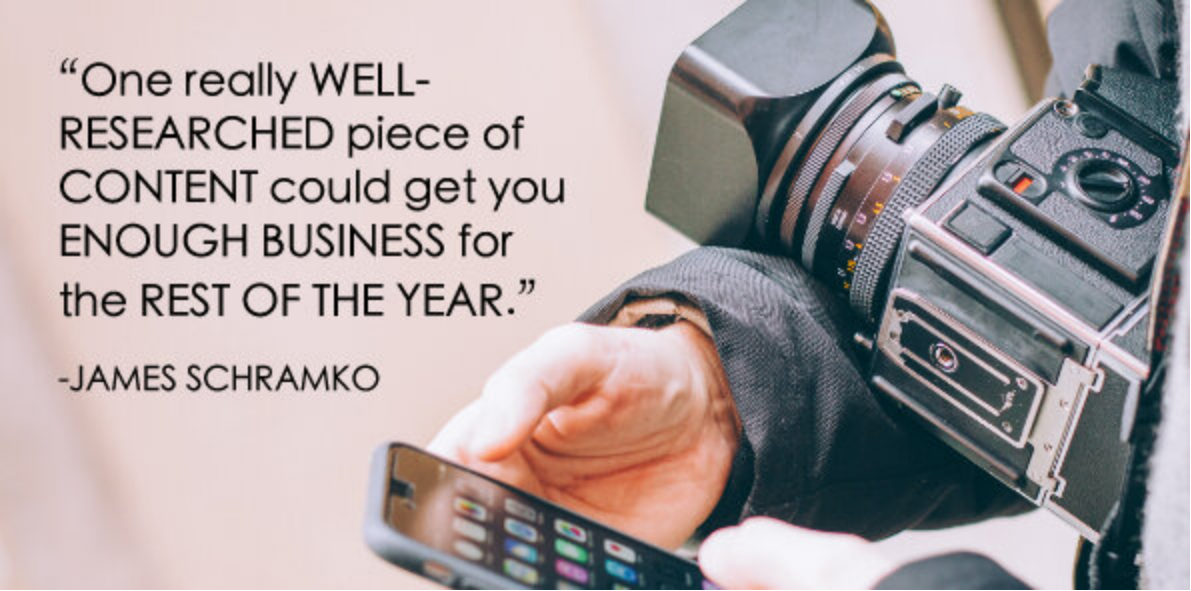
And I really like to think of the sub topics in your niche. So for my niche in Google ads, it would be the Google Search Network, [Display Network](#), [YouTube ads](#), [Gmail ads](#), [Performance Max](#), different bid strategies, you know, one little video of mine is like the gift that keeps on giving, which is you know, how to get your ads in Google Maps, you know, like a tiny little micro sub niche within a sub niche of the sub niche of Google ads.

But it ranks on the first page of Google for that inorganic, like google.com, that my video ranks for that. So really spend, I'd say like a good hour, and like, once you get on a roll, you kind of get on a roll with it, don't sort of chop and change from it, and just do a brain dump of your industry. So that would be my advice there.

James: I'd say most people don't do that step.

Ilana: Yeah. It's most critical.

James: And I was most people [laughs]. I was like, endlessly pumping out content, you know, just flying by the seat of my pants. It was only a year or two ago, I started actually mapping out podcast content before recording the podcast. Usually, it was just capturing stuff and then publishing, but it doesn't cut it.

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a smartphone, with a professional camera lens and body visible in the background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“One really WELL-RESEARCHED piece of CONTENT could get you ENOUGH BUSINESS for the REST OF THE YEAR.”

-JAMES SCHRAMKO

You know, in 2024, you have to be intentional. You know, back to that intent word, everything you do has to be intentional. I do believe you can get much better results with way less stuff. I'm all about [work less, make more](#). One really well-researched piece of content could get you enough business for the rest of the year. I can't emphasize that enough.

I'm more focused at the moment, our run rate with the team is we do one amazing piece of research content. And we work that all the way through the process. And then we start on the next one, it's not two a week, or one a day, or whatever, because that ends up compromising something, and it's usually the research.

