

Youtube and online video guidelines for official BK use

This document is designed to provide guidelines on the use of Youtube and other online video services for official Brahma Kumaris content (on official Brahma Kumaris branded online channels). These guidelines are also offered as a best practise document for individual BKs wanting to upload videos – which feature BK content – in a personal capacity.

As technical details from one online video service to another vary a little, for the purpose of this document they focus on Youtube. However, most - if not all - the advice and requirements outlined in the technical section should be transferrable to other online services too.

Background

Online video sharing has been a growing activity over recent years, with Youtube being the biggest of a range of websites that allow users to upload videos to the world on the internet. Within the space of a few years, Youtube and other sites like it, has transformed the online behaviour of millions of people. Youtube is now not just a place to watch videos, it has become the second biggest search engine as well – often being used in preference to mainstream search engines like Google and Yahoo to find things that people are searching for (e.g. 'how to' video guides, reviews of products, clips of TV shows, footage of major news stories, sporting events, etc).

For more background info on Youtube statistics, visit:

http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics

The Brahma Kumaris have a limited official presence on Youtube. These currently consist of channels for the BKs in India, (<http://www.youtube.com/brahmakumariz> - which contains video upload of the essence of the sakar murlis, but not the whole murlis), the BKs internationally (<http://www.youtube.com/brahmakumaris> - relatively new channel focussing on videos for a general international audience), the Release Your Wings show (<http://www.youtube.com/user/releaseyourwings>) and the BKs in the UK (<http://www.youtube.com/brahmakumarisuk> - videos of public events, videos used as content in public programmes and lighter or promotional content used in social media).

There are a number of other Youtube channels that are more loosely affiliated to the Brahma Kumaris based on the channel name, branding or type of content, where the content is either wholly or majority BK related content (e.g.:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheOmShantiChannel>)

In addition, there are a number of accounts that have been set up by individuals, which contain BK-related content, of varying degrees of quality from the consistently good quality, popular and suitable for a general public audience (such as <http://www.youtube.com/easymeditation>) to ones which are uploading full sakar murlis read in Madhuban, which are clearly not appropriate for a general public audience (such as: <http://www.youtube.com/user/OmshantiNews>). The same is the case for a number of other online video services, including Vimeo, Blip.tv and Dailymotion.

There have been a number of issues that have come up in recent times which have led to the need for guidelines to help clarify best practise on Youtube and other video sharing sites:

- Re-uploading or re-editing original BK content without attribution or credit (e.g. audio commentaries, videos, artwork) to the original BK creator/author.
- Uploading content without permission of BKs featured in these videos, leading to difficulties for BKs in their lokik lives.
- Uploading content to the public that is only suitable for a BK audience and as a result potentially damages the reputation of the BKs.

Editorial guidelines

Youtube is used as a medium for transmitting content that ranges from formal to informal and irreverent. The tone of BK content can also be light and entertaining as well as informative or more formal in content. Typically, the maximum allowable length for a video is 15 minutes, although you can get the ability to upload longer length videos if you meet certain criteria. For more information, visit:

<http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=71673>

Before uploading any video, it's important to be clear in answering the question '**What is the purpose of uploading this video?**'. The answer could fall into a number of categories, for example:

- promoting an event or trailing an official BK book, film, etc;
- uploading a recording of a public programme so a wider audience can view it;
- giving the viewer an experience of meditation or a spiritual message that they can connect with;
- a 'how to' guide such as cookery demonstration;
- a funny or light hearted clip for entertainment that has the potential to be shared widely on social media.
- a self-contained video on a spiritual theme or subject associated with the Brahma Kumaris

A follow-up question to answer is '**Would this video make sense to a member of the public that doesn't know the Brahma Kumaris?**'. If the answer is 'no', then the video is unlikely to be suitable as content for an official BK Youtube channel.

As a basic rule to follow, **never upload content that you wouldn't be comfortable showing on a public platform.**

** While the official BK Youtube channel in India does upload videos of the essence of the murlis, this is an exception and not a model that should be used elsewhere.*

*** Youtube is sometimes used as a means of uploading content for viewing privately or to a selected group of individuals. If that is your intention – and not for public consumption – then the above editorial guidelines may not need to be followed. It is important that in these instances, you ensure that the video is marked as 'private' or 'unlisted' and then is deleted once it has been viewed by the individuals whom it had been intended for.*

Copyright, permissions, attributions

In addition to the editorial guidelines, there are other considerations that need to be made before uploading video content:

- **Is the content of the video all your own work and creation?** You should not use any non-BK content (e.g. artwork, music, video clips, and voiceovers)

– in its entirety or in part - unless you have cleared its use through acquiring an appropriate licence or permission from the content creator in writing. If you are using the content of other BKs, it is best to seek their permission, but at the very least as a sign of appreciation and respect for their work they should be credited in the video description as the original author/source. Where possible, it is also recommended to include website links of where the original content can be found in the video description box. It is discouraged to re-upload identical video that has already been uploaded by another Youtube channel. There are links to resources at the end of this document where you can obtain copyright-free material.

