GOOGLE · YOUTUBE

Marketing Manager, YouTube Music and Premium GTM

Interview Prep Brief · San Bruno, CA or Los Angeles (Playa Vista), on-site

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00 Read This First

The one thing to take from this

On October 28, Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai announced that YouTube Music and Premium now have **more than 150 million subscribers**, including free trials, up from 125 million in March 2025 (Android Authority). The growth came after YouTube raised US prices in April 2026: Premium went from $13.99 to $15.99 a month and Music from $10.99 to $11.99 (Trak.in). Spotify reported 306 million paid subscribers in the same quarter (Music Business Worldwide).

Why this matters for your interview: this role's two programs, experiential activations and a new global affiliate program, are new ways to keep that growth going now that prices are higher. They also give subscribers a reason to stay. Be ready to explain how each one would add subscribers who **stay and pay**, not just free-trial sign-ups. The 150 million figure includes trials, and the posting asks for experience with subscription funnels and lifetime value.

If you only prepare three things:

- **One experiential story and one creator, affiliate or referral program story**, each with the measurement framework you used. These are the two areas you'd build from scratch (Q1, Q3).
- **A structured way to answer open-ended cases** such as "How would you grow YouTube Premium?" Google scores problem-solving as its own attribute, and recent marketing candidates report getting questions like this (Q5, Q6).
- **How YouTube Shopping affiliates works today.** It now has more than 1.3 million creators (Technobezz, Sep 2026), and the posting says your program would integrate with it (Q4).

01 Company Overview

YouTube Music and Premium at a glance

YouTube Music and Premium ("YTMP") is YouTube's paid subscription business, run inside the YouTube Marketing organization (Google job listing). **Premium** removes ads across YouTube and includes background play, downloads and YouTube Music. **YouTube Music Premium** covers music only. **Premium Lite** is a cheaper tier with no ads on most videos, but it doesn't include ad-free music. YouTube says it will offer Premium Lite in every country where full Premium is sold (PPC Land). Alphabet doesn't report how many subscribers are on each plan (Music Business Worldwide).

Recent news (2026)

- **Oct 28:** Music and Premium pass 150 million subscribers, including trials (Android Authority).
- **Sep:** YouTube says its Shopping affiliate program has more than 1.3 million creators, and that sales through the program have grown 13 times over in two years (Technobezz). It plans to reach 35 markets by the end of 2026 (Social Media Today).

- **Jul:** an expanded deal with NBCUniversal means eligible US Premium subscribers will get ad-supported Peacock Premium (YouTube Blog). Bundles like this are part of how Premium is positioned.
- **Jul–Aug:** Fred again.. and LATIN MAFIA's three-day livestream reached more than 7.5 million livestream views and ended in an arena show, with a YouTube Music exclusive recording (YouTube Blog). This is a recent example of a live music moment tied to the subscription.
- **Apr:** YouTube streamed Coachella on seven stages, and later renewed its exclusive livestream deal through 2030 (Net Influencer). This is the festival the posting names for activations.
- **Apr:** US price increases. Premium is now about $16 a month, Family about $27 and Premium Lite about $9 (The Desk).

Competitive context: Spotify has about twice as many paid subscribers as YouTube's combined count (Music Business Worldwide). YouTube's advantage is that Premium covers all of YouTube, not just music.

02 Role Scope: What You'd Own

Per the job posting, you'd build two new programs for YouTube Music and Premium: its **first global approach to experiential marketing** (activations at moments like Coachella and BravoCon), and a **new global affiliate program**. The affiliate program covers choosing an agency, finding creators, setting up payouts and integrating with YouTube Shopping Affiliates. The posting asks for 6 years of integrated go-to-market marketing, consumer brand activations, building affiliate, creator or referral programs globally, leading without direct authority, and building measurement frameworks.

