

Details

What it's Like to Host a Teacher YouTube Channel with Sam Kary - 155

In this episode, educator and YouTuber Sam Kary shares a behind-the-scenes look at his popular YouTube channel for educators. You'll also hear his advice and suggestions for starting your very own teacher YouTube channel!

Link to live show notes: <https://classtechtips.com/2022/03/22/teacher-youtube-155/>

Introduction

Hello there and welcome to today's episode of the Easy EdTech Podcast! If we haven't met before, my name is Monica Burns. I'm a former NYC public school teacher and I've been out of the classroom for a few years leading professional development for teachers, and writing about all things EdTech on my blog [ClassTechTips.com](https://classtechtips.com)

A quick reminder — head to my website classtechtips.com/podcast for all of the show notes and resources from today's episode, and if you're listening to this episode on a podcast player like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or Google Podcasts, you should see a link in the description that you can click on as you listen today with the show notes and all the resources mentioned in today's episode.

When you go to the podcast page on my website, ClassTechTips.com, don't forget to check out the "Free Stuff" section full of graphic organizers, ebooks, and more goodies you can download instantly.

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Today's Intro

This week's episode is titled: "What it's Like to Host a Teacher YouTube Channel with Sam Kary" and I can't wait for you to hear from Sam today. I connected with Sam a few years ago and met him in person for the first time at the FETC Conference earlier this year. I wanted to bring Sam on the podcast to give a behind the scenes look at his popular YouTube channel for educators.

If you follow along with me on IG and TikTok you know I share lots of short videos on these platforms. And if you're a member of my membership the Easy EdTech Club, you know I share longer videos, masterclasses, each month. YouTube is a space I use more as a consumer than a creator, and I know so many listeners make their own videos too. So Sam joined me today to offer insight and suggestions for getting started with your very own YouTube channel. Even if you're just curious about the process, you'll definitely get some ideas from our conversation.

Episode Transcript

Monica Burns:

Hello and welcome. I am so excited Sam to have you here on the podcast today and talk about all things YouTube, specifically hosting a YouTube channel. But before we jump in with all of the questions I have for you today, can you just start us off by sharing a little bit about your role in education? What does your day to day look like?

Sam Kary:

Yeah. Thanks so much for having me on Monica. My name is Sam Kary. I am now the CEO of New EdTech Classroom. I'm a former classroom teacher and instructional coach, and now, essentially make professional development material full time. My day to day looks very different depending on the day, as I'm sure you are quite familiar with Monica yourself. Mm-hmm <affirmative>, but you know, it's, some days a lot of just research writing, prepping material, mm-hmm <affirmative> sometimes I feel like my prep period as a teacher just got explode did, and that's actually a large part of what I do prepare for things. Some days I'm doing workshops, PDs, occasionally conferences, things like that. But, there is a lot of prep work and writing and research involved. And luckily I like doing that. Great.

Monica Burns:

And you know, it's, hopefully we'll unpack some of those pieces and what that process will look like as we're, you know, talking. So today we're really focusing in on this idea of hosting a YouTube channel and you have a big YouTube channel for educators that of course will link out to, for everyone to go and check out. But let's start kind of at the beginning, what made you start wanting to make YouTube videos in the first place?

Sam Kary:

Yeah, so I think a lot of people are surprised to hear that I'm actually not, or I don't consider myself to be a particularly techy person. Mm-hmm <affirmative> I certainly was not that way for a long period of time as a classroom teacher, myself, I was in the classroom for 10 years and I really came to the world of technology through the lens of pedagogy. I had been trying to implement lots of instructional strategies for a while, had difficulty doing it with things like universal design for learning, project based learning. And that really led me to want to experiment with technology or to be open, to experimenting with technology. I saw the impact that had in my own classroom room. I wanted to extend that beyond just the influence that I had kind of within my immediate sphere with my school and community. And that's, you know, what led me to start a YouTube channel?

Sam Kary:

I think I picked YouTube in particular because I had also been experimenting a lot with screen casting in my own classroom. And I really saw how beneficial it was for students to create video tutorials for them, particularly when teaching them about tech programs that we were gonna be using in class. And so I think I just kind of even subconsciously extended that, thinking to the level of teachers that teachers would also benefit from this kind of visual modeling if students benefited from it. So, it started the YouTube channel while I was still a classroom teacher, mostly just for that purpose to show teachers how they could transform their classrooms with technology.

