

Next up...

# Larisa Ivanova

Authenticity vs. Automation: State of YouTube in  
2026





# Authenticity vs. Automation

State of YouTube in 2026

# About me: Larisa Ivanova

- YouTube SEO consultant with over 8 years of experience
- Founded my own Video SEO consultancy - [Avenara.com](https://www.avenara.com)
- Bachelor's Degree in Psychology
- Worked with national TV networks and international brands on YouTube strategy
- I am one exam away from my first Dan in Iaido (samurai's katana yielding)
- Email > [hi@avenara.com](mailto:hi@avenara.com)



# Table of contents



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YouTube



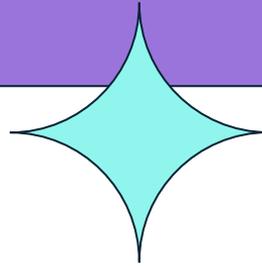
The viewer's  
psychology



The experiment



Tools you can  
use



01

**“AI content  
vs.  
YouTube”**

# AI content vs. YouTube

## Destroying the myth

First, we have to take down the assumption that AI is bad by definition for the platform. It came from an YouTube policy change announcement that they are going to delete AI content. Or so the people understand on first glance.

The reality is a little different...



# AI content vs. YouTube



96%

**of creators currently using Gen AI are using it for creative support**

Source: [https://www.youtube.com/intl/en\\_us/howyoutubeworks/ai/](https://www.youtube.com/intl/en_us/howyoutubeworks/ai/)

## Destroying the myth

YouTube's policy on AI content requires creators **to disclose** realistic or meaningfully altered and synthetically generated content to inform viewers. While AI-generated content **is not banned**, YouTube is cracking down on **low-effort, repetitive content by targeting "AI slop"** through new monetization policies that focus on originality and value.

# AI content vs. YouTube

## Destroying the myth

**Meaning:** you have the green light to create AI content as many times as you want, but be interesting and play by the rules (sometimes).

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
|  A person in an orange puffer jacket covering their face with their hands.                          | <b>AI slop</b>         |
|  A person in an orange puffer jacket covering their face with their hands.                          | <b>Trashy content</b>  |
|  A person in an orange puffer jacket with a Jordan shoe logo on their shirt, making a hand gesture. | <b>Valuable videos</b> |

# AI content vs. YouTube

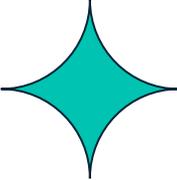
## Destroying the myth

Why they target the AI slob that aggressively, because it's **a lot**. Daily, Youtube welcomes tons and tons of video content.

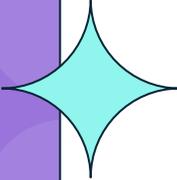
The competition is fierce as it is.

That's why YouTube as a platform HAD to protect their platform and creators from overflowing with useless content.





More than  
**500 hours of video**  
uploaded  
**EVERY MINUTE**



02

# The experiment

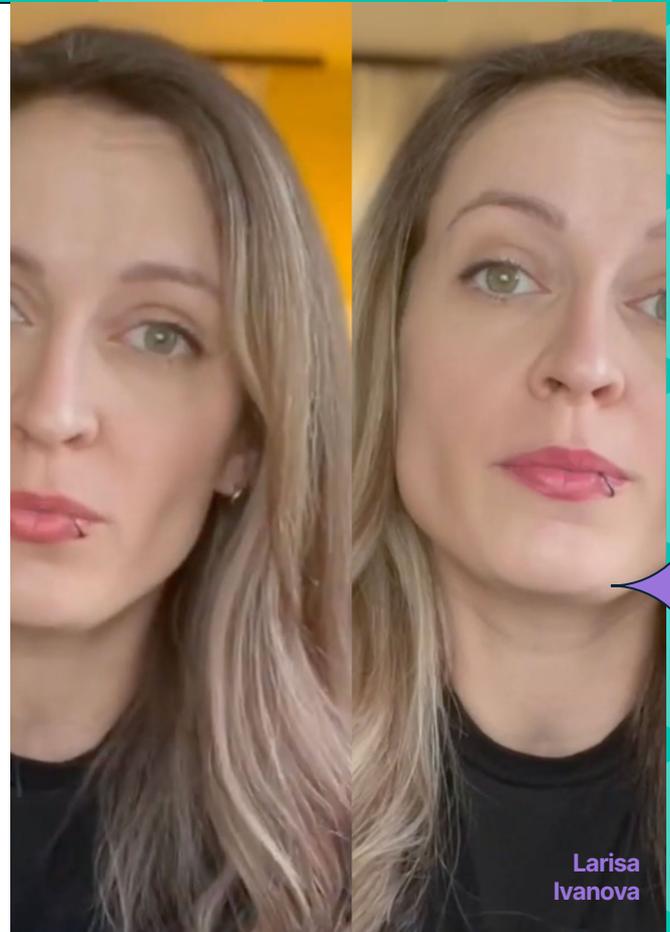


# The experiment

## What would happen if...

I create an AI Lara?

How would the two almost identical videos perform with equal settings, and how they were treated by the algorithm?  
Does YouTube in some way or form penalise you for using AI?



# The experiment

## What was the environment?

- Same channel name



### Vidara

@Vidara-jxw · 2 subscribers · 3 videos

Vedara is a creative experiment from Avenara, built to test, explore, and play with what res...more

Customise channel

Manage videos

View channel stats



### Vidara

@Vidara-q3n · 3 subscribers · 3 videos

Vedara is a creative experiment from Avenara, built to test, explore, and play with what res...more

Customise channel

Manage videos

View channel stats



# The experiment

## What was the environment?

- Same channel name
- **Same channel description**



### Vidara

#### Description

Vedara is a creative experiment from Avenara, built to test, explore, and play with what really works in the world of video. Here, you'll find experiments in format, style, optimization, and storytelling - from data-driven insights to bold creative tests.