The role breaks into five ownership areas. **For each one, prepare a STAR story showing you have done it.**

Ownership area	What it means day to day	Story prompt
1. Experiential strategy	Defining where Premium shows up in person (festivals, fan conventions, pop-ups) and what each activation is meant to achieve.	An activation you planned that drove a business result, not just attendance.
2. Affiliate program build	Agency selection, creator sourcing, payout structures and fraud controls, launched in several countries.	A creator, affiliate or referral program you launched or scaled.
3. Product & platform integration	Working with Product and Engineering on tracking, sign-up flows and YouTube Shopping Affiliates integration.	A time you needed engineering help to make a marketing program work.
4. Cross-functional leadership	Aligning Music and Creator partnerships, Product, legal and regional teams without managing any of them.	A time you got many teams to commit to your plan.
5. Measurement & exec recommendations	Setting KPIs and learning agendas, proving incremental subscribers, and making recommendations to executives.	A time your data changed a senior leader's decision.

Why this matters for your interview

Both programs are **new**: the posting calls it Premium's *first* global experiential approach and a *new* affiliate program. Interviewers will likely look for evidence that you can build from nothing, set up measurement before launch, and judge activations by subscribers rather than buzz. Two things in the posting stand out. First, the affiliate program is about **subscriptions**: creators would earn for driving Premium sign-ups, which is different from the existing Shopping program where creators earn when viewers buy products. Second, the preferred

> qualifications mention AI-driven marketing pilots and subscription funnels, which suggests the team will ask how you'd use AI and how you think about retention.

03 Company Values

Google publishes a list of guiding principles called **"Ten things we know to be true"** (Google, updated Jan 2026). Google calls it a philosophy rather than a list of values, and says it revisits the list from time to time. Most of the ten are about products, search and advertising. These four are the most relevant to this role:

Principle	What it means for this role	How it may show up in your interview
Focus on the user and all else will follow	Activations and affiliate offers should give fans something they value, not just promote the product.	Explaining the subscriber benefit behind an activation or program.
Fast is better than slow	You'd launch two new programs, so you'd need to start small, test and learn quickly.	Stories about getting something new off the ground.
Great just isn't good enough	Raising the bar beyond what has been done before.	Pushing for a stronger result than the brief asked for.
You can be serious without a suit	Google's culture: hard work in a collaborative, informal setting.	Collaboration and culture-fit ("Googleyness") questions.

How Google actually scores interviews. The principles don't mention hiring. What Google has described publicly is the **four attributes every interviewer scores**, introduced by Laszlo Bock, Google's former head of People Operations (Fortune, LinkedIn Talent Blog). Recent sources say the same framework is still used: Exponent's 2026 guide says each interviewer in the Google PMM loop is assigned one of the four attributes (Exponent), and a Google Cloud Marketing Manager candidate describes a "4 pillar" process (Glassdoor). **The questions in section 05 are grouped by these attributes**, with Role-Related Knowledge split into the two parts of this job.

Attribute	What Google has said it means	How it may show up in your interview
General Cognitive Ability	How you solve problems and learn, not your grades. Open-ended questions with no single right answer.	Marketing cases: "How would you grow Premium in a new market?"
Leadership	"Emergent leadership": stepping in when a problem needs a leader, and stepping back when someone else should lead.	Leading cross-functional work without authority.
Googleyness	Comfort with ambiguity, bringing something new, and intellectual humility ("I was wrong, and here's my new position").	Stories about ambiguity, changing your mind and collaboration.
Role-Related Knowledge	Having the skills and experience to do this specific job.	Experiential, affiliate, subscription marketing and measurement depth.

Note: Bock's descriptions of the four attributes are from 2014. Google has said little publicly about them since, so treat the definitions as a guide, not an official rubric.

04 Interview Process (Brief)

- **Typical steps:** recruiter screen → one or two screening interviews (often with the hiring manager or a peer) → an onsite or virtual loop of about **four 45-minute interviews**, each focused on one attribute (Exponent). After the loop, a separate group reviews the feedback before an offer is made.
- **Expect hypotheticals as well as behavioral questions.** Recent Google marketing candidates were asked "How would you make more money for YouTube?" (Glassdoor, Jan 2026), "How do you utilize AI in your marketing work today?" and "Talk me through your experience delivering revenue-driving campaigns" (Glassdoor, 2026). Exponent lists "How would you price YouTube Premium?" as a Google product question (Exponent).
- **Length:** one 2026 Marketing Manager candidate (Singapore) described six to seven rounds (Glassdoor). Plan for several weeks.

