

## Subbable: Sustainable Crowd-Funding for Online Content Creators (685 words)

*John & Hank Green, the force behind [Vlogbrothers](#) and the online community known as Nerdfighteria, have launched Subbable: a beta service which gives viewers a chance to support their favourite content creators via pay-what-you-want subscription.*

7 November 2013 – Changes have been fast and frequent for [YouTube](#) as of late. Last month they [disabled Video Responses](#), a feature which allowed viewers to upload videos “in response” to what they watch. This week, YouTube rolled out [Google+ comments](#), which prohibits users from commenting on videos without an activated Google+ account—even their own. It's the latest move by the video hosting giant (read: Google) that has creators and community viewers feeling both outraged and discouraged.

Many YouTube creators expressed frustration on Twitter following the news:



**Thomas Ridgewell** @thetomska

7h

Looking forward to the next YouTube/Google+ update. Maybe they'll remove that ugly "upload" button.



**Kayley Hyde** @kayleyhyde

49m

YouTube is really good at making me never want to make videos again. Stop trying to make Google+ happen ugh.



**Tom Bacon** @tom\_bacon

20m

I... but... IT'S MY OWN DAMN VIDEO! @YTCreators @YouTube  
<pic.twitter.com/F4X1y3ZVpJ>

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[The 10,000 Year Clock](#)

by **Tom Bacon** • 679 views

The Clock of the Long Now is a 200 ft clock being built inside a mountain in Texas d  
To see if we can. Subscribe for more: <http://bit.ly/YgASHt> I'm on...

ALL COMMENTS (42)

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**Emma Blackery** @emmablackery

1h

Google+ is about as embarrassing and unwanted as a drunk dad dancing at a wedding. No one invited you over, Google+. Sit back down.

Their contention is understandable, and they're hardly the first to accuse Google of forcing Google+ on its users.

However, well-known vlogger and author [John Green](#) had something else to say. He (re)announced the beta version of a new service, [Subbable](#), which aims to end many of the YouTube community's woes.



**John Green** @realjohngreen

1h

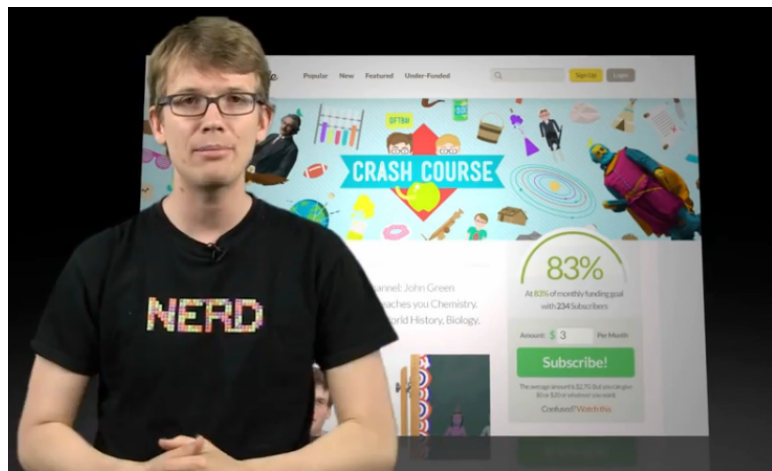
You can't comment on YouTube without google+ anymore...so we installed normal, functional comments over @subbable. [subbable.com](http://subbable.com)

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But it goes beyond the Google+ comments hullabaloo—Subbable is meant to complement YouTube in a variety of ways that make it easier for creators and viewers to connect. As it says on-site: “Subbable is a subscription service that allows audiences to connect with and fund the creators they love in a sustained, ongoing way.” With the success of sites like [Kickstarter](http://Kickstarter), which uses a one-time payment structure to crowd-fund projects, it makes sense to extend that idea to something more sustainable—a monthly “pay-what-you-want” subscription model.

So what does Subbable offer to content creators and their viewers? Primarily, it's about funding content that might not otherwise get its chance. “Not everyone wants to watch educational videos about biology or learn of a man's eccentric universe of many clones”, the About page states. “But those of us who do watch really care, and want these projects to grow and thrive.”



With funding from Subbable, creators don't have to depend on ad revenue – and this has more implications than it sounds. On YouTube, creators cannot choose the ads that run during their content, which has led to ethical dilemmas for many creators. And as Subbable points out, “With ad-based revenue models, many projects are unsustainable unless they have millions of views, but some of the best niche content that we care about the most isn't going to appeal to millions of people.” So creators don't have to cater to the lowest common denominator and can produce the unique, original content that YouTube used to be known for.

Here are some other benefits of the service:

- **You can subscribe for free!** Even subscribing at the zero-dollar level will make you eligible for “perks” like behind-the-scenes content and whatever else the creator chooses to share.
- Your Subbable **feed will include all content** produced by those you're subscribed to—a feature which seems like common sense but has been increasingly disabled by YouTube's evolving dashboard. Or as Subbable put it: “We want to connect creators directly with their audiences without having Certain Web Site's Strange Algorithms decide who does and does not see their subscriptions.”
- **Each dollar you contribute goes into a “perk bank”,** so you can redeem perks from your favourite creators as they become available. This could mean additional content, but it could also mean merchandise and video shout-outs.

- And, as John pointed out this morning, **you won't need a Google+ profile** to participate in the discussion. If the state of Twitter this morning is any indication, that might be the straw that sends an exodus their way.

**Subbable** is currently accepting applications from creators, but visitors can already take a look at the opening roster: 12 channels ranging across a variety of subjects and a wide range of subscriber counts. From [MysteryGuitarMan](#) (2,745,786) and [Minute Physics](#) (1,957,506) to [Gunnarolla](#) (65,404) and [The Good Stuff](#) (46,632), it appears that Subbable has made an earnest effort to represent the diversity found on YouTube. It will be interesting to see how the selection develops, hopefully to include more points of view from women and people of colour.

For more information about the service, visit [www.subbable.com](http://www.subbable.com) or follow their Twitter handle [@Subbable](#).

–ALICE WILDE

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