- **Have you got the permission of anyone that is identifiable in your video for it to be uploaded on the internet?** If you have not, then you should not upload the video. Permission can be gained through an official release form, or at least through an email confirmation that is kept. Where this is not possible, verbal permission needs to be obtained after a clear explanation is given on what the video will be used for.
- **Include an official BK website URL at the end of the video.** This will help point the viewer to additional information and BK resources (e.g., this could be the national country website, the official international BK website or a resource like Just-A-Minute).

Branding

Any official BK Youtube channel should include the official BK logo (the Shiva Baba image with the 16 rays). Alternatively, the official BK country/regional logo that the YouTube channel is representative of. Any other imagery should be appropriate for a public audience. If it is a national BK YouTube channel, it should follow the same colour scheme as that country's official BK website.

In the channel description, it should be made clear it is an official BK YouTube account and include a link to the relevant official website. #

For e.g.: "This is the official Youtube channel for the Brahma Kumaris UK. For more about the Brahma Kumaris, visit: www.bkwsu.org/uk".

Authorisation process

Any official channel set up on Youtube – or similar video sharing site – needs to go through an appropriate clearance process. It is suggested that an initial point of contact for advice is the official social media rep for your region. To find out who this is, speak to your RC office who will have nominated the social media rep originally. Alternatively, send an email to: socialmedia@bkwsu.org

Technical guidance

File Type

YouTube accepts video files in the following formats: .WMV, .AVI, .FLV, .MOV,MPG and .MP4. File size cannot exceed 1 GB.

Video Information

You will need to fill out the following fields when uploading the video:

- **Title** - a descriptive heading that explains what the content of the video is. It's useful to think what words someone might type in the search box if they were looking for a video like this – and then trying to include these words as part of the video title. A suggestion is to search for popular videos on Youtube on a

similar theme and see what titles they have, to see if any keywords in those videos could be used in your title too. The first two words of a title are the most important in terms of search engines, so try and ensure that you choose these carefully.

- **Description** – A brief explanation of the video, which ideally will also help distinguish it from other videos. Include references to sources where you are re-using other BK content (e.g. music, commentaries, voiceovers, artwork, etc). Always include a URL link where a viewer can get further information (eg the official BK website).
- **Tags** – Keywords used by viewers to easily locate your video. Example: A cookery video may be tagged 'food', 'vegetarian' and 'healthy eating'. You can use a number of tags, which need to be separated by spaces. It's useful to include tags as they are often used by search engines to identify and rank your videos. It's a good idea to ensure the main keywords in your film title are also included in the tags. List tagged words in order of priority (with the most important ones first)
- **Category** – this is the group classification for videos. Find the category that you feel best describes your content.
- **Thumbnail picture** – this is the image that will identify the video in search results. It can be a random image automatically generated by Youtube, or you can pick a key frame that you feel is most appropriate from a selection that will be offered to you during the upload process by Youtube. Alternatively, you can also upload a jpeg image at a resolution of 640x840.
- **Map Location** – this may be kept blank if the video isn't location-specific.
- **Playlists** – these are videos grouped together based on a common theme/subject. If you have other videos that you think relate to the new video you are uploading, you may wish to create a playlist or add the new video to an existing playlist. Otherwise, you can leave this option unselected.

Comment management

When you upload a video to Youtube or another online video service, you can select an option to include or exclude the ability for that site's users to leave comments at the bottom of your video. You can also choose to allow only approved comments to go up. These are comments that will be sent to your Youtube account for approval, before they are published and visible. This is the recommended option to use. If you need more help or guidance with managing comments from other users contact your regional social media rep, or email: socialmedia@bkwsu.org

Useful links:

Getting started with Youtube

https://www.youtube.com/t/about_getting_started

Royalty free music (purchase may be needed)

<http://www.soundsnap.com>

Royalty-free video footage

BBC Archive: www.bbcfootage.com

Getty Images both contemporary and vintage: www.archivefilms.com

Stock, archive and news footage network: www.footage.net

Online index to specialist footage libraries: www.stockfootageonline.com

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