

# YouTube Announces New Harassment Policy



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In recent years, social media platforms have been increasingly asked to take action to combat various forms of harassment conveyed in their content and comment threads. Several major brands have tried to address this publicly and privately, with somewhat dubious results. The latest big brand to put some public effort into this endeavor is video sharing site, YouTube.

Months after announcing its intentions to “reexamine” how it handles “harassment” on its platform, YouTube recently released planned updates to its user policy. According to the statement, YouTube leadership will take “stronger stance” against what they perceive to be “threats” or “personal attacks.”

As an explanation, YouTube said it would no longer allow either “veiled” or “implied” threats. The platform has always

disallowed direct, public threats. According to media reports about the policy change, YouTube will target content that “simulates violence against a person or language indicating physical violence could occur” and that the platform would not allow content makers or commenters to engage in “malicious” insults towards traits such as race, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Some critics are pointing to a single content creator as the genesis of these new changes, citing comedian and commentator Steven Crowder, as well as allegations that Crowder verbally “attacked” a web-based opinion writer. So, what did Crowder have to say about the new policies? His channel announced that a “purge” was coming soon to YouTube, riling up his fans, who spread the message far and wide on [social media](#).

While YouTube responded to the allegations against Crowder by “demonetizing” his videos, the company said the recently announced changes had been planned months before the allegations against Crowder surfaced, saying several issues needed to be addressed, including content creators targeting each other, actions which often spilled over into the comments as partisans supporting either “personality” engaged in escalating wars of words across multiple platforms.

Both the announcement from YouTube and the messaging around it from all sides, have people talking, all around the [digital marketing](#) world asking for further clarification. One of the most popular questions being asked is “how does YouTube plan to actually enforce the new policy?”

Some critics have said they’re okay with the platform getting a bit heavy handed with enforcement, while content creators want to continue enjoying as much latitude as possible. In this convergence of messaging, priorities, and sociopolitical worldviews, the only thing that appears clear at this point is that this issue is far from settled. Despite the new “rules,” it remains to be seen exactly how YouTube censors will enforce

the policy change, while trying to live up to the platforms promise as a social media site by and for the users.

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