The idea? To push boundaries, learn in real time, and share what happens when strategy meets experimentation. Whether it's testing new algorithms, trying out fresh video trends, or uncovering hidden growth hacks, Vedara is the lab where Avenara's expertise comes to life.

If you're curious about how videos grow, evolve, and sometimes break the rules, you'll feel right at home.

#### More info

 [www.youtube.com/@Vidara-q3n](http://www.youtube.com/@Vidara-q3n)

 Joined 18 Aug 2025

### Vidara

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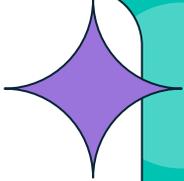
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[youtube.com/@Vidara-jxw](https://www.youtube.com/@Vidara-jxw)

Joined 18 Aug 2025

# The experiment



## What was the environment?

- Same channel name
- Same channel description
- **Same video title**



YouTube Is Deleting AI Channels Now?  
YouTube is demonetizing AI content starting July 15th, 2025 – but is it really...



YouTube Is Deleting AI Channels Now?  
YouTube is demonetizing AI content starting July 15th, 2025 – but is it really...

# The experiment

## What was the environment?

- Same channel name
- Same channel description
- Same video title
- **Same video description**

YouTube is demonetizing AI content starting July 15th, 2025 – but is it really bad news? In this video, we break down what YouTube's new rules mean for creators, why low-value AI spam is being targeted, and how real content makers can actually benefit.

We'll cover:

- Why faceless AI videos are at risk
- What EEAT (Experience, Expertise, Authority, Trust) means for YouTube
- How creators using AI tools safely can still monetize
- Why this change could protect authentic creators

If you've ever worried about your channel being demonetized because of AI – this video is for you.

Subscribe to Vedara, an experiment from Avenara, where we test how video, AI, and strategy evolve on YouTube.

YouTube  
why low

[#Aldemonetization](#)

We'll cover:

- Why faceless AI videos are at risk
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[#Aldemonetization](#)

# The experiment

## What was the environment?

- Same channel name
- Same channel description
- Same video title
- Same video description
- **Same video tags**



Tags

Tags can be useful if content in your video is commonly misspelt. Otherwise, tags play a minimal role in helping viewers to find your video. [Learn more](#)

YouTube demonization 49.1 × ai content youtube 47.8 ×

youtube algorithm changes × faceless ai youtube × youtube ×

demonetization × ai × content × ban ×

update × algorithm 58.9 × faceless 64.7 ×

policy 51.0 × creators × lowvalue × channels ×

automation 61.7 × trustworthiness 56.6 × spam ×

AI slop 66.9 ×

248/500

Tags

Tags can be useful if content in your video is commonly misspelt. Otherwise, tags play a minimal role in helping viewers to find your video. [Learn more](#)

YouTube demonization 49.1 × ai content youtube 47.8 ×

youtube algorithm changes 45.3 × faceless ai youtube 51.7 ×

youtube 77.6 × demonization 45.9 × ai 72.0 ×

content 57.2 × ban 60.9 × update 63.3 ×

algorithm 58.9 × faceless 64.7 × policy 51.0 ×

creators 49.4 × lowvalue 18.3 × channels 53.0 ×

automation 61.7 × trustworthiness 56.6 × spam 60.2 ×

changes 69.3 × tips 57.7 × AI slop 66.9 ×

# The experiment

## What was the environment?

- Same channel name
- Same channel description
- Same video title
- Same video description
- Same video tags
- **Only organic traffic and uploaded at the same time**

