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Social Media Dimension of Video Made by Tourist (*An Amateur*)

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Abstract

Ever since the emergence of mobile technology, there has been a noticeable surge in tourists capturing live videos while on vacation. Despite the fact that online video diaries (vlogs) have become a highly popular form of media content, particularly among youthful audiences, the nature and usage of these live short snippets are not well understood. Seeking to analyse the potential of these amateur videos for the purpose of tourism, this essay aims first to find out the reactions of users towards these short videos and subsequently analyse how these live videos and stories influence the audiences' opinions and behaviours. Variations of the analysis in terms of parasocial responses, delight, and immersion were conducted with video content prepared in an unedited or simple manner ("amateur") and meticulously edited ("professional"). Regarding the majority of these factors, I notice that the reviews for the amateur video are significantly more positive and influential. The findings indicate the impact of live videos and stories in conveying genuineness, enhancing tourism encounters, augmenting destination appeal, and shaping a captivating destination impression.

Keywords Mobile technology; Video blogs; Amateur video; Parasocial responses

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Introduction

Travellers are always eager to use cutting-edge technology to document their travels. With the advent of Web 2.0 and the pervasiveness of cellphones and an intelligent environment, documenting the traveller's experiences by means of photography and videos and sharing them on social networking sites and travel sites has become a common practise among many travellers. Tourism videography has emerged as a distinct media form and travel-related activity, distinguishable from conventional tourist photography due to its unique relationship to technological and social practises. Additionally, with the swift growth of digital cameras and mobile phones, travellers have these powerful resources at their disposal, which necessitates a higher level of proficiency in order to utilise them effectively. Consequently, device-based specialisations, such as routines and practises surrounding the use of GoPro cameras, have developed. Drones, which enable travellers to surmount terrestrial limitations and eye-level perspectives, provide an expanded view of where they are going (destination) and give their recordings new dimensions. They are also gaining popularity in tourist videography. This study examines the effectiveness and attributes of videos captured by tourists while on vacation.

The rise of mobile technology has made videos crucial for promoting destinations and their brands through emotional and experiential means. Unlike photos, videos capture tourists' activities and actions more vividly, creating powerful and emotional experiences that make them an ideal promotional tool for tourism advertising. Moreover, videos generate a positive attitude towards the destination, enhance brand image, and increase the intention to visit more effectively than other communication formats. The videos shared on social media platforms influence the tourism experiences of others by stimulating mental delight in their imaginative thinking, thus boosting their eagerness to visit the place of interest. Therefore, videos are essential for creating a positive image and brand for destinations.

Furthermore, technical advancements have improved visitors' access to better equipment and editing skills, resulting in a rise in the creation and sharing of movies online. There are several social media platforms that allow video sharing on the web (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and so on), and their applications have expanded. Videos used to have to be uploaded from computers, but today they can be readily posted from smartphonest, resulting in a rise in the creation and sharing of movies online. Typically, this video footage is posted on social media. Recently, new applications that allow tales (films that expire for 24 hours) or live

videos (real-time videos) have become a social phenomenon in recent years, and their rising use is extremely important for tourism. However, there are currently very few research papers that focus on these traits.

The Influence of YouTube Vlog Production Techniques on Viewer Recognition, Parasocial Response and Enjoyment

During the past three decades, the development of digital technology has had a profound effect on how media is transmitted. The word "traditional media" now refers to radio, television, and newspapers and has the implications of being antiquated or out of date. Nowadays, the majority of media users receive material entirely digitally, with on-demand video platforms replacing traditional TV schedules (Rainie, 2017). Meanwhile, printed newspaper subscriptions are being threatened by ever-changing social media feeds (Kamarck & Gabriele, 2015).

YouTube has become the most popular media sharing platform in recent years, alongside Netflix, Facebook, and Instagram. According to Anderson and Jiang (2018), 85% of a sizable sample of American adolescents identified as frequent YouTube users, the highest proportion among all digital media platforms surveyed. Over 400 hours of new videos are uploaded to YouTube every minute, resulting in an almost infinite quantity of content. While media professionals contribute to this massive archive, it is mostly supported by user-generated content, including amateur film. Vlogging, a practise in which people submit videos of themselves sharing personal thoughts or daily life events, has grown in popularity among YouTube viewers.