Ilana: Going back to what we started with, thinking the end in mind, the end goal is to have lots of little videos, which rank in YouTube search. Okay, so that's why research is important, because you're going to get these content ideas, and then you're going to run it through the next step of the research phase, which is using some software tools to actually find the search volume of these keywords.

And it's this balance between enough search volume to justify making the video but not too much volume that it's going to be ridiculously competitive to rank for, you know? And it's sort of that sweet spot search volume range, I have found, which, as I said, you know, once you add up all those kinds of videos, you've got to experience the compounding effect of all these little videos that rank, which aren't also impossible to rank for.

You just got to have them the right titles, the right tags and descriptions, and then you know, and have a good video so that you have good clickthrough rate and audience retention. And then YouTube will bump up the rankings of that video.

James: And at this point, we should clarify, we're pretty much talking about longer-form content, better-produced, longer-form content rather than viral shorts, because that's the other end of the spectrum, right? Where you're not so interested in the keywords for those, you're interested in something being shared because it's hilarious or funny or entertaining or clever. But not everyone has got the creativity to be able to do that.

And also, I would argue, and I've coached some people, I have a guy that I talk to who's got almost a million followers on a short social media platform, but he doesn't generate much income from that, because it doesn't translate into intent. So we're talking about longer-form, better content. And by longer form, like I'm having the most success between seven and 17 minutes, that sort of time zone's working well for the type of content that I'm doing.

Ilana: It's interesting because my videos are around three to four minutes.

James: Yeah, but they're not one minute or sub one minute, right?

Ilana: No, they're not.

James: So I mean, I think three minutes, you know, puts it into the next category now.

Ilana: Yeah, obviously, it's depending on what I'm teaching is, will depend on how long the video is. But I would test a mix of different length of videos, but most people think, Oh, my God, YouTube's so daunting, I've got to create 25 minute videos. I'd say, Absolutely not. Some of my best videos are sub five minutes.

James: I think that's cool. The guy that's really going well with shorts, he always tries to limit his content to 25 seconds.

Ilana: Wow. That's short.

James: And he's researched a lot. And he publishes every day. And he's got a massive following. And he said, If you don't hold attention every two to three seconds in a short, they're gone. And 25 seconds is his kind of uncomfortable limit for a short. So yeah, when you're talking three minutes, five minutes, that definitely goes into the next category of content.

Ilana: Yep. Yep. Cool. All righty. So as I said, that's the research phase where you do the content brainstorm. And then you run those subtopics and all those, you know, that you find in the content brainstorm, through the research tools to find the actual search volume. And then you also, when you put those keywords in the YouTube search bar, it will auto populate the suggestions, I'm sure you've seen that yourself.

So when you use these tools, the suggestions will also show their search volume. So I've found some real nugget keywords just from auto suggest, and then the research tools showing me the search volumes of those auto suggest terms. And so, then I do a Google search for each of those terms, look at what is showing up in the search results page on YouTube, and I look for breakout videos on there.

So videos of a channel where the number of views is greater than the number of their subscribers. So I can say, Okay, these guys have had a breakout video. This is a topic that is kind of worth pursuing. And we're good to go.

James: Is that because, like what happened to me with my surf video, 4000 views from 84 subscribers? I noticed when I look at the analytics that YouTube is showing that video to people after they watch someone else's video, they've shown it on the homepage of YouTube, like still blows my mind, for people who are watching some other kind of content.

Ilana: Yeah, I don't really understand the theory of it. I just know that it works.

James: And watching the graph, it seems like when they promote it and it gets taken, it's like a self-fulfilling prophecy. They keep promoting it, and it kept having a life, and it's actually still climbing now where they keep promoting it. So they're rewarding the content based on however long people watch, or if they're giving a thumbs up or commenting.

I'm not sure what the algorithm is. I'm not an expert in it. But I do know that when I actually researched, and I got help from Zac Mason with this for sure, when we zoomed in on a topic that seems to have gone well for some others and looked at what thumbnails are working and titles are working, we went close to that, and then of course we [A/B split test](#).

And then the last one, we actually did an A/B and then a C/D, and found out the best thumbnail's the fourth one we put up, but it's by far better than the others. And so, like it just tripped my mind as how important, I finally got it, a thumbnail is like a subject line in an email. It's critical.