Monica Burns:

Well, I love that kind of mission if you will, right. Of giving those resources, sharing those resources, expanding your audience. And you mentioned screencasts, which I know I love creating quick screencast videos, which is essentially right that recording of your screen of what you're doing and talking through it sometimes being on camera. I know I use tools like that to answer questions. If someone reaches out to me and sometimes it's easier <laugh> than writing a whole big email, but you know, your videos go beyond just recording your screen, like a screencast. So would love to hear a little bit about your process for creating one of the videos that you post on your YouTube channel.

Sam Kary:

You want the short version here, the little long version.

Monica Burns:

Yeah. A lot of, yeah, take us through. Right. What does that look like?

Sam Kary:

So, yeah, the first thing we do is identify a subject or a topic that we're entrusted in creating a video about. Then it's usually a lot of research. So we'll see what other types of videos have been made about that topic. If it's a program that I need to go learn about, or, or Tom, our creative director needs to go learn about, we'll learn about that. Usually also trying to find little nuggets, little hidden features of programs and things like that. So even if it's a program that I know a lot about, or Tom knows a lot about, we will still go do research to make sure we're showing something new and interesting in a video. and then we actually spend a lot of time on the title and the thumbnail, and this is something that I didn't use to do. And it is very much, creating the book jacket cover before writing the book.

Sam Kary:

But particularly in YouTube, it's just so important for, to be able to grab people's attention and get that, you know, click on the video. And so we really try to take a, a chocolate carrot approach with the titles thumbnails. Sometimes I might wanna show people, you know, a pretty serious instructional strategy, but I'm not gonna label the video that, or call the video that gonna try to pitch it as the chocolate, but inside of it, there's gonna be some carrot, some nutrition. And so we really, you know, we, we've gotten a lot more nerdy about the titles and thumbnails and trying different ones and things like that. spend a lot of time on that. and then we'll, we'll brainstorm general ideas for a video. So, we do now also try to fit a video into some kind of story arc.

Sam Kary:

Okay. So we'll think about who the characters might be. They're often us <laugh> mm-hmm <affirmative> and what the problem is that we're solving. So as opposed to just straight up showing it tutorial, we're trying to think about it in terms of what's the conflict, you know, to mm-hmm <affirmative> really make sure that we're creating engaging videos as well. and then, we typically will do once we kind of have an overview, we'll do the screencast. So that gets to your question about the screencast and kind of the typical way of doing it. Whereas, you know, if you're sending a video response to somebody or making screencast for your school, you're just doing it at, at the same time, I started this practice pretty early on of doing

this screencasting first mm-hmm <affirmative>. And I did it because I realized it allowed me to really, to, to actually go back if I needed to and be very detail oriented.

Sam Kary:

So I made sure that I wasn't missing anything. And I also really wanted the ability to just always look into the camera and not be looking at the computer screen. It just has a different effect. so we will do the screen count asking separately and then, and then script <laugh> based on that. So everything we do is a detailed script. we revise the script, so we send them back and forth to each other, revise them, give feedback, then we'll film mm-hmm <affirmative> then, then it gets to, you know, it's, we're pretty close. So then we can actually, send it, we, I now use a video editor. We used to do all of our editing in the house mm-hmm <affirmative> but, no longer cuz that is an incredibly time intensive process. <laugh> mm-hmm <affirmative> so we'll send it to the video editor. We'll usually try to cut pretty viciously from the edit to really cut out anything that we think is superfluous or like, oh, we're getting bored at this part. So let's cut that out or it's repetitive. and then we publish and of course there's still other work that has to be done there too, but, yeah, it's, it's a pretty labor intensive process to create a video.

