

## A 'Beat the Clock' for the YouTube generation

April 22 2015, byDerrick J. Lang

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In this Tuesday, March 31, 2015 photo, host Elliot Morgan, center, watches over contestants Dominic DeAngelis, left, and Gabie Hanna as they try to knock over glasses with party whistles during a taping of the classic game show "Beat the Clock," at YouTube Space LA, in Los Angeles. FremantleMedia, the company that owns the rights to "Beat the Clock" and more than 150 other game show formats, commissioned original digital content studio Tiny Riot! to produce content for Buzzr. (Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

This isn't your grandparents' "Beat the Clock."

Inside a soundstage at YouTube Space LA, a high-tech production facility operated by the streaming video site, a couple of YouTube stars have been outfitted with helmets and jockstraps affixed with long hooks. The guys are furiously gyrating their bodies in an attempt to nab rings scattered across the set in less than 60 seconds—all while several cameras capture each thrust.

The silly hip-shaking stunt is one of several tasks that will be featured in a new take on the old-school game show that dared contestants to complete challenges before time ran out. In this updated "Beat the Clock," the clock is on a flat-screen TV, the audience is chilling out on couches in the background, and the host and contestants are all Internet personalities.

FremantleMedia North America, the production company best known for keeping "American Idol" and "The Price is Right" on the airwaves, commissioned its digital content studio Tiny Riot! last year to begin revamping classic game shows from its library of more than 150 series, such as "Password" and "Body Language," for its ad-supported Buzzr channel on YouTube.



In this Tuesday, March 31, 2015 photo, host Elliott Morgan, right, looks on as teammates Gabie Hanna, far left, and Zane Hijazi compete during a taping of the classic game show "Beat the Clock," at YouTube Space LA, in Los Angeles. FremantleMedia, the company that owns the rights to "Beat the Clock" and more than 150 other game show formats, commissioned original digital content studio Tiny Riot! to produce content for Buzzr. (Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

"We're just here to have fun," said Tiny Riot! executive vice president and general manager Gayle Gilman during a break from filming. "The prizes are small, so it's more about just enjoying the games. We don't have to worry too much about the rules, and we can make the contestants do weird, twisted things like wear jockstraps with hooks. It's very liberating."

At a time when many TV and online providers are reviving beloved

scripted shows, Fremantle launched Buzzr last fall with "Family Feud," featuring not relatives but YouTubers on Buzzr's casual set, which was constructed to accommodate several different game shows. Elliott Morgan, who gained Internet fame as one of the co-hosts of the YouTube news series "SourceFed," serves as host for the "Beat the Clock" episodes.

"I was only kind of familiar with it, so I Googled a bunch of clips before I auditioned and found some from like the 1950s," said the 28-year-old stand-up comedian, who regularly posts on his own YouTube channel. "I wasn't really able to get through them all because things were really, really boring back then, but it was still sort of cool. I'm glad they upped the game."

Unlike a typical broadcast game show, Buzzr's prizes are only worth a few hundred dollars, but there aren't those annoying commercial breaks, either. The producers have also streamlined the games' formats, so they move faster than their predecessors but are still recognizable to longtime fans. Gilman said the initial Buzzr installments have been keeping viewers glued to their screens.



In this Tuesday, March 31, 2015 photo, host Elliott Morgan, left, plays to the camera as teammates Dominic DeAngelis, center, and Harrison Webb look on during a taping of the classic game show "Beat the Clock," at YouTube Space LA, in Los Angeles. FremantleMedia, the company that owns the rights to "Beat the Clock" and more than 150 other game show formats, commissioned original digital content studio Tiny Riot! to produce content for Buzzr. (Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

"It's primarily a short-form medium," said Gilman. "Our episodes have been ranging between eight and 18 minutes, and we've had about 70 percent retention across the board. The people who are watching are watching regardless if it's a short or long episode. That's an encouraging metric. It's not easy to get people to watch an 18-minute video on YouTube."

While the content is only intended to be viewed online, Gilman said there's a possibility that the YouTube shenanigans will be broadcast on

TV. Fremantle has partnered with some Fox stations to launch a game show network this summer also called Buzzr. At launch, the network is scheduled to air vintage episodes of series like "To Tell the Truth" and "Match Game."

For now, only time will tell if Fremantle's YouTube [game show](#) wins over online viewers.



In this Tuesday, March 31, 2015 photo, host Elliott Morgan, back, stands over contestants Greg Edwards, left, and Mark Schroeder as they finish a contest during a taping of the classic game show "Beat the Clock," at YouTube Space LA in Los Angeles. FremantleMedia, the company that owns the rights to "Beat the Clock" and more than 150 other game show formats, commissioned original digital content studio Tiny Riot! to produce content for Buzzr. (Photo by Chris Pizzello/Invision/AP)

**More information:** [www.buzzrgames.com](http://www.buzzrgames.com)

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