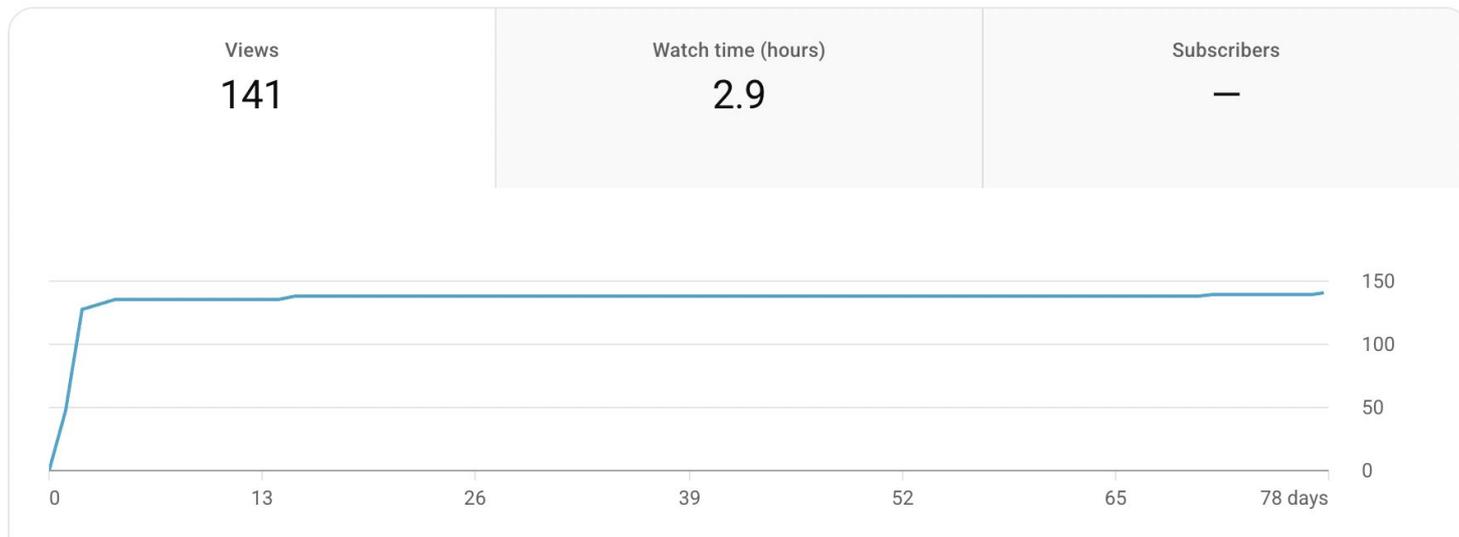
# ✨ The results: ✨

| Assets     | Impressions | Views | Likes    | Dislikes | Comments |
|------------|-------------|-------|----------|----------|----------|
| Video RP 1 | 2.8K        | 188   | 100% (8) | 0%       | 5        |
| Video RP 2 | 121         | 5     | 100% (2) | 0%       | -        |
| Short      |             | 144   | -        | -        | -        |
| Video AI 1 | 2.9K        | 144   | ~60% (3) | ~40%(2)  | 1        |
| Video AI 2 | 225         | 17    | 100%(1)  | 0%       | -        |
| Short      |             | 212   | -        | -        | -        |