Worth knowing: Google is hiring for several roles on this team. A Partnership Marketing Manager, YTMP role (posted Aug 2026) covers telco, auto and device partners (listing). A Product Marketing Manager, YouTube Premium, Global role (Aug 2026) covers product launches (listing). Knowing which partner teams you'd work alongside will help in the hiring manager round.

✱ ***What people are saying online:*** *a verified 2026 Exponent post from a Google L5 Product Manager candidate advises not to rely too heavily on Google's stated rubrics (source). One March 2026 Glassdoor review describes an interviewer arriving late and leaving early (source). These are individual experiences. No Reddit or Blind discussion specific to this role was found.*

05 Interview Questions to Prepare

Ten likely questions, grouped under Google's four hiring attributes (see section 03), with Role-Related Knowledge split into the two halves of this job. For each theme, the table shows what a strong answer demonstrates (left) versus what a weak answer signals (right). Use it to check your own stories. These are likely questions, not a confirmed list.

ROLE-RELATED KNOWLEDGE: EXPERIENTIAL

Designs live activations that are tied to a business goal, reach people beyond those in the room, and are measured by the subscribers they bring in. (Based on the posting's experiential responsibilities.)

Strong answer	Weak answer
• States the business goal before the creative idea • Links on-site moments to sign-ups or trials (codes, QR flows, in-app offers) • Reaches people at home through creators and livestreams • Shares a real cost-per-subscriber or comparable result	• Describes the event, not the result • Measures success by attendance or impressions only • No plan for the people watching online • Can't explain how the activation tied to the product

1. **Tell me about a brand activation you led at a festival, convention or pop-up. How did you know it worked?** What was the goal? What did you measure? What would you change?
   What it's really asking: Can you run activations that pay off, not just look good?
   What they're looking for: A clear goal, a sound measurement approach and honest lessons.
2. **If you had one activation budget for next year, would you spend it on Coachella or BravoCon? Why?** Who is each audience? What does Premium offer each one? How would you measure it?
   What it's really asking: Can you choose between options using audience and business logic?
   What they're looking for: Audience insight, a clear recommendation and trade-offs you can defend.

ROLE-RELATED KNOWLEDGE: AFFILIATE & CREATORS

Builds creator and affiliate programs that grow globally: right partners, fair payouts, clean tracking and protection against fraud. (Based on the posting's affiliate program responsibilities.)

Strong answer	Weak answer
• Covers the full build: agency, sourcing, payouts, tracking • Chooses commission models that reward paying, retained subscribers • Adapts to local markets and rules • Tracks activation rate, conversion, retention and payback	• Talks only about recruiting influencers • No view on payout models or fraud • Treats every market the same • Can't name program metrics beyond clicks

3. **Walk me through an affiliate, creator or referral program you launched or scaled. How did you structure it?** How did you select partners? How were they paid? What went wrong?
   What it's really asking: Have you done the hardest part of this job before?
   What they're looking for: End-to-end program design, real numbers and lessons learned.

4. **How would a Premium affiliate program differ from YouTube Shopping affiliates, where creators earn when viewers buy products?** What would creators earn for? How would you stop free-trial gaming? How would they work together?
   What it's really asking: Do you understand subscription economics and YouTube's own platform?
   What they're looking for: A clear difference between subscriptions and one-time sales, payout logic and fraud controls.

GENERAL COGNITIVE ABILITY

Breaks open-ended problems into a structure, makes reasonable assumptions, uses data, and lands on a recommendation. (Based on Google's "general cognitive ability" attribute.)

