

The evolution of influence.

YouTube's new role in building
brands for both audiences:
human and AI.



YouTube's new role in building brands for both audiences.

We've spent the past three years studying which sources AI reaches for when generating a recommendation: across industries, markets and models. Every week we analyse a quarter of a million questions that people ask before they buy, across six model families, and we record video, article and forum post the AI referenced.

That's more than 75 million answers a year and one result keeps repeating, market after market, category after category.

YouTube is the platform AI recommends most.



>1 in 4

AI-generated answers across the categories we track cite YouTube.



~1 in 2

In research-heavy categories such as electronics and household goods.



#1

The only video or social platform present in every category measured.

YouTube is more than an influential platform. It's proof of a more structural change in AI influence. Video is now the most effective medium for humans and AI.

Video can showcase a comparison, a demonstration, a walkthrough and convey real experience of why the brand is the best choice.

Along with these multimodal cues, a video provides a transcript, chapters, and the exact moment that answers the prompt in question.

Your YouTube content and the creators you work with generate context for AI to recommend your brand. Every video is a brief to someone else's model about why it should choose you.

So do you have a dual audience creator strategy?

**DUAL-AUDIENCE
CREATOR STRATEGY**

Plan creator content for the people making the decision & the AI systems helping them make it.

A dual-audience YouTube strategy leverages every video format.

With YouTube as the strategically essential platform for AI influence; every video is now a brief. A brief to a new audience of AI models and agents that act as influencers in their own right.

This new audience finds, watches, and shares video in different ways to your conventional human audience.

Analysing millions of hours of YouTube citations in AI answers demonstrates how you need to combine duration, style, and specificity along the consumer journey.

1 in 4

YouTube citations for product discovery answers were Shorts.

Nail the why.

75%

Of citations for comparison and reviews were long-form.

Show the how.

1 in 7

Citations in AI answers linked to an exact timestamp in your video.

Show them where.

AI audiences reward a diverse mix of YouTube formats that allow you to unpack and explain what makes your brand unique.

The most important finding for your existing creator strategy:
long-form is an ROI multiplier for AI.

A thorough video can contain the full structure of an answer: context, evidence, comparison, verdict and chapters that map to sub-questions. These rich signals build on existing transcript and chapter markers to improve visibility, citation, and sentiment.

**DUAL-AUDIENCE
CREATOR STRATEGY**

Combine diverse formats for dual audiences.
Long-form is your ROI multiplier for AI.

Your new AI audience rewards creators with clarity and passion.

The YouTube creators who can reach human and AI audiences with a single post are a new generation of influencer. They're recognised by both audiences as passionate, committed, and helpful creators and rewarded on subject matter expertise rather than raw subscriber count.

Our analysis of more than 75 million answers a year reveals that the quality of content, rather than quantity of views, is the key signal for AI influence.

100,000 subs



1000 views

Both can be cited, but audience size is a weaker citation signal than **answer fit**.

These **unique creators** deserve a **different brief** to your average influencer campaign.

Ask your agency if they're including these 5x elements into your influencer briefs for optimal AI visibility and influence:

Mirror the question.

Use a title people and machines can recognise as the answer.

Match length to complexity

Sixteen minutes can be right for finance; two minutes can be right for cleaning.

Deliver a verdict

Don't bury the answer behind lifestyle footage or brand preamble.

Evergreen accuracy

A durable asset should emphasise evergreen facts rather than topical discounts or rates

Create findable moments

Chapters and clear transitions help AI locate the useful part.

DUAL-AUDIENCE CREATOR STRATEGY

Every video is now a brief to AI.
Brief your creators to engage both audiences.

Same platform. Three different AI playbooks.

Once your creators recognise their new audience, ensure they understand the category best practices for AI answers. Here’s what we found in Australia:

	FINANCIAL SERVICES	CONSUMER ELECTRONICS	CPG / HOUSEHOLD
LONG-FORM VIDEO share of citations	87%	94%	61%
SHORTS share of citations	13%	6%	39%
EXACT TIMESTAMP share of citations	18%	14%	8%
DOMINANT FORMAT	Head-to-head comparisons + product reviews	“Best of year” buying guides + Top 5 lists	Quick demos, how-tos + product tests
CONTENT LIFESPAN	SHORT Refresh as rates and products change	LONG Can keep answering for a year or more	VERY LONG When the product’s stable, so is the answer

DUAL-AUDIENCE CREATOR STRATEGY

There is no universal duration or magic hook.
Craft answers to match your category.

Boost YouTube creators with high AI visibility to maximise ROI.

Your campaign workflow should include Creator Partnerships Boost activity to reach both audiences with your most effective content.

01 CREATE

A creator publishes a useful video for both audiences.



02 CITE

AI finds the video and shares it in an answer.

03 AMPLIFY

Don't rely on organic AI answers for impact. Creator Partnerships Boost can scale content already appearing in AI answers.



04 LEARN

Human response and AI citation reveal which moments to clip.



05 COMPOUND

The maintained asset keeps earning views and citations.