3 - Creating a content plan

Ilana: It is, it is, yeah. I'll get to thumbnails in a minute. But once you've done your research, then you come up with your content plan. Now something which had a massive effect on my channel was something that I heard from somebody else, my apologies I can't remember who, but they said to really give your channel a kickstart, which is basically what my channel needed. You need to - drumroll

James: Hang on. I do have that. [drumroll sound]

Ilana: You need to create 100 videos in 100 days. And I just thought, oh my god, how am I going to do that, but challenge accepted. Full disclosure, I didn't get to the 100 days.

James: [laughs] How many days did you get?

Ilana: I got to 63.

James: You're a mom, too, right?

Ilana: I'm a mom of three young children, and running an agency, like that was my limit. However, not even completing the 100 days, I experienced exponential growth. My channel was experiencing linear growth, a straight line, and I thought, I need exponential, you know, like the hockey stick. And that's where things really, really took off.

So I would say plan for that, you know, so bank some videos with the intention of - if you can't possibly do that, I understand not everyone can, maybe you even only do it for 50 days, but it gave my channel a massive, massive boost.

4 - Making the actual videos

Now, we should talk about the actual videos. And this is kind of what I learned when I did that guest video on that big channel, they massively coached me on how to create good content videos.

James: I feel like that's probably more important even than the volume. Because you know, my original channel, I have 6000 subscribers over, like 14 years or something long term. But the biggest video I've ever had probably only had 50,000 or 60,000 views, which was like the [Ikigai](#) one. And here's the irony, that one video was one that the team researched the concept. And then I just read. And I think it's just a static picture from memory.


So it was like the most researched of any of the videos we did. And it wasn't by me. But in my surf channel, what I have seen is a huge breakout with just one video every 10 days or so. So it's like I didn't need to do 100 videos, I need to do like three videos, to wake up that channel, and to make it start performing. So I reckon this thing you're about to share with us is probably the most important feature after the research.

Ilana: Yup. Okay. So you have an introduction, you basically have the three kind of core components of a video are an introduction, the body of the content, and then your kind of outro, or conclusion or call to action, kind of think of those three components. Your introduction, they were ruthless with this, cannot be more than 30 seconds. If I was 31 seconds, I'd have to redo it. They were absolutely ruthless. Okay, that's obviously important. So can't be more than 30 seconds.

And I have to, in the first three seconds, say exactly what my video is going to be about. I don't start with introducing myself or anything like that. So let's pretend it's, you know, how to show ads in Google Maps. I will start by saying how to show your Google ads in Google Maps. So they know exactly what they're going to learn.

I would also have a quick mention to like and subscribe. And let's say you're doing a video on, you know, the five Google Ad optimizations every account must do, I would say, Make sure you stay through to the end of the video, because I also throw in a bonus tip as well.

James: So you open up an open loop to the end.



"You need GOOD
AUDIENCE RETENTION.
You need to get people
STAYING THROUGH to
the END of the VIDEO."

- ILANA WECHSLER

JAMES SCHRAMKO

Ilana: Correct. Because you need good audience retention. You need to get people staying through to the end of the video. So you need to have some kind of, as you said, open loop or hook, to get people to stay through to the end of the video. And that's also why, you know, if you've got like five steps or 10 steps type videos work really well, because people want to know what each of those is.

James: They can't finish at two or three.

Ilana: They can't finish at two, exactly.

James: It's like in my [fin video](#). I said, Later on in the video, I will share with you my favorite fin from all that. So like we're going through all the different ones and then they don't know which one of those is my favorite. And I learned from doing some short video training, as soon as you deliver that payoff, shoop, they're gone. Like, even if you have an outro, they're gone before that even hits the second beat. They're just shoop, as soon as they get the payoff.

Ilana: That's exactly right. So you have to put that at the end, but you've got to tell them it's coming so that they hang around for it. Then you've got the content part of your video, obviously, that's pretty self-explanatory. Just don't waffle. Just get straight to the point, show people exactly what they want. They're there to learn because as you say, they will leave straightaway if they feel like you're kind of dragging your feet with the content, or you know, what do they say?

James: That's what Justin said, you know, trimming words made a huge difference to the retention, and that we have to go back through the content and look for any dead spots and remove them, or they will sink the video.