Strong answer	Weak answer
• Clarifies the goal and the audience first • Lays out a clear framework and talks through it • Uses rough numbers to size the opportunity • Ends with a recommendation and how to test it	• Jumps to a list of channels or tactics • Doesn't ask clarifying questions • Makes no assumptions or estimates • Never reaches a recommendation

5. **Case: How would you grow paid YouTube Premium subscribers by 10% next year?** Which audience would you target first? Which levers would you use? How would you test them?
   What it's really asking: Can you structure an open-ended growth problem?
   What they're looking for: Audience segments, prioritized levers, rough sizing and a test plan.

6. **Case: We ran a festival activation and trial sign-ups jumped that week. How would you know whether it actually worked?** What else could explain the jump? What would you compare against? What would you look at 90 days later?
   What it's really asking: Do you understand incrementality and retention, not just spikes?
   What they're looking for: Control groups or holdouts, conversion from trial to paid, and longer-term value.

LEADERSHIP

Steps up to lead when a problem needs it, brings many teams along without authority, and knows when to let others lead. (Based on Google's "emergent leadership" attribute.)

Strong answer	Weak answer
• Shows a clear personal role in getting others aligned • Uses data and shared goals to persuade • Steps back when someone else is better placed • Gives senior leaders a clear recommendation and what it needs from them	• Says "I" for everything, or "we" with no clear role • Gets agreement only by escalating • Recommendations lack data • Doesn't adapt the message to senior audiences

7. **Tell me about a time you led a project across Product, Engineering and partners when none of them reported to you.** How did you get commitment? What happened when priorities clashed?
   What it's really asking: Can you lead the way this job requires?
   What they're looking for: Influence, clear plans and how you handled conflict.
8. **Tell me about a time you made a recommendation to senior leadership that changed a decision.** What did you recommend? What data did you use? What pushback did you get?
   What it's really asking: Can you turn results into decisions at the executive level?
   What they're looking for: A concise recommendation, strong data and handling pushback.

GOOGLEYNESS

Comfortable with ambiguity, open to new information, willing to change course, and good to work with. (Based on Google's "Googleyness" attribute.)

Strong answer	Weak answer
• Creates structure when there isn't one • Changes course when the evidence changes • Admits mistakes clearly and early • Credits others and builds goodwill across teams	• Needs a clear brief before starting • Defends the original plan whatever the data shows • Hard to point to a time they were wrong • Takes credit and leaves out the team

9. **Tell me about a time you changed your mind about a campaign or strategy because of new information.** What did you believe at first? What changed it? How did you tell the team?
   What it's really asking: Do you show intellectual humility?
   What they're looking for: Openness, speed of adjusting and clear communication.
10. **Tell me about a time you started something from scratch with very little direction.** Where did you start? What did you decide not to do? What would you do differently?
    What it's really asking: Can you build Premium's first experiential and affiliate programs?
    What they're looking for: Comfort with ambiguity, smart first steps and focus.

06 Level Calibration

Google doesn't publish its leveling framework or state the level in this posting. Two signs point to **L5** (a senior individual contributor), but that is **unconfirmed** and based on Google's general patterns: the posting asks for **6 years** of experience, and its base range (**$141K–$205K**) matches other recent YouTube Marketing manager postings that ask for 6 years. Compare with sibling postings and reported pay:

Comparison	Posted base range	Reported total pay (levels.fyi, Mar 2026)
This role (6 years required)	**$141K–$205K** + 15% bonus + equity (per job posting)	L5 marketing average: ~$287K (levels.fyi)
PMM, Core and Artist, YouTube Marketing	$141K–$205K + equity (listing)	Same band as this role
Partnership Marketing Manager, YTMP (Aug 2026)	$116K–$166K + equity (listing)	Likely one level below (L4 PMM: ~$219K)
Next level up (L6)	Not posted	L6 PMM: ~$368K (levels.fyi)

What this tells you: at L5, interviewers will expect you to set strategy for a program yourself, not just carry out someone else's plan. That fits a role building two programs from scratch. If your experience is closer to L6 (leading global programs, or managing people or agencies at scale), say so in your stories. Ask the recruiter to confirm the level early, because it determines both the pay band and how high the bar is.

