

YouTube says the battle with TV is already over

May 2 2013, by Jake Coyle

YouTube vs. TV? YouTube says the battle—if there ever was one—is over. In a flashy presentation to advertisers Wednesday night, Google Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt declined to forecast that Internet video will displace television watching. Instead he declared: "That's already happened."

Schmidt said "the future is now" for [YouTube](#), which recently passed the milestone of 1 billion unique visitors every month. But, he added with the Third World in mind, if you think that's a large number, "wait until you get to 6 (billion) or 7 billion."

Schmidt and YouTube, which billed the event as a "brandcast," shifted away from the [video platform](#)'s relationship to TV. A year ago, YouTube seemed to have its sights set on reinventing television by funding the launch of more than 100 channels from well-known media brands and Hollywood personalities.

But that initiative went unmentioned at Wednesday's presentation, held at a Lower East Side pier as part of a week of "NewFronts," (digital media's version of the TV tradition of promoting programming and selling ads). Though the model for the evening was TV, YouTube used it to distinguish itself as something entirely different.

"It's not a replacement for something that we know," said Schmidt. "It's a new thing that we have to think about, to program, to curate and build new platforms."

The presentation featured performances by Snoop Dogg and Macklemore, as well as YouTube personalities like Felicia Day. YouTube focused on its global reach, [community engagement](#) and enormous audience.

"I thought that YouTube was like TV, but it isn't. I was wrong," said Robert Kyncl, YouTube's global head of content. "TV is one-way. YouTube talks back."

Some comparisons were inevitable. One fact highly touted was that more 18- to 34-year-olds watch YouTube than any [cable network](#).

"TV means reach," said Kyncl. "YouTube means engagement."

Though companies like Yahoo and [AOL](#) have used their NewFront presentations to announce new slates of original programming, YouTube made no programming announcements Wednesday night.

It did, though, announce a partnership with the Association of National Advertiser's Alliance for Family Entertainment to create more digital family content.

YouTube also celebrated DreamWorks Animation's purchase Wednesday of the teen-focused YouTube network Awesomeness TV for \$33 million. DreamWorks CEO Jeffery Katzenberg appeared with Awesomeness founder and CEO Brian Robbins, the former "Head of the Class" actor.

"This is a whole new form of content, content delivery and content consumption," said Katzenberg. "It's the medium of the future and the future has already arrived."

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