

Jimmy Kimmel is Back!

YouTube · Jimmy Kimmel Live · Sep 24, 2025

YouTube

rain the growth agency

No. 69 | October 23, 2025



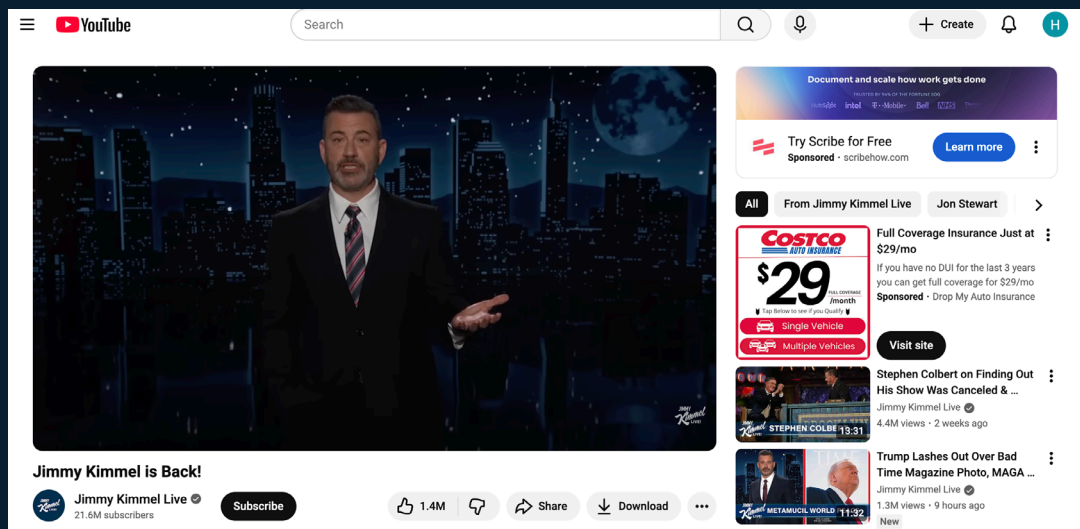
Source: YouTube

MEDIA IMPACT REPORT

The Late-Night Lessons Advertisers Can't Afford to Miss

Also in this issue:

Amazon Google Shopping Update
Advertising Week NY Recap



Source: YouTube

/BRIEFING ROOM

The Late-Night Lessons Advertisers Can't Afford to Miss

By [Sheila Clough](#), Director, Integrated Media Investment

When “Jimmy Kimmel Live” returned to the air on September 23 after a short suspension, it delivered a powerful message to advertisers—flexible media planning can pay off with big results. Despite being preempted in nearly a quarter (23%) of U.S. linear TV homes, the show drew 6.26 million viewers, making it the third most-watched episode ever. The first 10 minutes viewership peaked at 7.78 million, highlighting a level of live viewership that’s becoming rare in today’s media landscape.

The show was a huge success for advertisers who had inventory in that episode. One Rain the Growth Agency client secured a unit in the show and saw results that more than doubled their usual response rate. This opportunity also surfaced a larger conversation about platform strategy and capitalizing on massive cultural moments.

Here are three key lessons for advertisers from the “Jimmy Kimmel Live” return:

1. Linear TV Still Delivers

It’s easy to write off linear TV amid declining ratings, but moments like this prove it still has power when the timing and content align. Keep budgets flexible for scatter marketplace buys and availability for tentpole moments such as show returns, host debuts, viral news cycles, and major cultural events, especially those getting a lot of buzz on other channels like social media.

2. Amplify with YouTube

The show’s return episode monologue reached 14 million views on YouTube in its first 24 hours, meaning more people actually watched the monologue on YouTube than linear TV. The @JimmyKimmelLive YouTube account gained 100,000 new subscribers from September 23-25, signaling that advertisers should consider investing in YouTube around major topical moments.

3. Late Night’s Influence Remains Strong

Despite conflicting reports that late night TV viewership is declining, what the “Jimmy Kimmel Live” return showed is that audiences still seek timely commentary delivered by late night hosts. Given the attention the Stephen Colbert and Jimmy Kimmel programming is getting currently, it demonstrates their content is still culturally relevant and gaining the attention of younger demos that consume their content on digital platforms.