Ilana: Exactly. And then the last part of the video is a really, really quick call to action. Once again, no more, even I'd say, than 15 seconds at most. And once again, reiterate like and subscribe or whatever is also the call to action to go to my website, TeachTraffic.com, or whatever would be the call to action.

So one type of video that I've done is I've got a lead magnet on my website, which is called the Google Ad Gotcha Guide, right. And I would grab one of those Google gotchas, be it a sneaky setting to disable the display network when you're running a search campaign, whatever. So I would strip that one out. And I would explain it, and I'd say, These are just one of the type of Google gotchas that are around. I've got this free guide you can download, and I'd show them what it is. So I kind of like give them away one...

James: The power of demonstration.

Ilana: Exactly, the power of demonstration. Tell them there's 13 others to also download. So there's a call to action there. And that is very effective as well.

5 - Titles, descriptions and thumbnails

Also, good titles and descriptions. And you and I, James, know how important this is. The titles need to explain to really hook them. But the thumbnail is the scroll stopper.

It's as you say, it's that subject line in the email. If they don't stop, they whiz past your video, then they're not going to even click on the video and know how amazing your content is. So we are both a big fan of that software tool. What's it called, thumbnailtest.com or something like that?

James: Yeah, something like that. I like that, I'm casual with it.

Ilana: Thumbnailtest.com, yeah, I just checked.

James: Did you check? Yeah. [laughs]

Ilana: I just checked. And you know, it's really, really indicative that when you split test two different thumbnails, the metric that the software produces determines which one is your winner, is the calculation of clickthrough rate times average view duration, which is the retention. So that's why it's so important, from YouTube's point of view, to get people to click on your video, and then actually watch your video.

James: And the thing that makes that tool so much better than some of the other tools is it's rotating hourly, instead of 24 hourly. You don't want to go a whole day sinking your teeth into a crappy thumbnail, you want to know pretty quickly that something's off the rails, depending on the volume that you're getting.

Ilana: That's right. And then, yeah, so that's basically the process.

Next: three different search campaigns

And then once you create your beautiful audience of exactly who is your target customer, my recommendation is to do three different types of search campaigns.

1 - Brand campaign

In Google ads, the first is a brand campaign, because you will generate brand traffic from it. And then the purpose of that is to send them to a page that you have control over where you send that traffic to.

James: So in my case, is that someone searching for my name, the campaign that you set up for me?

Ilana: For [BlinkSurf](#)?

James: Yeah, for that one, for sure.

Ilana: And the goal would be, so you might say, Well, why would I do a brand campaign? I'm probably showing up organically for that.

James: Well, I think other people would be trying to show up for my brand. So I'd want to block them at least.

Ilana: Number one. And number two, you might want to send them straight to a lead magnet to get them on your email list. So you can control where you send that traffic to is the other main reason why.

2 - Top of funnel retargeting search campaign

The second type of campaign you want to create on search is what's called like a top of funnel retargeting search campaign. So in my market, I would never dream of bidding on the single keyword just Google ads, right? Because that could be anyone. But if I know that they're interested in learning Google ads, I might do that just for them.

James: You know, in 2006, I was bidding on the word Mercedes-Benz.

Ilana: Nice.

James: Those days are gone.

Ilana: That would have cost a fraction to what it costs now.

James: Yeah. I went to some SEO, or some internet conference in Sydney, and they gave away some Google AdWords vouchers. And I started running ads for the dealership I was working at. This was back in the olden days.

Ilana: When it was like two cents a click or something.

James: Oh, it's like two or \$3 or something, I'd have to look it up, but it was a bit too broad. But once I started concatenating, then things got serious, you know? I don't know many people back in 2006. They would run an ad for Mercedes-Benz AMG C-43. And then it would land on a C-43 picture with a book a test drive of a C-43 opt-in form, like it was pretty advanced.

Ilana: That would have been very advanced.

James: We were just smashing it. Yeah. It was like the land of the blind. We were the one-eyed giant.

Ilana: Amazing. They were the good old days, huh?

James: Yeah.

