

You Tube© Smashed the Gatekeeper's gate. By Walter Sabo

You've read about You Tube, you know it's the website that lets you post or see videos about almost any subject made available for free to anyone in the world. Wow, what a statement!

Anyone can make a video, post it on You Tube and know that it will be broadcast, and viewed by people in Portland Maine and Tokyo. The price of entry is a computer with a camera or one loaded with software that can process "video" from any video source.

Do you know about PANAVISION? That's the company that rents out 35mm professional movie cameras to studios that want to make the movies you see in theatres. Rent is the key word. They won't sell you one. The number of cameras is finite. At any given time only a limited number of films can be in production because there are a limited number of very expensive Panavision cameras to rent.

Ok, that gate is smashed. The laptop has a camera, anyone can make a movie and send it around the world now.

Want to be cast in a movie? An actor used to meet with a casting agent, producer, director and a long list of executives each with their own prejudice about whom should get the role. Ok, now you can press RECORD and you're cast. You don't leave your chair.

New technology is adopted first by people who could not have their needs met by the old technology. When you look at YOU TUBE it is revealing to see which videos are the most popular. It's not the likely suspects. As a group, the most watched videos are created by 18-34 year old women performing alone---one on one with the camera.

Now, here's where you may want to pay attention:

MEET CAITLIN HILL: Thehill88. 4,000,000 viewers.



Caitlin has a bigger audience than your morning show. About once a week, Caitlin contributes a video to You Tube. Her username is "Thehill88." What does Caitlin "do" on her videos? She does what you DREAM a radio host would do, she speaks in an entertaining, very honest way about her life. There is no sex, there is no violence. She is not a "lad" magazine girl. She is 18.

Her ratings? Top 20 most viewed videos of all time. More than the videos from the “pros” who contribute from the TV networks. One of her videos has hit 4,000,000 views.

Caitlin has inspired the creation of a community. There are other You Tube members whose username refers to her such as “thehill88fans”. There are many videos that respond to Caitlin’s videos. Many.

Caitlin is not alone. There are dozens of young women on You Tube who sit alone in their bedrooms and create videos expressing their feelings about life.

The videos are often well edited, funny, but always honest. Their mini-movies have plot lines with beginnings and ends. They know how to tell a story.



Caitlin has nothing to learn

For Caitlin, and other women her age, the internet and a computer in the home are transparent. The internet, computers, video games, cable and other digital based media has always been there. Their users don’t have to adjust their thinking to learn how to “go digital.” Digital is the assumed technology.

If you look on You Tube at the top 20 channel views each week you’ll see that about half of them, half, are created by solo young women. They usually beat out the guys falling off cliffs and the clips posted from traditional TV and movies sources.

Which group of people has the hardest time gaining access to your station, the TV station, traditional media? *Young women*. This is not about getting an internship, it’s about getting a show. It is fascinating that when we’ve played groups of male colleagues You Tube contributions posted by young women, the men become distant and uncomfortable. But when groups of female colleagues are shown the same videos they become engaged and entertained.

Don’t worry about the Arbitron “erosion” of young male sample. (It’s a sampling problem, not a phenomenon.) Find ways for “Caitlin” to have a microphone. She knows how to make your website sing. She knows how to reach other 18-34 year old women. She’s already got a bigger audience than your station.