As the media landscape continues to evolve, one thing is clear: cultural moments still have the power to break through, and advertisers who plan with flexibility and agility can reap the rewards. The return of “Jimmy Kimmel Live” was a compelling reminder that late night TV can still be a high reach avenue, especially when supported by cross-channel amplification. For advertisers, the takeaway is simple: don’t underestimate the power of live, topical content, and be ready to move quickly when the next big moment hits.



/UPDATES

Amazon Returns to Google Shopping in International Markets

By **Jacob Simonich**, Associate Director, Paid Search

In July, Amazon suddenly pulled all investment from Google Shopping Ads in the U.S. and internationally, catching both Google and other advertisers completely offguard. The ecommerce giant previously held a near 60% impression share in the U.S. market for Google Shopping results.

Across major markets Amazon's share of Shopping ad impressions dropped from significant levels (often 50-60% in some verticals) down to zero. However, that absence only lasted one month as Amazon returned to Google Shopping in some international markets in August. Notably, they did not reactivate in the U.S.

Amazon likely made this decision for a variety of reasons:

Incrementality Testing: To understand how much value Amazon gets from Google Shopping ads—e.g. whether they bring in incremental traffic versus traffic Amazon would already get via its own channels.

Reducing Dependency On Google: Amazon may be looking to gain leverage in its relationship with Google—possibly in terms of ad rates, fee structures, or how listings are handled.

Focus on Own Ecosystem and Development of AI: Amazon has been developing its own AI-assisted search function on its site that would allow users to

shop brand sites directly even if the brand does not sell directly through the giant. In addition, big ecommerce players are worried about owning as much of the customer journey as possible. By reducing reliance on external marketing channels, Amazon could be pushing users to start searches on Amazon rather than on Google.

What Was the Impact?

Reduced CPC - Other Google Shopping advertisers saw significant decreases in their costs as a result of a bidder as large as Amazon not competing in the auction. On average, advertisers saw an 8.3% CPC decrease with some verticals seeing larger drops.

Reduction in Conversion Value and ROAS - While click traffic improved, average conversion values fell around 5.5% while ROAS fell on average by 4.4%.



However, this could also be due to current economic conditions as consumers are becoming more conservative with their discretionary spending.

It's still not fully clear what reasons Amazon has for exiting the Google Shopping auction temporarily only to return without advertising in the largest market. However, a few reasons could be:

- The U.S. might have shown less incremental return—perhaps Amazon determined the benefit of Google Shopping ads in its home market does not outweigh cost, or that its reach via other channels offsets the absence there.
- Amazon may be testing a differentiated ad strategy by geography—perhaps pushing more investment into its own search and discovery tools in the U.S. rather than external listings.

Amazon did not return to Google shopping for the ecommerce giant's famous "Prime Days" sale occurring October 7-8. Amazon's move underscores how important flexibility and testing are in large

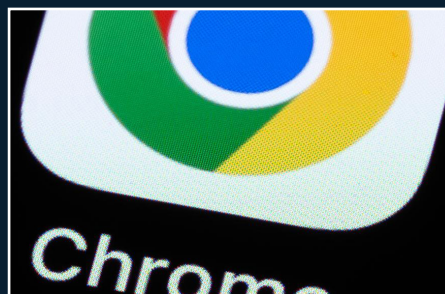
ecommerce advertising strategies. For marketers, it's a reminder to avoid overdependence on any single channel and to stay agile. We'll be watching closely to see if Amazon returns to Google Shopping in the U.S. for Black Friday/Cyber Monday.



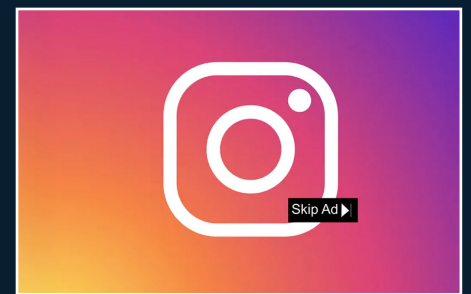
/QUICK HITS



In Graphic Detail: How AI Search Is Changing Publisher Visibility
[\[Digiday\]](#)



'Phased Out'—Google Confirms Bad News For 3 Billion Chrome Users
[\[Forbes\]](#)



