

## YouTube Invests in Education

By Evan Zimmerman, J.D. Candidate 2020 | October 31, 2018

On October 22, YouTube [announced](#) that it plans to spend \$20 million on educational videos and other education initiatives. While YouTube is well-known as a home for everything from how-to videos to informational shorts, this represents YouTube's first investment in education-specific content. In addition to working on its own original content and developing an explainer series with Vox to answer questions posed by viewers, YouTube also plans to host more EduCon events, where it gathers YouTube Creators to discuss real-world education.

The investment comes on the heels of two key Google initiatives. First, YouTube has been pushing a subscription service, YouTube Red, for years with [limited success](#). Like many Netflix competitors, Google's shift includes investing in original content: YouTube Originals is [slated to create over 50 programs in 2019](#). Second, Google has seen great success in the education market in recent years with its Chromebook products. Google recently overtook longtime education champion Apple with Chromebooks owning [60% of the K-12 market](#). However, competition from Microsoft and Apple is heating up. The new axis of competition is software, where Google's competitive strategy is largely focusing on creating software for educators. In both cases, a suite of original content will bolster its efforts.

The investment in educational initiatives also comes as YouTube faces increased scrutiny for how it categorizes and promotes videos. This year, YouTube's recommendation algorithms were [roundly criticized](#) for radicalizing individuals, and the national security community has expressed concerns on similar grounds for years. Similarly, some of its Creators notably [quit](#)—claiming that YouTube's algorithms create a stressful work schedule—or were [kicked off](#) for creating offensive videos some Creators claim YouTube incentivizes them to create. These issues are critically important for YouTube as feed-style algorithms attract increasing regulatory scrutiny. Harmless content, like the upcoming Vox explainer series and other new educational videos, may take some of the edge off.