# ✨ The results: ✨

## Video 1 (ai) stats: Overview

Less views, less watch time

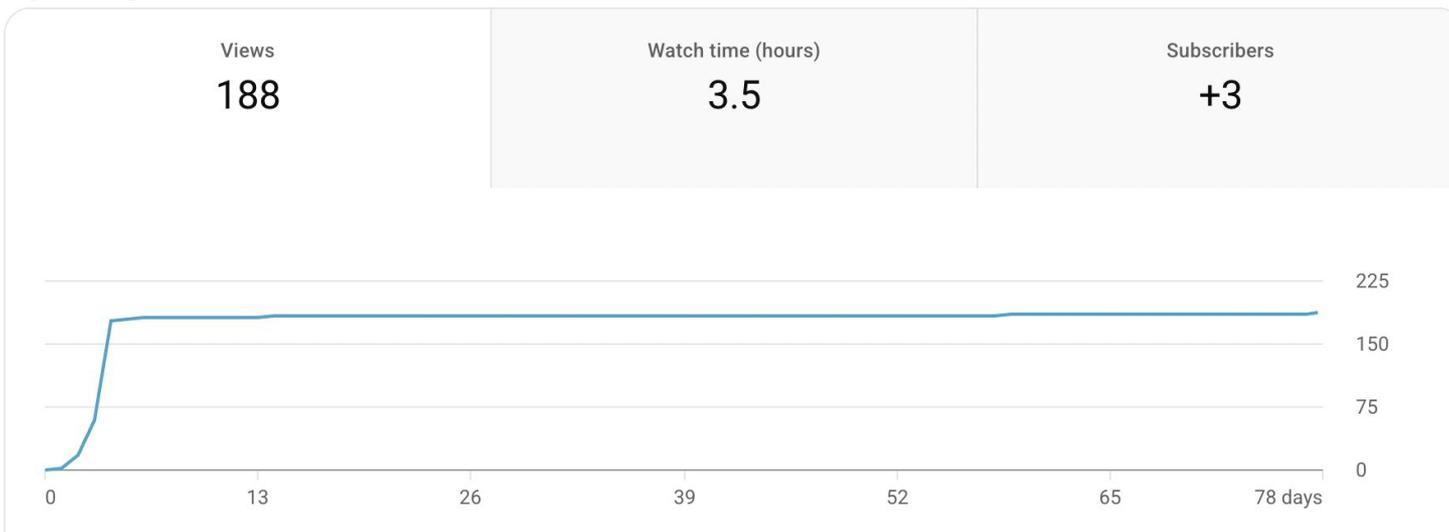


# 🌟 The results: 🌟

**Video 1 (rp) stats:**

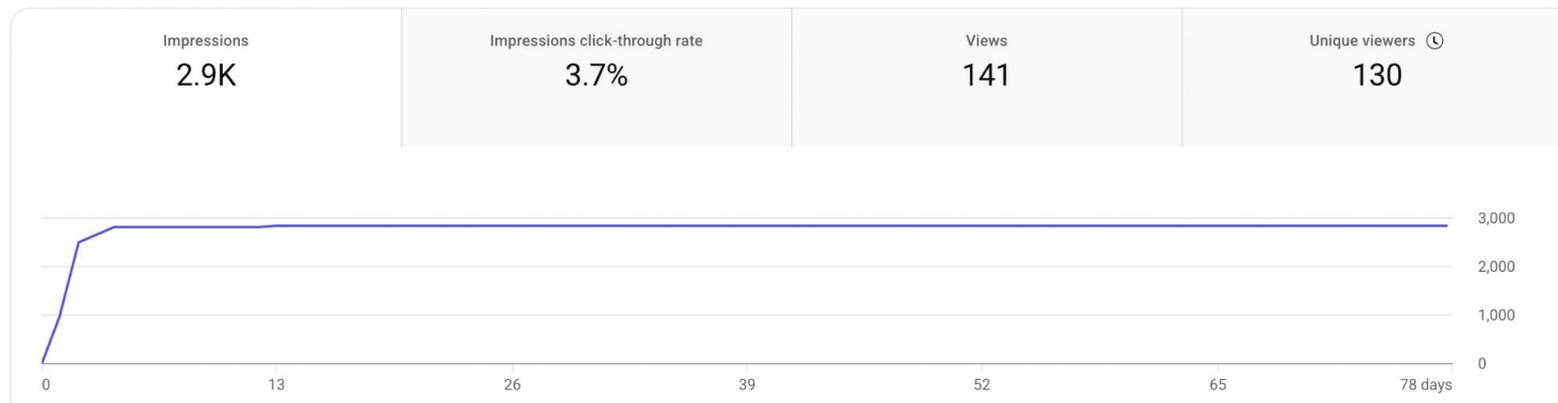
better views, better watch time

## Overview

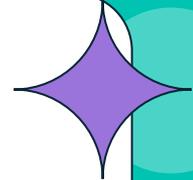


# 🌟 The results: 🌟

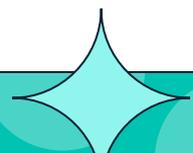
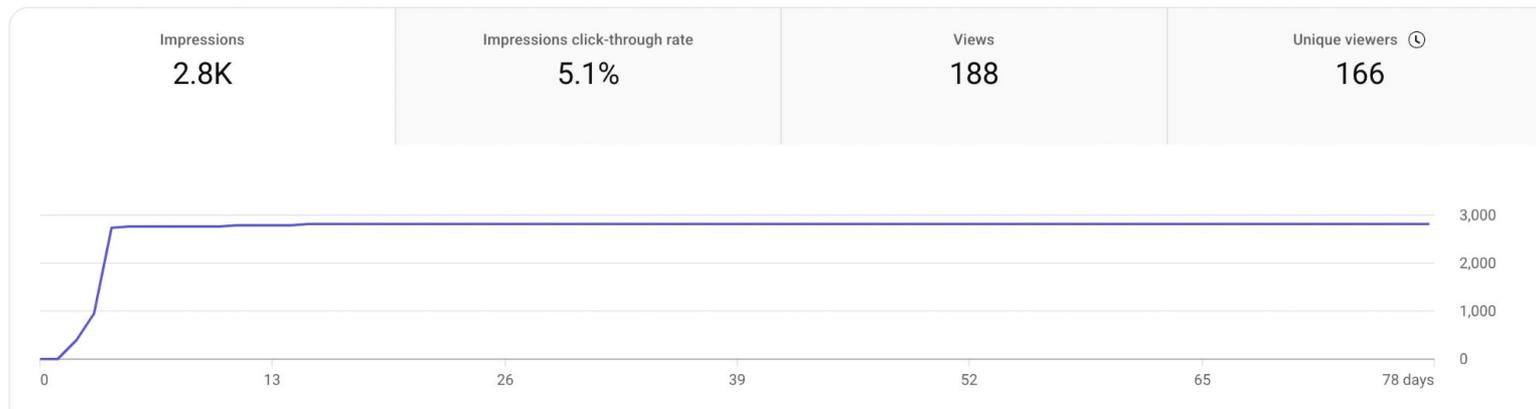
**Video 1 (ai) stats:** better impressions, less CTR, less UV  
**Reach**



# 🌟 The results: 🌟



**Video 1 (rp) stats:**      less impressions, better CTR, better UV  
**Reach**

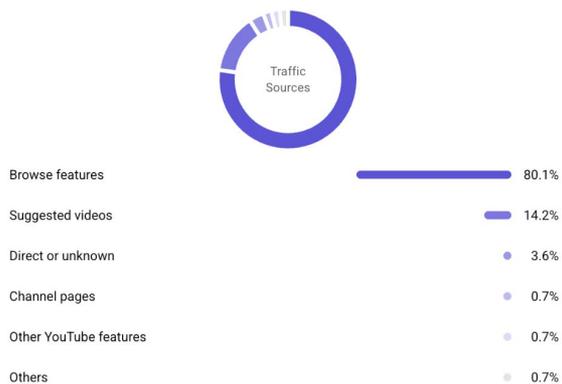


# 🌟 The results: 🌟

## Video 1 (ai) stats: Reach

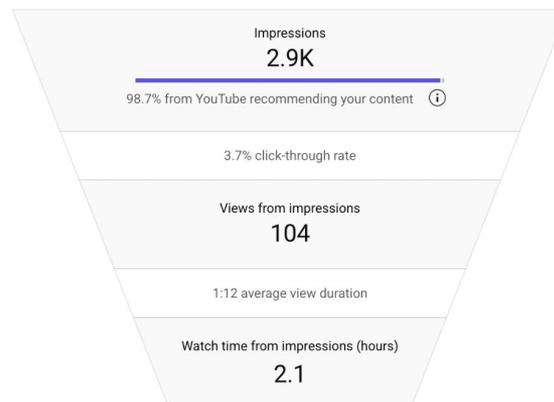
### How viewers find this video

Views - Since published



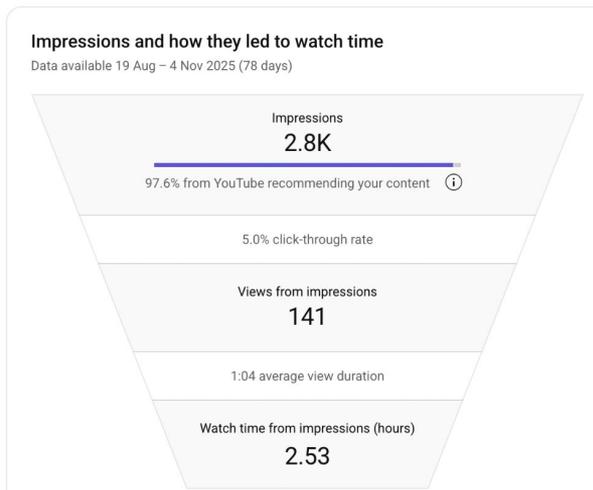
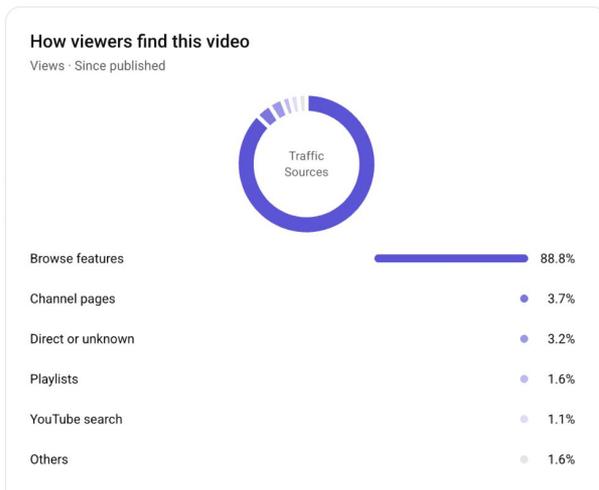
### Impressions and how they led to watch time