Vlog culture distinguishes itself from traditional media by actively engaging viewers as an important component. In contrast to traditional media's passive reception techniques, vloggers typically communicate directly with their viewers and supporters in their YouTube videos. This immersive experience emphasises the need to generate high degrees of audience identification, immersion, and parasocial engagement for the appeal of vlogs (Brouwer, 2015). However, there is a dearth of empirical research on these media psychological principles in the context of vlogs, and the transition of many vlog channels into highly refined media products has yet to attract the interest of the media psychological community. The connection between vlog aesthetic characteristics and viewer experience is therefore largely unknown. To fill this need, this study

will perform an experimental analysis of viewers' reactions to two vlogs: one with poor production quality characteristic of an amateur vlogger and another with a more polished, professional style equivalent to that of successful YouTube channels.

The Advancement of Vlog Content Creation

The standard vlogging format consists of a presenter or presenters addressing the camera on a wide range of topics, including fashion, social issues, and celebrity gossip. Vlogs were first viewed as a way for amateurs to express themselves, according to Burgess and Green's (2009) early appraisal of this developing medium. The authors did, however, observe that the vlogging culture on YouTube had entrepreneurial aspects, and they expected that the border between "professional" and "amateur" would become increasingly blurred over time (Burgess & Green, 2009, p. 104). Today, the prediction made several years ago has materialised into a tangible reality: vloggers who managed to amass significant followings, commonly known as vlog influencers, have attained remarkable financial prosperity. This has transformed vlogging into a legitimate media industry, complete with covert advertising (Gürkaynak et al., 2018) and multimillion-dollar sponsorships (Lynch, 2018).

The culture of vlogging on YouTube has shifted towards professionalisation, which in turn has resulted in the professionalisation of vlogging as a media format (Kim, 2012). Although many vloggers still rely on inexpensive video equipment such as GoPro cameras or smartphones and learn video editing on their own, prosperous influencers frequently upgrade to advanced equipment and employ professional production crews. Nonetheless, this could take away from the core appeal of the medium, which is its appearance of unfiltered genuineness (Duplantier, 2016). Lee's (2020) recent research highlights the importance of successfully conveying a feeling of intimacy and interrelatedness in achieving success with mass-oriented computer-mediated communication. Certain authors suggest that particular stylistic decisions are necessary to maintain these significant perceptions among viewers (Strangelove, 2010; Abidin, 2015; Ferchaud et al., 2018). Nevertheless, aside from a limited number of content analyses (such as Cunningham & Craig, 2017; Zhang, 2018) and individual case studies, there is currently a lack of empirical research examining the connection between particular vlog features and the audience's overall experience, as noted in the existing literature. Existing research on this topic has relied primarily on ambiguous self-report measures, such as "perceived vlogger authenticity," while disregarding

established psychological principles that may underlie these conclusions. Cunningham and Craig (2017) argue that while traditional audiences attend theatres, vlog audiences would rather linger out in the green room with the actors. They explore the impact of parasocial interactions but do not name or quantify these phenomena. Similarly, Hunter (2015) asserts that viewers gain from the ability to "imagine being" vloggers, although no actual research on viewers' identification with vloggers has been conducted as far as we know.

Identified and Classified

According to Cohen (2001, p. 245), identified and classified refer to the temporary process of psychological assimilation, wherein a viewer adopts some or all of the traits or identities portrayed by media personalities. According to Slater et al. (2014), when viewers identify with a media character, they momentarily broaden their own sense of self and begin to subjectively perceive and understand the emotions and motives of another individual. Hoffner and Buchanan (2005) defined and categorised two forms of identification in the previous literature: similarity identification and wishful identification. The former is based on a sense of shared qualities with a media persona, whereas the other is more concerned with striving to replicate a character whose look or behaviour is very attractive.

On the basis of the impact of various vlog production approaches on two specific criteria, it was hypothesised that audiences were more likely to relate to and identify with the presenter of an amateur vlog. This is because the authentic and personal nature of the content would help bridge the gap between the depicted persona and the audience, making it easier to establish a psychological connection. Alternatively, we anticipated that if a vlogger had an improved and polished appearance in a high-quality video, it would result in a more significant desire for viewers to identify with them.

Parasocial Response

In general terms, parasocial occurrences refer to the unreciprocated reactions of viewers towards media personalities. Parasocial interaction (PSI) and parasocial relationships (PSR) are the two major categories of parasocial phenomena. Horton and Wohl (1956) described parasocial contact as the sensation of having an imaginative interaction with a media figure. Parasocial interactions,

on the other hand, as defined by Dibble, Hartmann, and Rosaen (2016), include the one-sided sensation of closeness to a media figure that is felt during and after the watching circumstance.

