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**POV:** NEW YOUTUBE "CARDS" EXTEND  
VIDEOS' REACH AND VALUE

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# NEW YOUTUBE “CARDS” EXTEND VIDEOS’ REACH AND VALUE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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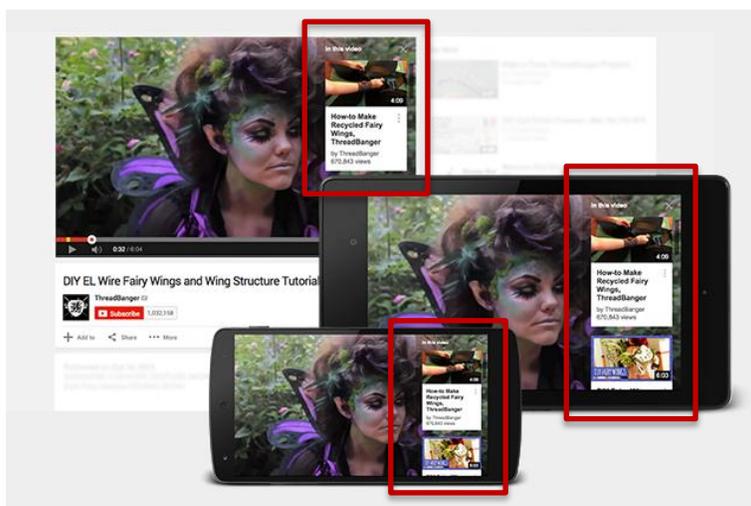
In 2014, YouTube [promised](#) content creators several new features that would allow more control over how their videos are consumed. One of those features, interactive information cards, was recently released to the public. These cards drive viewers to a website, suggest related videos and display other contextual information designed to enhance the user experience and help businesses accomplish goals.

YouTube Cards are positioned as the mobile-friendly successor to annotations and may eventually replace them altogether. This POV reviews the new feature, addresses several implications and recommends solutions for pharma marketers.

## OVERVIEW

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YouTube annotations have long been the only way for marketers to add interactivity to their videos. [Annotations](#) are a great way to add call-to-action text and links to a domain or suggested video within video content, but they are not viewable on mobile devices. With 50 percent of YouTube views coming from mobile, an interactivity gap exists. [YouTube’s introduction](#) of Cards fills that gap.





## WHAT ARE YOUTUBE CARDS?

Cards can inform viewers about other videos or link viewers off of YouTube to owned, verified domains. The six different Cards categories include video, playlist, merchandise, fundraising, fan-funding and associated website. We see video, playlist and associated website as the most relevant categories to pharma marketers.

When Cards are enabled on a video, a small text teaser appears for a few seconds in the upper right corner of the video at a pre-designated time. Viewers can click on the text teaser to view the full Card.



## HOW DO CARDS DIFFER FROM ANNOTATIONS?

The main difference is that annotations are not mobile-friendly; Cards are. Annotations can be added to any part of a video, but the Cards text teaser displays only in the upper right corner, and the full Card populates in the right side of the video. Annotations can be customized by color, text and links. Cards don't currently offer as many customization options. However, channel owners have the opportunity to modify other aspects of Cards, including image previews, website names and the text teaser.

The introduction of Cards does not mean annotations are going away, at least for the time being. Any existing annotations will continue to function. Channel owners can also add Cards and annotations to the same video, and they will work together. According to [YouTube](#), Cards will not replace annotations until Cards can do everything annotations can do.

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Channel owners can add up to five Cards per video. When the text teaser or Card icon is clicked in the upper right, all Cards on the video will be displayed. Clicks on these Cards are tracked and can be viewed in YouTube Analytics.

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PHARMA

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### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The most valuable benefit of YouTube Cards is that they extend the reach of the YouTube channel by giving marketers the ability to add clickable links and additional information on mobile devices. Since 50 percent of video views are from mobile devices, more traffic can now be generated to associated videos and websites. Any page on an associated website can be linked to, so videos discussing support programs can link to an information page, while webinar videos can link to a registration page.

By design, YouTube Cards are cleaner and less intrusive than annotations. Annotations can be added to any part of a video's real estate and cover part of the video, so when used incorrectly, they distract from the video. Cards consist only of a small text teaser until a user decides to click for more information. This approach gives Cards a consistent look and feel across all videos, and the less intrusive nature of Cards may result in a better user experience.

### **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

The look and feel of Cards is great for consistency, but it means channel owners won't have as much customization opportunity. Videos with Cards also won't show existing call-to-action overlays, though they will continue to show any annotations.

Additionally, now that Cards are viewable on mobile devices, any associated websites should be mobile optimized for the best possible user experience.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- + **Give Cards a try.** Cards are a natural extension of video annotations, so if you are already using annotations in your videos, explore adding Cards to leverage mobile functionality. If you are not already using annotations, adding this new layer of interactivity may increase engagement and extend your videos' value.

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- + **Make Cards relevant.** Just because you *can* have up to five Cards per video doesn't mean you should. Don't use Cards when the context is not appropriate. Instead, focus on keeping the Cards relevant to the video.
- + **Add teasers to the beginning of videos.** Even though the Card icon will be clickable at any point in the video, the text teaser for the Card will only display for a few seconds at a pre-designated time. Adding a teaser with a call-to-action near the start of a video will likely increase the teaser's impressions.

Intouch will continue to monitor YouTube for additional updates. If you have any questions about YouTube or Cards, please reach out to your Intouch Solutions representative.

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Author: Andrew Grojean — Manager, Social Media

 **Kansas City**  
913.317.9700

 **Chicago**  
312.540.6940

 **New York**  
646.795.3600

**[www.intouchsol.com](http://www.intouchsol.com)**  
email: [info@intouchsol.com](mailto:info@intouchsol.com)  
blog: [intouchsoul.com](http://intouchsoul.com)  
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