3 - Dynamic search campaign

Ilana: [laughs] And the third type of campaign I suggest you run is what's called the dynamic search campaign, where you don't decide what keywords to bid on, Google is deciding what keywords to bid on based on the content on your website. So you give them your entire website URL, and they decide what to bid on that's a match for the content. So it's a really good way to discover what your target audience is searching for. So that will give you additional keyword ideas, and other ideas that you could use for all sorts of methods.

James: And how do these link to the video audience that we've built? Are these the ones you'd run to that...

Ilana: So we're only doing this for that audience.

Why it's worth getting help

James: Now, what's the difference between me trying to go and figure out how to do that myself versus joining TeachTraffic.com?

Ilana: Well, I will be outlining this entire process of how to do it.

James: So what, am I going to save time, save wasted budget, all that sort of stuff?

Ilana: You would probably just, it would be difficult to work out exactly how to do it yourself without some guidance. Absolutely. Yeah, so the whole YouTube process, connecting your Google ad account to YouTube, creating those audiences. And as I mentioned before, you know, there are many landmines in the Google ad world, knowing how to only show ads to that particular audience, it's quite a little sneaky setting, you've got to know where it's lying as well. So I could absolutely help your listeners to do that.

James: I think that's something I need to do, because I've found a pathway to monetize some of the content that I'm making, and I can steer it that way. We've been also, like, doing a little additional bonus thing. I'll throw this in here as well, just as a little extra value. We take that YouTube video, we transcribe it, and then we take still shots from it, and we make a big meaty blog post off it for our website.

And we're picking up Google SEO traffic and then we can interlink it to all the times we've covered or mentioned other things. So like if we mentioned these fins, and we've already got a post about the fins, we hyperlink it across to that page with the anchor text. So we've been picking up organic traffic, we're picking up organic referrals from people who have watched the video and would like us to make that sort of content for them.

And now, we can turbocharge it with your paid traffic magnification process. So this last step, the ad leverage. The big idea from this episode, which is episode 1054, on JamesSchramko.com, is build an audience that has intent, and then turbocharge that audience by showing three different ad campaigns only to those people. Am I right?

Ilana: Correct. That's exactly right.

James: This is gold. Ilana, every time you come on, you've got such useful ideas. I love what you're doing. We should keep covering topics. If you've listened to this, watched this somewhere, and you have a question or you would like a future topic covered, let us know. But I really think it's been wonderful going on this YouTube journey. In particular, I love seeing how your channel's built. What's your channel on YouTube called?

Ilana: Teach Traffic. So [YouTube.com/teachtraffic](https://www.youtube.com/teachtraffic). And I'd also say to your listeners, you know, a nice little byproduct, which really, I wasn't expecting, is, I've now got my channel to a point where I'm earning revenue just from the ads that are on there. So you know, that's becoming a nice little earner as well, which so to get your channel to that level, you need, I think it's a minimum of 1000 subscribers and 4000 watch hours within a 365 day period. And yeah, but I mean, obviously, that's not the point of it. There are way more leverage points.

James: Well, maybe it is. If one day you go to Instagram or Twitter or X or whatever they call it these days on my website and it's just blank or gone, it just means my ad revenue on the surf channel has reached the point where I just don't want to anymore. Because honestly, that will be a fantastic little, I think that one of the most leveraged ways to make an income as a creator if you are smart enough to do that.

And some of the people we're running with do that. That's their entire existence, just generating millions of views, scraping that Internet income. Now, I would always say, don't be single-source dependent, but if I am generating money that way, it's going to go back into investments that then fuel income, so that's just the extra step I would put into that business model.

Ilana: Absolutely.

James: Thank you, as always, Ilana. I'm stoked, and let's see if [TeachTraffic.com](https://teachtraffic.com) can get a few more people turbocharging their YouTube audiences.

Ilana: Yeah, sure, sounds good. Thanks so much for having me on, James.

James: Always.

A desk setup featuring a large monitor on the left displaying a website with an orange header, a laptop on the right showing code in a dark-themed editor, a black keyboard with yellow function keys, a white Starbucks coffee cup, and a small green succulent in a white pot. The background is a blurred office space with a white chair.

JAMES **SCHRAMKO**

**SHAPE A
WINNING BUSINESS
STRATEGY WITH
JAMES'S GUIDANCE**