Data available 19 Aug - 4 Nov 2025 (78 days)



# 🌟 The results: 🌟

## Video 1 (rp) stats: Reach



# Tools I used:

Scripting - my own

Thumbnails:  
Canva Pro

Titles and tags:  
VidIQ

Post Editing:  
FNCPx

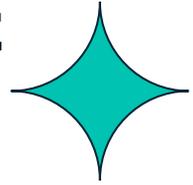
Recording: An Iphone  
11 pro, a softbox, my  
living room

Descriptions: my own &  
"optimised" by OpenAI

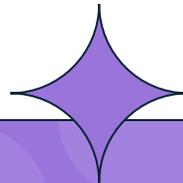
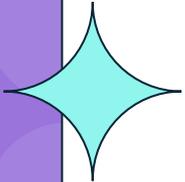
Editing AI video:  
HeyGen Pro

Uploading to YouTube:  
manual

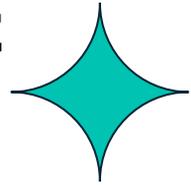
**The conclusion of the experiment**



**What you  
can **learn** from this  
experiment?**

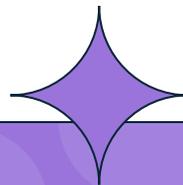
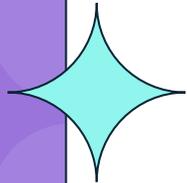


**The conclusion of the experiment**



**YouTube has  
no problem with AI  
content...**

**People do.**



03

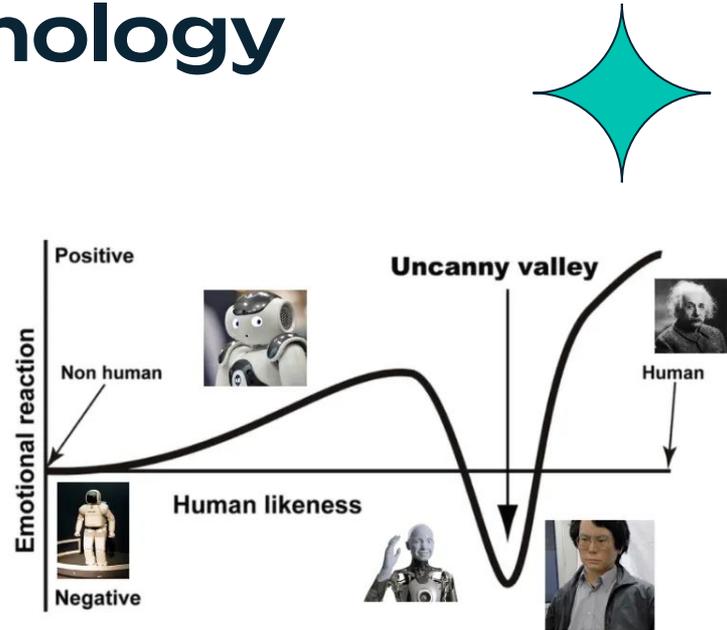
# The viewer's psychology



# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect:

"The psychological repulsion to things that are *near* - **but not quite** - human."

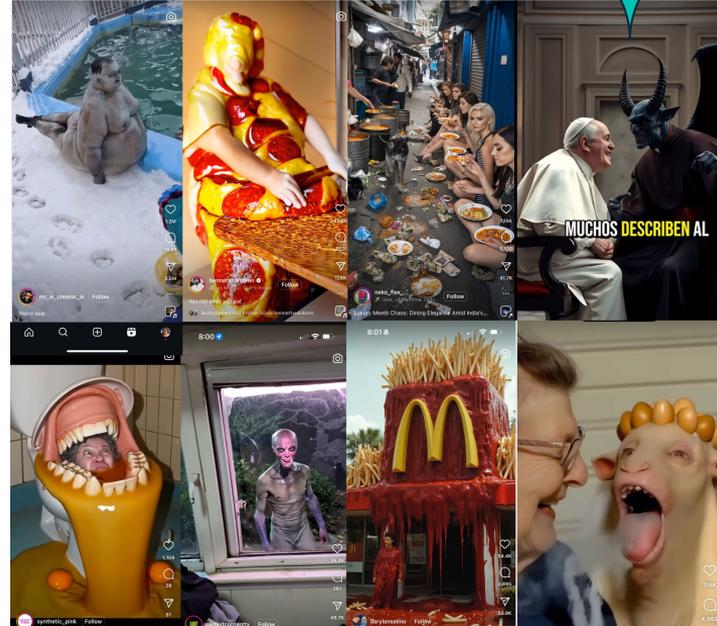


# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect in video:

It was used mostly to create an unsettling feeling of something scary.

But morphed into general fast recognition of AI generated videos.



# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect in video:

Not that most of the AI videos wasn't scary in the first place... tbh, too many fingers gives me the heebie-jeebies too.

But knowing that, we now could try and perfect as much as possible the final product.



