What if YouTube Stopped Existing?

VEDA 2013
https://youtube.com/watch?v=_iCGsQ2kZWk
https://nerdfighteria.info/v/_iCGsQ2kZWk

VEDA number 5! We're gonna talk about what would happen if YouTube disappeared.

Now this is an extra-fascinating question because, unlike most other social media platformy things like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, YouTube is an important source of money for creators. You can't make money on Facebook. (You can spend lots nowadays.) You can't make money on Tumblr or Twitter either. You can try, but you can't.

Now, this does not mean that there are no other ways for creators to monetize their work. Obviously, there are. John and I actually make most of our money, partially because we don't run pre-roll advertisements, but we make most of our money selling shirts, not selling YouTube advertisements, because people just want my brother's stupid pizza face on their shirt, just, like, all up in here [gestures to chest], and I don't know why that is, but I am thankful. It's also important to note that two other shows that I work on, The Brain Scoop and the Lizzie Bennet Diaries, made more money by asking (either just asking and putting a donation button up or through a Kickstarter) than they ever did through any other way. All of them combined -- merchandise advertisements, anything, sponsorships, investment -- no other way did they make as much money as just asking.

So YouTube's vitalness is not really in the money. It's nice that they sell advertisements, we appreciate that, that is a wonderful income stream for a lot of people. I think that there are, like, thousands of people who make six figures a year or more off of YouTube, and more power to, uh, that. That's great. But that, I don't think, is really the thing that if YouTube went away would be the catastrophe.

Now I do think there would be a catastrophe, but I don't think YouTube's going anywhere, because it's a big huge moneymaker for Google, and also other reasons which I think I'm going to talk about next video. But if YouTube disappeared, or more likely but still extremely unlikely, just became hostile toward this kind of content (there's no reason why they would do that, but that would be more likely to me than YouTube just failing, 'cause it's just extremely successful right now), it would be an organizational nightmare. And I don't mean like "where am I gonna put all my desktop items" organization, I mean like organization like "community" organizational nightmare, because YouTube exists on a hub-and-spoke model, whereas Facebook is a web with lots of connections between lots of people, and Twitter is a little more hub-and-spokey, and then YouTube is very much like "there is one person watched by millions of other people".

Now, there's web elements of YouTube, and those are some of my favorite parts of YouTube, but they are not the big part of YouTube, like, the active YouTube thing. There's also the passive YouTube thing which is just people watching cat videos, but the active people who watch and subscribe to stuff, most of those people are viewers and community members watching content and creators. That's how it works. YouTube is a platform, and nobody really even recognizes this, but it's extremely good at supporting that model, and there aren't a lot of other places where you can do that well. There are, you know, you can kind of do it on Twitter, you can kinda do it on Tumblr, but those things are so limited in the way that you can communicate and entertain, and YouTube is so unlimited that if it went away that would be a huge problem.

And by the time someone came in to fill the vacuum, which someone would, those communities that exist now would have fractured and gotten smaller and withered away a little bit, because YouTube is an extremely important part of how we talk together. And if that went away I would be freaking out and I wouldn't know how to talk to all of you. We'd figure it out, I mean, we'd figure it out, but I do think that there would be a hit to this community. It would be a hit to a lot of communities. It'd be a hit to a lot of creators.

So yeah. Um. I'm not worried about that happening -- it doesn't seem possible, and I'll talk about why it is impossible next video, tomorrow on Vlog Every Day in April #6. Until then, goodbye!