Monica Burns:

Well, It sounds like there's a lot of strategy and planning there and around the topic and the details that you're going to share and the visual components and you're jumping into a strategy, right. Having that screencast or the how to part, but I love that you're pairing it with a story or that conflict or a pain point or something where someone can really identify with maybe that struggle or why they wanna try something new. And I bet you get lots of ed tech questions through your inbox. I know I get a lot that come through about suggestions or advice or something that, you know, someone's tackling that they kind of wanna talk through. How do you decide on the topic of your next YouTube video? I know you mentioned wanting to make sure the titles were really clean and crisp and grabbing someone's attention, but how do you decide on, on the topics that you're gonna cover?

Sam Kary:

Yeah. Believe it or not. We do not have the problem that you'll often hear YouTubers have, where they need to kind of come up with ideas <laugh> and that's just because they're so many tools and so many strategies out there. I feel like we can make a video every day of the week and not cover everything. So when we're looking at our content calendar, we're really trying to offer a mix of programs that people expect and are looking for. Mm-hmm

<affirmative> you have to create your content about Google Classroom and Google Slides and, have those kinds of really foundational videos that are gonna appeal to lots of people who might just be, you know, potentially entering into the world of ed tech. And then we also want to make videos that represent tools and strategies that we really believe in that, you know, might cover programs that are less well known mm-hmm <affirmative>, but we still wanna make sure that we show them.

Sam Kary:

So, you know, an example that actually is the most recent video that we just put out about IRA, which mm-hmm <affirmative>, isn't quite as well known in the education, sector, but they are essentially a artificial intelligence tutorial creator that we think has genuine value for teachers. So, we'll make a video, you know, about those types of programs that are maybe a little bit more esoteric, less well known, but that we feel like cover something important that that teachers wanna know. And then there's also, you know, some stuff that is timely. So we'll try to make videos that respond to app updates. If there's a major one, holiday gift videos, the occasional response videos. So I recently responded to a video that they posted about how technology was gonna impact education. And I was like, I gotta respond to this. So I made a video that responded to it.

Sam Kary:

So some of 'em, you know, they do crop up like, oh, this thing happened or this update came out. So we need to make sure we have room for that. And then we do work with sponsors as well. So, that wall, so help prioritize whether or not we're going to make a video. but it's really important when we work with sponsors that it's only with apps and tools that we genuinely believe in ourselves. so we usually plan out content calendar about three months in advance, but I'm always bemoaning like, man, we don't have a video about this program or that program, or, you know, there's, there's so much content that could be made.

Monica Burns:

Yeah. I think it's one of the exciting things about being in this space and, you know, I feel the same way as well with blog posts or with, creating podcasts topics or looking at that calendar. Right. There's a lot to talk about and a lot of questions that come in and I love that you are balancing the, what people are asking for and what people might not know about or not know to ask for. So just letting them kind of understand what's out there and what's available, but also addressing any questions that they have. And you know, there's a, a lot of listeners in the podcast that are in the classroom as a classroom teacher are supporting their

colleagues as an instructional coach who are creating videos right now. Right. And it might be in a folder in their Google drive that they are sharing the links when they get a question. I know I often recommend that if you're creating a Loom video for one person's question that they have, you should probably save it because someone else might ask you the same question. So if someone is listening today and they're already making videos for their, or for their students, and they're curious about this idea of using YouTube or uploading their content for a larger audience to see, you know, what should they consider if they're thinking about starting their very own YouTube channel?

Sam Kary:

I think if somebody is considering starting one, you should just jump in and do it. There's no real harm in starting to just put content out there. You're gonna discover if it's something over time that you want to sustain, but sharing content, I just think is valuable on so many levels. It helps you grow. You're gonna push yourself to make sure you're making the best instructional videos, and that's gonna hone your practice just for delivering instructions to students and also the, you know, professional development that you deliver for your teachers. And it also has the possibility, a very strong possibility. I think YouTube is actually a, still a pretty wide open space for video content. There's so much, room for content to be made about specific thick, subject areas, specific grade levels. so it really has a possibility of reaching people around the world, changing people's lives, giving people access to knowledge that they might not have had access to before.