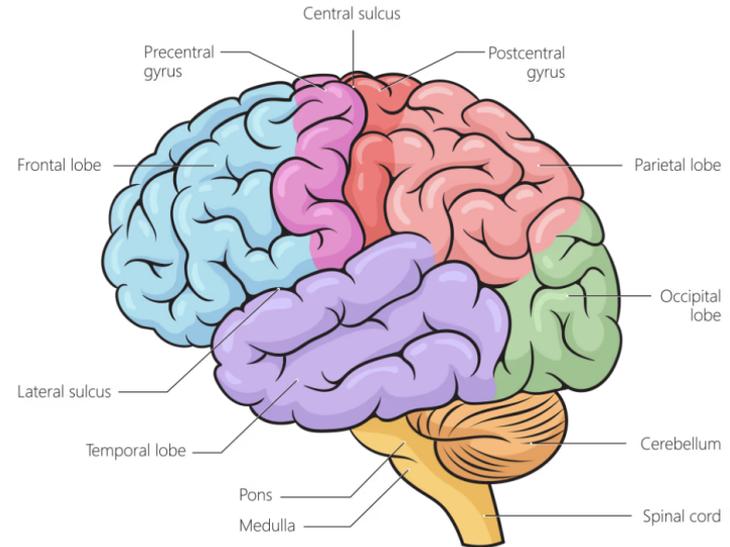
# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect:

Your brain has some really cool features you don't even realise.

While you watch a video to relax, your brain will calculate hundreds of metrics at the background just to make sure what you see is real.

Human brain  
(Lateral view)



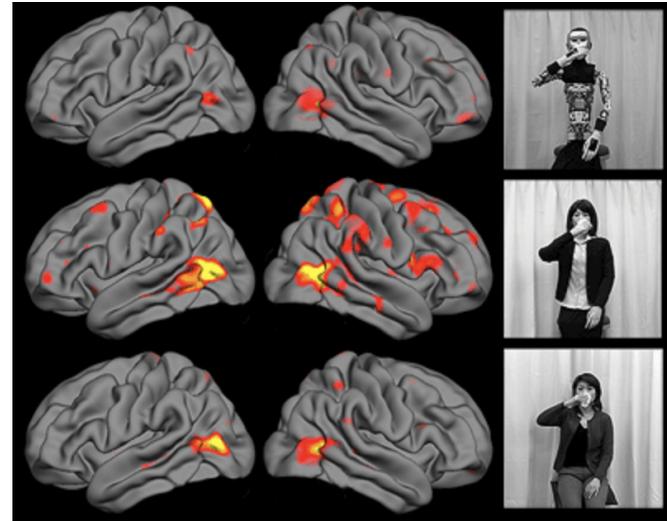
# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect:

On the right you see a real experiment showing you how our brain reacts to:

- A robot looking robot
- An Android (human looking robot)
- A human

<https://research.universityofcalifornia.edu/stories/2012/02/uncanny.html>

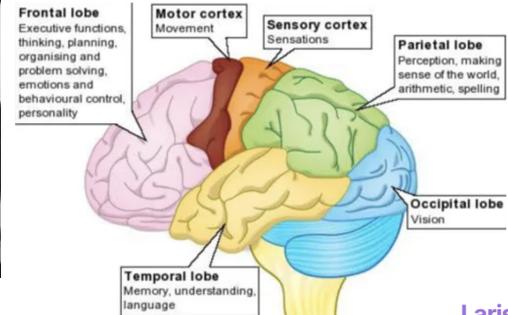
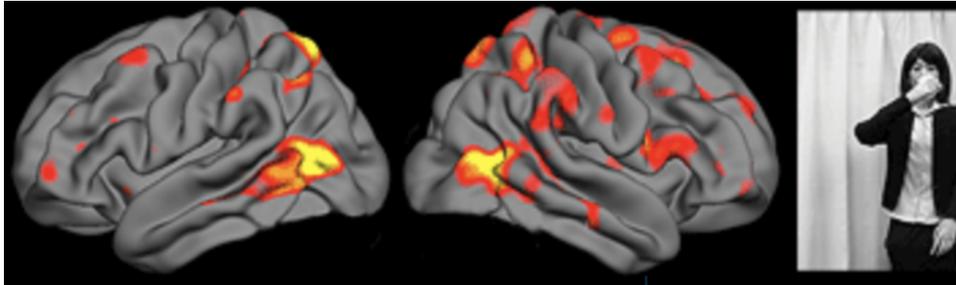


Brain responses as measured by fMRI to videos of a robot (top), android (middle) and human (bottom).

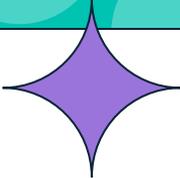
# The viewer's psychology

## The uncanny valley effect:

UC San Diego neuroscientist **Ayse Saygin** was trying to find out what's going on in our brains that account for this distinct switch from a familiar to an unnerving feeling. And she found out that the human brain will activate different centres of itself when is trying to understand something that looks real, but doesn't feel real.

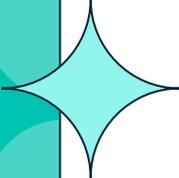


# The viewer's psychology



## The uncanny valley effect:

At the moment, your brain will catch:

- Weird eyes movement
  - Not quite right mouth movement
  - Unnatural face mimics
- 

Not that you have a glossary on what is real, but you brain do.

## The short explanation:

It's an evolutionary trace that was designed to protect you from predators. Now it protects your reality from culprits, such as deep fakes etc.

# The viewer's psychology

## The solution

The newest models have the opportunity to be trained almost up to perfection. If you cannot spot the difference easily, everyone else also can't.

And there are a few softwares that can help you with that.



04

**Tools you can use to  
create realistic content**

# HeyGen



Platform Use cases Learning Pricing Enterprise Company

## Free your story AI video generator

Fast, simple, and incredibly powerful. Start with a text, image, or audio clip. Then, our AI video generator creates the entire video for you, complete with voiceovers, translations, and styles that match your brand.