Horton and Wohl initially viewed parasocial phenomena as a pathological response to the illusion of social contact. In the words of Schramm and Hartmann (2008), these behaviours are non-pathological responses that do not require the illusion of reciprocal social contact. Additionally, Hartmann, Schramm, and Klimmt (2004) argued that parasocial interactions (PSIs) may range from superficial and instinctive reactions to high-level PSIs that have a more profound effect on viewers' thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. According to Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011), the current understanding of parasocial interaction (PSI) has little relation to Horton and Wohl's initial notion from 1956, given theoretical advances in this subject. PSI was initially defined by Horton and Wohl as a real illusion of reciprocal communication. The authors recommended the Experience of PSI (EPSI) as a novel construct based on the legacy of Horton and Wohl to re-establish the basic notion of parasocial interaction while acknowledging current advances. This unique concept is primarily concerned with the perception of shared awareness with a media celebrity.

Schramm and Hartmann (2008), Cummins and Cui (2014), and Tsai and Men (2016) indicated that PSI, PSR, and EPSI are all reliant on stylistic characteristics of media representations; hence, we included all three in our current study. However, after analysing the current research, it was impossible to construct a firm, unidirectional hypothesis relating the production style of a vlog to the parasocial response of viewers. Cohen and Tyler (2016) discovered that when participants heard that outside aides helped manage Twitter celebrities' profiles, their PSI towards them declined. Based on this discovery, we hypothesised that vlogging may have a similar impact. Viewers' perceived intimacy with a vlogger may drop if they become aware of a professional shooting team, resulting in lower parasocial responses. Multiple studies, such as those conducted by Cummins and Cui (2014) and Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011), have shown that enhanced attractiveness and longer eye contact with a persona may result in increased PSI and EPSI. The possibility that a more refined production style may elicit a greater parasocial response, as both of these aspects are frequently highlighted in professionally produced vlogs, was examined. It was challenging to establish a firm, unidirectional hypothesis regarding the relationship between a vlog's production style and viewers' parasocial responses. Furthermore, Cohen and Tyler (2016) found that participants' PSI towards Twitter superstars fell

after discovering that they had outside help maintaining their profiles. We hypothesised that viewers' perceived intimacy with a vlogger would decline when they were aware of a professional shooting team, hindering parasocial reactions. As a result, an open-ended research question was posed regarding how well-produced and unedited vlogs influence participants' PSI, EPSI, and PSR.

Enjoyment

Enjoyment is a psychological concept that is frequently boiled down to the "pleasure" felt when watching television. Recent psychology research, however, reveals that enjoyment covers far more than just hedonic requirements. It can also be the result of significant (i.e., eudaimonic) events that increase self-awareness or make people feel competent (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). Although this enhancement has increased our comprehension of pleasurable media experiences, it is argued that a hedonic approach is still applicable to vlogging. Most vloggers aim to create a relaxed mood in their videos by focusing on light-hearted themes like fashion, travel, or video games. Although this may not be true for every YouTube vlog channel, it is believed a hedonic approach is still applicable for this study due to the prominence of happy vlogs.

Several predictors of hedonic media enjoyment have been identified by researchers, including narrative coherence, elicited arousal, perceived novelty, and technical elegance (Bilandzic & Busselle, 2011; Eden, 2017). Similarly, all of the mentioned constructs have been previously linked to pleasure (Vorderer, Klimmt, & Ritterfeld, 2004; Ferchaud & Sanders, 2018). Taking into account all of these factors, it appears that professionally produced vlogs have a significant advantage over amateur videos, both in terms of visual quality and narrative structure. As a result, we believe that viewers will find professional vlog videos more entertaining compared to similar novice ones.

Methodology

This study looks at two components of internet video blogs (vlogs) that may be used to compare professional and amateur material: production instances and content characteristics. The article will examine a number of topics in order to acquire a better knowledge of video production,

such as the time and place of production, the producer of the video, the intended audience, and the technology employed in its production.

The study will also delve into the content characteristics of vlogs by investigating various elements such as the video's subject matter, image composition, component arrangement, whether it is part of a series, and where the viewer's attention is directed within the image. The examination will also analyse the image's perspective point, the visual links between its components, and how technology has altered the video's content.