07 Pay

Posted range: $141,000–$205,000 base (US), **plus a 15% target bonus, equity and benefits**, per the job posting. Google notes that the range depends on location, and that your level, skills and experience are assessed during interviews.

Beyond base salary

- **Bonus:** 15% target per the posting. On a $187K base, that's about $28K, close to the ~$30.7K average bonus levels.fyi reports for L5 marketing (levels.fyi).
- **Equity:** included per the posting. levels.fyi reports an average of about **$69.7K a year in stock** for L5 marketing (levels.fyi), and lists a front-loaded four-year vesting schedule of 38% / 32% / 20% / 10% for Google marketing roles (levels.fyi). Confirm the vesting schedule in your offer.

Reported total pay (estimates)

- **L5 marketing at Google:** about **$287K** average total pay (base ~$187K, stock ~$69.7K, bonus ~$30.7K) (levels.fyi).
- **Product Marketing Manager by level** (levels.fyi, last updated March 17, 2026): L4 ~$219K, L5 ~$281K, L6 ~$368K (levels.fyi). Glassdoor shows employer-provided ranges for some Google roles, but nothing for this specific title was found.

These are self-reported figures from levels.fyi, averaged across US locations. They are a guide, not a guarantee. The posted base range is the most reliable number.

08 Sources

Company and job postings

- Google: Partnership Marketing Manager, YTMP listing (team description)

- Google: Product Marketing Manager, Core and Artist, YouTube Marketing ($141K–$205K)
- Google: Partnership Marketing Manager, YTMP, YouTube Marketing (Aug 2026)
- Google: Product Marketing Manager, YouTube Premium, Global (Aug 2026)
- Google: Social Marketing Manager, YouTube Marketing (May 2026)
- Google: Ten things we know to be true (updated Jan 2026)
- YouTube Blog: NBCUniversal partnership and Peacock for Premium (Jul 2026)
- YouTube Blog: Fred again.. and LATIN MAFIA YouTube Music exclusive (Aug 2026)

News

- Android Authority: YouTube Music and Premium pass 150M subscribers (Oct 28, 2026)
- Music Business Worldwide: YouTube Music and Premium surpass 150M (Oct 2026)
- Trak.in: YouTube now has 150M subscribers; US price changes (Nov 1, 2026)
- The Desk: YouTube raises prices of ad-free and family plans (Apr 2026)
- PPC Land: Premium Lite expands to all Premium markets (2026)
- Net Influencer: YouTube and Coachella extend livestream deal through 2030
- Digital Music News: YouTube's Coachella 2026 livestreams (Apr 2026)
- Technobezz: YouTube Shopping affiliate program passes 1.3M creators (Sep 2026)
- Social Media Today: YouTube adds AliExpress; 35 markets by end of 2026
- Social Media Today: YouTube adds Amazon affiliate links (US)
- PPC Land: Shopping affiliates opens to UK; 500-subscriber eligibility (Aug 2026)
- Fortune: Laszlo Bock on how Google hires, from Work Rules (2014)
- LinkedIn Talent Blog: Google's four hiring attributes (2014)

Review and pay sites

- Exponent: Google Product Marketing Manager interview guide (2026)
- Exponent: Google Product Manager interview guide (2026)
- Glassdoor: Google Marketing Manager interview reviews (2026)
- Glassdoor: Google Associate Product Marketing Manager interview (Jan 2026)
- Glassdoor: Google Cloud Marketing Manager interview
- levels.fyi: Google L5 marketing compensation
- levels.fyi: Google Product Marketing Manager pay by level (Mar 2026)
- levels.fyi: Google marketing vesting schedule

Online sources (anecdotal)

- Exponent: verified Google L5 PM candidate experience (2026)

This brief compiles publicly available information, including company sources, news coverage, review sites and online forums. Interview, process and pay details reflect what others have reported online. They are not Emily Career Services LLC's own assessment and may have changed since this brief was prepared.