[Get started for free →](#)



\$29/mo

**Avenara**  
[avenara.com](https://avenara.com)

### Video Generation:

- Unlimited videos
- Videos up to 30-mins
- 1080p video export
- Fast video processing
- Extended video generation w/ Avatar IV

### Everything in Free, plus:

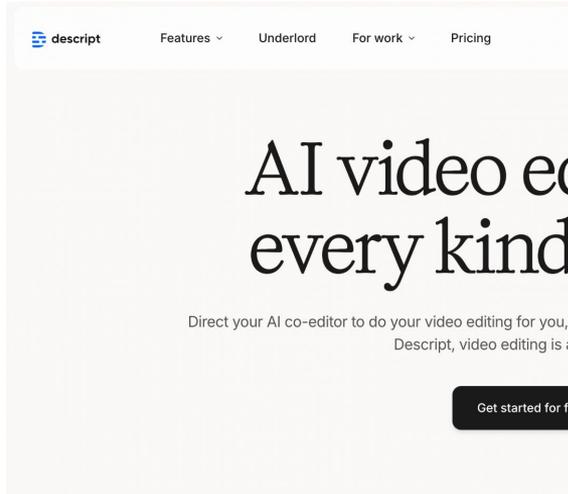
- 1 Custom Video Avatar
- 1 Custom Interactive Avatar
- 700+ Stock Video Avatars
- Voice cloning
- 175+ languages and dialects
- Generate Looks
- Look Packs
- Watermark removal
- Brand Kit

Imagine... Canva for AI video generation.

- Easy to maneuver
- Easy to train
- Not too expensive

Larisa  
Ivanova

# Descript



- 🕒 30 media hours / month
- 🌟 800 AI credits / month
- 📄 Export 4k, watermark-free
- 🎁 Full access to Underlord, our AI video co-editor and 20+ more AI tools
- 🗣️ Generate video with the latest AI models
- 📚 Unlimited access to royalty-free stock media library
- 👤 Access to top ups for more media hours and AI credits

Imagine being a content writer but with video...

- Easy and fast video editing
- One of the most popular editor in the world
- Renown businesses use it



€35/month

**Avenara**  
[avenara.com](https://avenara.com)

Larisa  
Ivanova

# Artist

Artist

AI Video AI Image AI Voiceover Music More Business

## Create any video you can

Get cutting-edge AI image and video, voiceovers, high-quality music, and more. The choice of 30M+ creators worldwide.

Start Free Now

- AI videos Veo 3.1 Sora 2
- AI images Nano Banana
- AI voiceovers
- Music & stems
- Footage & video templates
- Sound effects
- LUTs
- Plugins
- Extensions for Premiere Pro

Select your monthly AI credit amount ⓘ

7,500 credits Included in plan

- Up to 25 AI videos per month
- Up to 750 AI images per month
- Up to 1.5 hours of AI voiceover time per month



€39.99 /month  
€479.88 billed annually

**Avenara**  
[avenara.com](https://avenara.com)

Imagine... Chat GPT and Midjourney had an offspring...

- Control over the model you use
- One of the most popular tools now
- Quite easy to navigate and use

Larisa  
Ivanova

# Hot tip on using Artlist

Go from this...

Make a short video of a person waiting for a train. It's early in the morning so the lighting should look nice. Use like a normal camera lens, maybe something around 35mm or 50mm, doesn't matter too much. Add a bit of that cinematic blurry thing. The colors should be kind of warm but also a bit cold in the dark parts, like a movie.

The person should be wearing normal clothes and holding a phone. There are other people around but don't make them too noticeable. Maybe have a bike somewhere too. The train comes in while we see the person thinking or something.

The camera should move a little bit, maybe sliding or moving to make it feel more professional. Try not to make it shaky. Add some fog so it looks cool. Sound should just be train sounds and maybe people walking. Don't add music.

At the end, we should get a nice frame that looks good for a thumbnail, where the person is kind of turning while the train is behind them. Make it look realistic and cinematic.



...to this

```
Format & Look
Duration 4s; 108° shutter; digital capture emulating 65 mm photochemical contrast; fine grain; subtle halation 0

Lenses & Filtration
32 mm / 50 mm spherical primes; Black Pro-Mist 1/4; slight CPL rotation to manage glass reflections on train win

Grade / Palette
Highlights: clean morning sunlight with amber lift.
Mids: balanced neutrals with slight teal cast in shadows.
Blacks: soft, neutral with mild lift for haze retention.

Lighting & Atmosphere
Natural sunlight from camera left, low angle (07:30 AM).
Bounce: 4x ultrabounce silver from trackside.
Negative fill from opposite wall.
Practical: sodium platform lights on dim fade.
Atmos: gentle mist; train exhaust drift through light beam.

Location & Framing
Urban commuter platform, dawn.
Foreground: yellow safety line, coffee cup on bench.
Midground: waiting passengers silhouetted in haze.
Background: arriving train braking to a stop.
Avoid signage or corporate branding.

Wardrobe / Props / Extras
Main subject: mid-30s traveler, navy coat, backpack slung on one shoulder, holding phone loosely at side.
Extras: commuters in muted tones; one cyclist pushing bike.
Props: paper coffee cup, rolling luggage, LED departure board (generic destinations).

Sound
Diegetic only: faint rail screech, train brakes hiss, distant announcement muffled (-20 LUFS), low ambient hum.
Footsteps and paper rustle; no score or added Foley.

Optimized Shot List (2 shots / 4 s total)
0.00-2.48 - "Arrival Drift" (32 mm, shoulder-mounted slow dolly left)
Camera slides past platform signage edge; shallow focus reveals traveler mid-frame looking down tracks. Morning
2.48-4.00 - "Turn and Pause" (50 mm, slow arc in)
Cut to tighter over-shoulder arc as train halts; traveler turns slightly toward camera, catching sunlight rim at

Camera Notes (Why It Reads)
Keep eyeline low and close to lens axis for intimacy.
Allow micro flares from train glass as aesthetic texture.
Preserve subtle handheld imperfection for realism.
Do not break silhouette clarity with overexposed flare; retain skin highlight roll-off.

Finishing
Fine-grain overlay with mild chroma noise for realism; restrained halation on practicals; warm-cool LUT for moor
Mix: prioritize train and ambient detail over footsteps transients.
Poster frame: traveler mid-turn, golden rim light, arriving train soft-focus in background haze.
```

# Hot tip on using Artlist

What's on your mind today?