The research attempts to give insights into the differences between professional and amateur video production and how these variations affect the content features of vlogs by investigating these two essential components of internet vlogs.

Participants

Our study included 100 people who were selected primarily via university email lists and local social media organisations. As a result, the majority of those who took part were undergraduate and graduate students. We tracked how long participants spent viewing the vlog and found 38 people who spent less than four minutes or more than 10 minutes watching the linked five-minute video (attention check). Our final sample included people between the ages of 18 and 35.

We decided to make our own vlog films for the current study in order to preserve total control over the experimental manipulation. To accomplish this, we enlisted the aid of a 26-year-old female amateur vlogger and requested that she create four distinct versions of a vlog, two of which were well-rehearsed (professional condition) and the other two of which appeared impromptu (amateur condition). The YouTuber presented the same topic in each of these pairs, which was "Backpacking Hacks."

We created the professional-quality videos using a Canon EOS 5D camera mounted on a tripod and the above specifications. In addition, we utilised external microphones and superior lighting equipment. In contrast, the novice stimuli were documented using a portable iPhone XS Max smartphone. In the professional condition, our presenter was instructed to deliver the two

scripts flawlessly; however, in the amateur condition, the presenter appeared to improvise the same material with varying pauses, mispronunciations, and camera errors.

After recognising the editing inconsistencies, jump cuts, stock footage inserts, and quiet background music were added to the professional-quality films. Aside from these stylistic inclinations, attempts were made to standardise as many parts of the vlogs as possible, including the presenter's wardrobe and cosmetics and video length. When the movies were finished, they were published on YouTube and incorporated into our online survey.



Figure 1 Difference between a Pro and an Amateur Shot



Figure 2 Comparison between a Pro and an Amateur Shot



Figure 3 Professional Versus Amateur Video Shot

Discussion

The success of amateur video vloggers can be traced to our natural curiosity about other people's lives. As we compare ourselves and imitate others, video blogs offer us a glimpse into someone else's life and allow us to dream about having different experiences. Additionally, the interactive nature of video content allows audiences to influence its quality and format, enabling creators to adapt their work to better meet the expectations and preferences of viewers.

Notably, vloggers who specialise in travel and tourism are particularly attuned to the voice of their audiences, taking into consideration their opinions and feedback. As a result, vlogger-created content is often flexible and valuable for both viewers and creators, with the potential for financial benefits through advertising and sponsorship opportunities.

However, the constantly evolving landscape of digital media and technologies means that these conclusions cannot be considered definitive. Trends and preferences change rapidly, and it is impossible to predict whether lifestyle content will remain as popular in the future. Nonetheless, as long as audiences remain interested in watching other people, video blogging will continue to be a popular and influential medium for content creators and viewers alike.

Table 1 A comparison between professional and amateur

	Professional	Amateur
Preproduction	Script, talent casting, directing, rehearsals, lighting and sound design.	Unscripted. Camera setup in available place.
Production	Carefully planned during shooting. Multi-camera and angle shootings. Preplanned composition, lighting and sound.	Random shooting, small number of shots, frequently single shot videos. Hand held shooting without any camera support.
Postproduction	Graphic editing by expert editor. Follow rules of filmmaking.	Raw or no edit. Sometimes simple graphics edit.
Costs	High costs budget.	Low or using available props or materials on site.
Content	Well-structured on information.	Unscripted, direct speech, spontaneous.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while the present study sheds light on a number of fundamental characteristics of media reception in the context of user-generated video (UGC), it is not possible to propose a one-size-fits-all method for developing effective vlogs. It should be emphasised that the study's

styles and themes reflect only a small percentage of the social media video or vlogging population.

Nevertheless, it is felt that an intentional approach to creating authentic stimuli, coupled with the experimental design of the study, seems to provide compelling evidence of the effects of YouTube's ongoing professionalisation. While the results shown have certain limitations, they highlight the importance of "production value" in a media landscape that tends to favour amateur content. Vloggers should not be afraid to strive for technical excellence to set themselves apart. The findings suggest that viewers are more likely to prefer content that includes a professional camera, thorough preparation, and expert editing. However, it is worth noting that the advantages of professional vlogs that were discovered in the study may be influenced by their relative rarity and the contrast they create with the abundance of novice content. If the "professionalised" style that was examined becomes the norm for most vlogs, audiences may once again find the imperfections and idiosyncrasies of amateur video diaries, such as poor lighting or unrefined delivery, more appealing.

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Authors' Bio

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