~30% better conversions

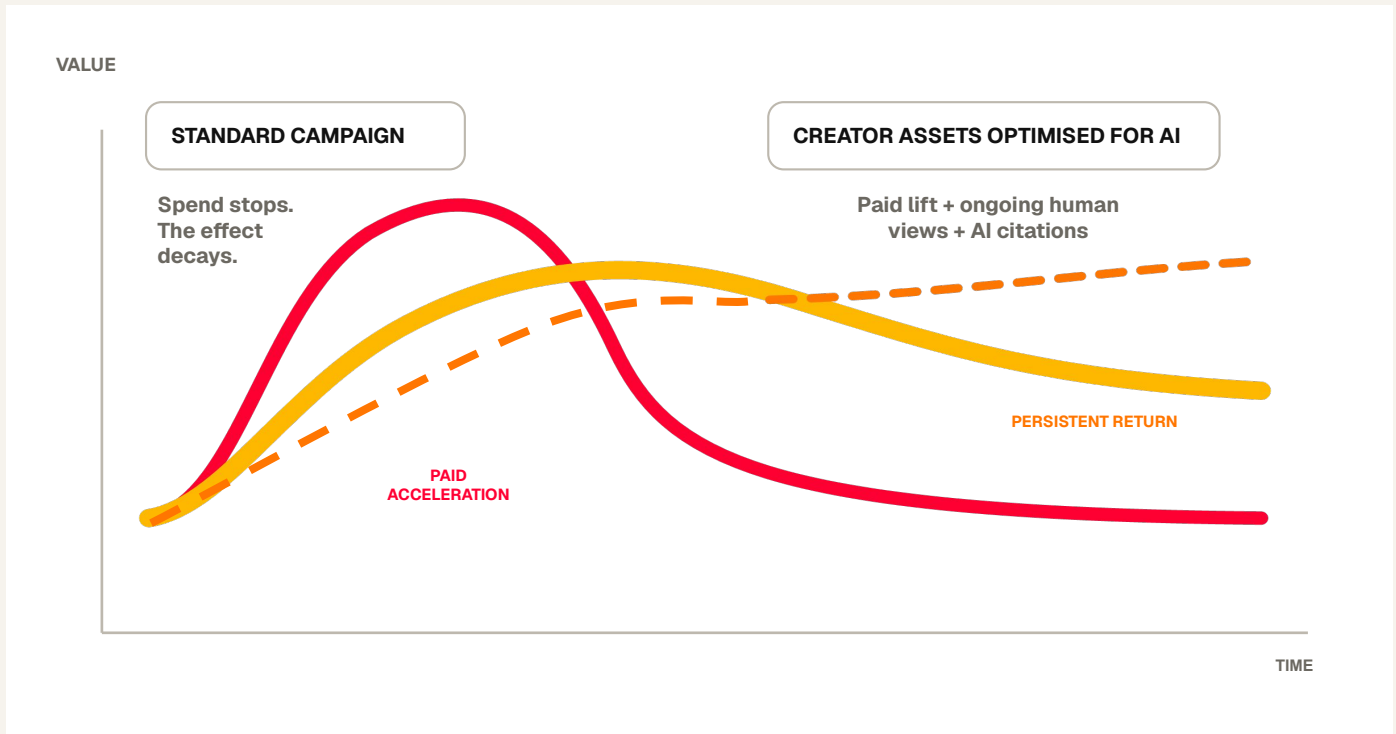
For campaigns using Creator Partnerships Boost. The new creator playbook combines AI visibility + ads.

DUAL-AUDIENCE CREATOR STRATEGY

Do not guess which creators to boost. Put spend behind the content and timestamps that AI is already featuring in answers.

A great YouTube asset can earn twice as much, for twice as long.

Paid media turns useful creator content into long-term, compounding ROI.



Google and Circana proved YouTube creator content delivers ~86% higher long-term ROAS than paid social. Amplifying through AI answers generates even greater returns.

A paid ad works while the budget runs.

A useful YouTube video can keep working **long after**.

Dual-audience strategy tactics:

- 1 **Fund answers, not just assets**
Commission useful videos with a maintenance plan, not disposable content tied to one launch.
- 2 **Use YouTube ads to accelerate proof**
Put media behind creator content that has already earned human response or AI citations.
- 3 **Amplify for AI timestamp citations**
Tracking specific timestamps in citations is the ultimate reverse brief: generate Shorts related to these key moments and amplify alongside long-form.

Source: Google-commissioned Circana MMM meta-analysis 2025/2026. Durable return depends on the video remaining within the citation set.



Your Dual-Audience Action Plan:

Start with the one important question you cannot afford to leave to competitors: why should both audiences choose your brand?

WEEK 1

AUDIT

Map the YouTube videos that AI already recommends in your category: creators, competitors, and your own channel.

WEEK 2

DESIGN

Draw on real prompts and Share of Model content insights to develop an answer strategy for every YouTube format.

WEEK 3

PARTNER

Choose creators for answer credibility, not follower count alone. Brief long-form and Shorts as one system.

WEEK 4

AMPLIFY

Use Creator Partnerships Boost to put spend behind the moments that are cited by AI. Optimise for both audiences at once.

Ask jack.smyth@thebrandtechgroup.com to design your **Dual-Audience Strategy** today.

METHODOLOGY

This paper draws on data from the Share of Model Platform™, The Brandtech Group's proprietary system for tracking how AI systems answer real consumer questions. The findings in this whitepaper are derived from a quarter of a million real consumer questions, written in local language for local markets, put every week to six model families: OpenAI, Google, Anthropic, Meta, DeepSeek and Perplexity. That is around 1.5 million prompt-model observations per collect and more than 75 million AI answers a year. Our findings carry a 95% margin of error of roughly ± 4 points.

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