Sam Kary:

and for you personally, if you're thinking about doing it, it has the possibility of opening doors for you and opportunities, like being on Monica burns podcast. <laugh> right now that, that I never <laugh>, would've anticipated a few years ago. and you know, I, I think even though I just outlined all these complex steps, it didn't start that way for me. I didn't know anything about video production. The first YouTube video that I made was the first video I ever filmed in my entire life was the first time, you know, I used a semi-professional camera, anything like that? You go back and look at the quality it's okay. yeah, mm-hmm <affirmative> and even, you know, even then I was spending in inordinate amount of time on that, that I probably didn't need necessarily need to spend <laugh>. so I think what that also communicates is that, if you have good ideas, you have high quality content, you know, it doesn't have to be this amazingly well produced video or anything like that. People will find value in it. So yeah, I think if people are thinking about doing it, you should jump in and go for it and see where it takes you. It's exciting.

Monica Burns:

Yeah. I just, I love the space in terms of what impact you're gonna have. Right. You never know who's gonna stumble across your video or who's gonna have their whole entire day changed because you solved that problem for them. And, you know, I'm sure you having a YouTube channel do this more often than I do, but you know, I'll find myself sometimes doing a Google search and then even though some YouTube results will pop up, you know, I stop and I say, I'm gonna go over to YouTube and look there. Cause what I really want is to see someone do this, I don't wanna read about it. Right. I wanna look at the steps to solve, right. Whatever the problem is, even if it's, you know, a recipe <laugh> let alone, right. A technology issue or a question that I have. So, you know, you mentioned the start of things and you know, starting off kind of simpler, not worrying so much about some of the high quality production, but you know, what is something that might surprise someone hosting videos on YouTube or that might surprise 'em about your overall process or your experience sharing ed tech tips this way?

Sam Kary:

I think the thing that would surprise people the most is actually how much time I spend writing that actually a large part of my job is writing. Every single script is sometimes, you know, five, six single page script that's been revised and researched. And so I think, yeah, in spite of the fact that we make video content, we're actually spending a ton of time doing the work that I feel like a blogger would do or somebody who's writing books would do. and it does become, if you're trying to do it over the long run, inevitably, you're gonna have to do a lot of research and learning about things. And if you wanna be detail oriented, you have to write it down, you kind of, it's impossible to wing it. And mm-hmm <affirmative> and not miss things. So I think people will probably find that a little bit surprising.

Monica Burns:

Yeah. Right. I think when we look first at video and it's kind of similar with podcasting, I typically, when I, especially when I do the solo episodes, right? Like I'll write everything out. So I don't forget anything if I'm explaining steps on how to do something, or I wanna remember to tell this story about whatever the thing is. Right. I don't want it to be an afterthought. I want it to be really thoughtful right. For someone. So I think that that story for you of just us, the prep work, the research, the writing, the scripting is, is definitely something that might surprise someone. If they're used to consuming video content without thinking, you know, too much of the behind the scenes work. So Sam, I'm gonna make sure to link out. So anyone who's listening right now, they can tap on the link. That'll be in the description in

so that they'll be able to find your YouTube channel, subscribe to it, get ideas for things that they might wanna create for their students or colleagues too. But can you tell us a little bit, where can people connect with you? Where can they learn more about your work?

Sam Kary:

Best place to go is definitely newedtechclassroom.com. That's the hub. Where you can access our blogs and free courses, our paid courses, our online, professional development and links to YouTube channels. We also have a student tutorial channel that I don't talk that much about, but the link to the student tutorial channels on there. So I recommend going to newedtechclassroom.com and you can follow us on all the social media channels at, [@newedtechclass](https://twitter.com/newedtechclass). Well, thank you so much for your time today. Definitely. Thanks for having me Monica.

So let's make this EdTech easy...

First, have a plan for your videos.

Next, include visuals, perhaps a screencast.

Then, share your videos for the public to see.

Finally, choose a video title that makes it easy for other people to find your videos.

Remember, you can find the shownotes and the full list of resources from this episode including all of the ways to connect with Sam Kary on classtechtips.com/podcast and finding today's episode #155!

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Outro

If you have a moment to leave a review I would super appreciate it! I read every single review that comes through on the different podcast platforms. I keep my eyes peeled for any questions that come in there, too. So if you have a moment please leave a star rating or type in a quick review. Not only do I appreciate it so much, but it also helps boost the podcast in search engines meaning other educators will find it when they search for EdTech tips.

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