Hey, Nova, this is a full guide on prompting for Sora 2. Analyse it, and from now on, when we do a prompt for Sora 2, please follow this guide:

[https://cookbook.openai.com/examples/sora/sora2\\_prompting\\_guide](https://cookbook.openai.com/examples/sora/sora2_prompting_guide)

+



[https://cookbook.openai.com/examples/sora/sora2\\_prompting\\_guide](https://cookbook.openai.com/examples/sora/sora2_prompting_guide)

# Hot tip on using Artlist

## ★ Example Version (Blank for Reuse)

css

Copy code

### [SCENE DESCRIPTION]

A [character description] stands in/at [location]. They are wearing [clothing details]. The

### [CAMERA]

Medium shot, eye-level. 50mm lens equivalent. Shallow depth of field. Camera slowly dolly-

### [LIGHTING]

Soft early-morning light with a warm highlight and cool shadows. Gentle fog in the background.

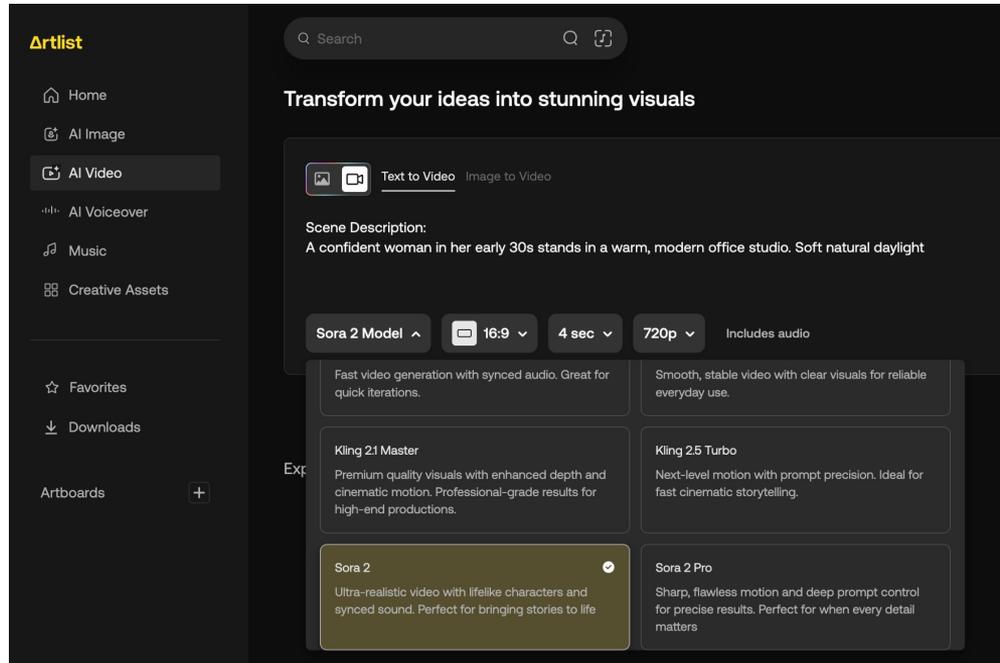
### [ACTION BEATS]

1. Character looks down at their phone.
2. They take a slow breath and glance toward the train approaching.
3. The wind shifts their jacket slightly.
4. The train enters the frame behind them.

### [AUDIO]

No music. Ambient station sounds, quiet crowd noise, distant train speakers.

# Hot tip on using Artlist



The screenshot shows the Artlist interface with a dark theme. On the left is a navigation sidebar with options: Home, AI Image, AI Video (highlighted), AI Voiceover, Music, Creative Assets, Favorites, Downloads, and Artboards. The main area has a search bar and the heading 'Transform your ideas into stunning visuals'. Below this, there are tabs for 'Text to Video' and 'Image to Video'. A 'Scene Description' field contains the text: 'A confident woman in her early 30s stands in a warm, modern office studio. Soft natural daylight'. Below the description are settings for 'Sora 2 Model', '16:9' aspect ratio, '4 sec' duration, and '720p' resolution, with a note 'Includes audio'. A grid of model options is displayed:

| Model            | Description  |
|------------------|--|
| Sora 2           | Ultra-realistic video with lifelike characters and synced sound. Perfect for bringing stories to life                  |
| Kling 2.1 Master | Premium quality visuals with enhanced depth and cinematic motion. Professional-grade results for high-end productions. |
| Kling 2.5 Turbo  | Next-level motion with prompt precision. Ideal for fast cinematic storytelling.  |
| Sora 2 Pro       | Sharp, flawless motion and deep prompt control for precise results. Perfect for when every detail matters              |
| (Unlabeled)      | Fast video generation with synced audio. Great for quick iterations.   |
| (Unlabeled)      | Smooth, stable video with clear visuals for reliable everyday use.   |

# Final advice:

- Don't use pearls on your AI training videos (or glasses),
- Try again, and again, and again, and you will get there,
- Stretch the limits everytime you can,
- Make your content the right answer among everyone else.

# Thanks

Contact me at  
[avenara.com](https://www.avenara.com)

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