Meta Is Testing Skippable Ads on Instagram Reels, Borrowing From YouTube's Playbook
[\[Adweek\]](#)



/NOTEPAD

Younger Gens and AI Emerge as Key Themes at Advertising Week NY 2025

By [Susan Boland](#), SVP, Communications Strategy

Two key themes emerged through the programming at this year's Advertising Week NY event:

1. Gen Alpha and Gen Z are reshaping what it means to connect with brands
2. The rise of AI as a cultural and creative catalyst

Gen Alpha and Gen Z are digital natives born into participation, personalization, and purpose. They expect brands not only to mirror culture but to build it with them. This shift toward co-creation aligns perfectly with the rise of AI as both a cultural and creative catalyst. AI's role is no longer about automation or efficiency—it's about amplifying human connection at scale.

1. From Messaging to Participation

Traditional advertising is losing impact among younger audiences. Gen Alpha and Z don't want to be spoken to—they want to participate. Brands should move from one-way storytelling to interactive, co-created experiences that invite contribution and feedback.

Takeaway for brands: Design campaigns and platforms that allow audiences to collaborate through user-generated content, open creative prompts, product customization or real-time feedback loops.

2. Use AI to Listen, Learn, and Localize Culture

AI allows brands to track cultural signals across countless channels, decode audience sentiment, and predict emerging interests or subcultures. This "cultural radar" enables marketers to stay relevant in our fast-moving culture.

Takeaway for brands: Apply AI-powered social listening and trend analysis to understand micro-communities and regional variations. Use those insights to shape tone, timing, and creative direction.

3. Personalization as an Expectation, Not a Perk

For Gen Alpha especially, personalization isn't impressive — it's assumed. They expect technology to adapt to them in real time.



Takeaway for brands: Use AI to deliver dynamic creative and adaptive experiences (e.g., tailored messaging by behavior, time, or interest).

4. Build Human-Centered Brand Intelligence

AI can provide intelligent automation, but marketers must provide human empathy. The most effective strategies use AI insights to enhance human creativity, not replace it.

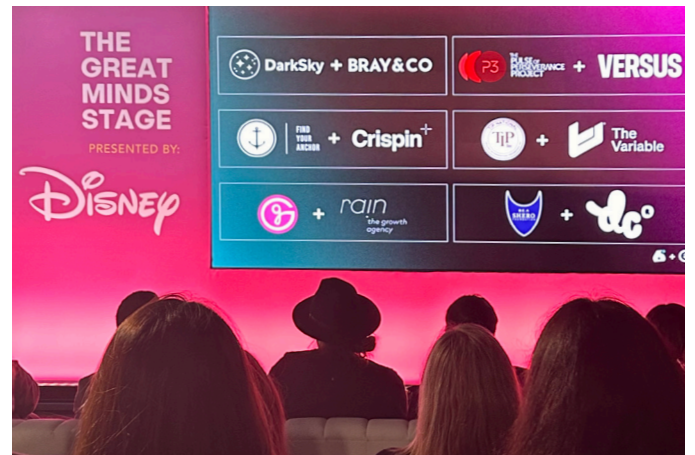
Takeaway for brands: Pair data-driven intelligence with brand storytelling rooted in emotion, humor and cultural truth.

5. Redefine Community as a Living Ecosystem

Gen Alpha and Z don't form communities *around brands*; they form them *around shared identity, purpose, and creativity*.

Takeaway for brands: Identify where these communities already exist (e.g., creator platforms, fandom spaces, Discord servers) and add value through education, inspiration, or collaboration.

The intersection of AI, culture, and younger generations demands a mindset shift. Brands must evolve from broadcasting messages to building ecosystems where technology amplifies human creativity, storytelling becomes participatory, and community becomes the most valuable form of currency.



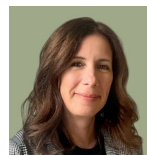
Need More Guidance?



Rachel Baker

SVP, Head of Video Investment & Partnerships

rachel.baker@rainforgrowth.com



Robin Cohen

EVP, Integrated Media Investment & Planning

robin.cohen@rainforgrowth.com

For more news and insights visit: <https://www.rainforgrowth.com/insights-updates/>