The influence of short video development on news communication strategies from factual information to emotional experience

Jingchen Yang

Occidental College, Los Angeles, United States

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine how news communication tactics are affected by the creation of short videos, specifically in the shift from factual information delivery to an emotional experience for the audience. This study aims to comprehend how news organizations modify their communication strategies to engage and connect with audiences in an era dominated by attention spans and information overload, given the growth of digital media platforms and the rising popularity of short-form content. The study uses a variety of methodologies, such as public opinion, academic research, and content analysis, to obtain deep insights into this changing environment.

1. Introduction

The efficiency of online content delivery has grown to be a major concern for media companies looking to connect and inform their audiences in an era where digital media consumption is the norm. In this quest, short-form video content—made famous by sites like Youtube Shorts, Instagram Reels, and TikTok—has shown to be an effective tool. In the context of short video motion content, this study explores the complex interactions among psychology, search engine optimization (SEO), and the art of visual storytelling. This study aims to shed light on the underlying mechanisms that shape viewer retention, information retention, and overall effectiveness in news communication strategies by looking at important components like emotional engagement, graphic techniques, and concise editing. Moreover, this study aims to answer the question of whether or not the media controls society, or if conversely, the reverse is true. By delving into these dynamics, this paper aims to offer priceless insights into the rapidly changing field of digital media, giving media practitioners a sophisticated grasp of how to leverage the pleasure theory and tailor their content to an audience that is adept at using technology.

2. Background Information

Ever since it was first developed, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) has been the main component that allows a website to rank higher when internal and external website optimization is used. Short video content, like Reels or Tiktok, falls under the category of external website optimization. This is because off-page elements like "adding the web site to the site guide, using social media factors, using links from other optimized web sites to the related web page" are all included in this type of

optimization. (Johnsen & Fahlström) The technique is best categorized under this heading as systematic ranking achieved by ongoing efforts from search engine providers that regularly update keywords.

Now for some quick video content: Zhang Yiming launched Musical.ly in September of 2016. In November 2017, Beijing Bytedance Technology purchased the app Musically, which it rebranded as TikTok. This program quickly rose to the top of the Chinese app store in terms of worldwide distribution (1). 800 million monthly users were recorded as of November 2021. Estimates for 2019 first-time installs totaled 738 million. While using TikTok is permitted for users 13 years of age and up, direct messaging between users is restricted for users 16 years of age and up (to protect younger people from grooming or other forms of inappropriate contact).

3. Methodology

This research will make use of earlier case studies in an effort to examine the impact of reader retention on digital media and delve deeply into audience participation on a subject that receives little attention from individuals. This study's methodology focuses on the interactions between psychology, search engine optimization (SEO), and visual storytelling through a thorough and methodical examination of short-form video material. In order to provide a comprehensive knowledge of the elements influencing viewer retention, information retention, and overall success in news communication strategies, the study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis. The case study that will be conducted within this research paper will be set on the personal account of the author of this research. The case study is therefore credible because of the deep experience the writer of the paper has with various forms of content creation for the past five years, in internationally speaking.

4. Literature Review

While there has been research from both perspectives in the long search about psychology's influence on media and entertainment, some existing studies point to the following ideas that: social, behavioral, health and physiological psychology have played an important role in shaping social entertainment, as well as the other way around, in that social entertainment has played an important role in shaping people's physiological psychology. In Boyle's study on *Entertainment Computing*, "Durkin and Barber found that adolescents who play games had more favorable outcomes with respect to family closeness, school engagement, involvement in other leisure activities, positive mental health, substance use, self-concept, friendship network and obedience to parents."[1] Moreover, examples such as "serious games" which are designed purposely for learning, skill acquisition and training have also been a common tool for educators that implement gaming as a part of student wellness and growth. According to the *Journal of American Pharmacists Association*, MedSMART is classified as an approved serious game that educates the end-user by putting their decision making to the test in a low-stakes environment [2]. Pharmacists in return, have taken on an even more integrated role in the process by applying and incorporating the MedSMART game into a variety of pharmacy practice contexts. From this perspective, people are capable of influencing the trajectory of entertainment media to work more positively to create invaluable career paths that expand beyond just short term digital entertainment.

Another aspect of this study is seen through entertainment media's control on human beings.

Based on an analysis of the psychological reaction behind emotional gratification to entertainment by the psychologist Bartch from the Department of Media and Educational Technology at the University of Augsburg, three characteristics were found to reflect feelings of gratifying reward: joy, excitement, and sympathetic grief. These aspects not only draw attention to the range of emotions

that can be elicited by media consumption, but they also show the complex interactions that exist between entertainment media and people's psychological, social, and cognitive health. Therefore, it becomes crucial to comprehend the complex dynamics of these components in order to fully appreciate the deep influence that entertainment media has on human behavior and emotional health. In addition to these three characteristics mentioned above, there are four other factors that show how emotional media experiences fit into the larger picture of people's social and cognitive needs: 1) emotional experiences that are introspective; 2) emotional involvement with characters; 3) social sharing of feelings; and 4) vicarious emotional release.[3]

5. Analysis

Whether it is SEO, short video content or storytelling media softwares, everything falls under the category of the gratification theory. This is the single key retention tool for all of these entertainment-oriented productions. The assertion that SEO, short video content, and storytelling media softwares all align with the gratification theory underscores a fundamental principle in contemporary entertainment and digital content consumption. According to the University of Kentucky, the Gratification Theory is the concept "that media users play an active role in choosing and using the media. Users take an active part in the communication process and are goal oriented in their media use." [4] This theory is rooted in the idea that individuals seek media for specific psychological needs and satisfactions, serving as a unifying concept across these diverse platforms. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) caters to the user's need for information and relevance, ensuring that content aligns with their queries. Short video content taps into the instant gratification of concise and engaging narratives, catering to the audience's desire for quick, entertaining snippets. In other words, the shorter the content, the longer retention span. Storytelling media softwares, on the other hand, leverages the gratification theory by providing immersive and emotionally resonant experiences. Essentially, the gratification theory emerges as the linchpin, the central retention tool that binds these varied forms of entertainment, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of audiences in the digital age.

6. Case Study

For a more detailed analysis, this research case study will be conducted on the audience of the author of this research paper's own personal social media content account. Attached below is the total engagement of the most engaged video with the least engaged video on the platform Tiktok. The reason for choosing the platform Tiktok is because this is the most active and main source of following for the author. The study will be conducted through: engagement pattern analysis, content type impact study as well as audience demographics exploration.

7. Engagement Pattern Analysis

The purpose of analyzing the engagement patterns of the audience on the author's Tiktok Account is to identify common themes, content types, or posting times that correlate with higher engagement. In doing so, it then would answer whether or not the popularity of content is reliant on people's interest or purely random. (See Figure 1 Below)

When comparing two different video uploads that have the same editing style as well as content idea, the views, likes, comments and reposts, are drastically different within the video analysis. Although the algorithm is intended to present material that is customized to each user's interests, the significant difference in engagement for seemingly similar videos indicates that the system does not rely exclusively on features that are readily apparent. The algorithm may be sensitive to more minor

differences, such as the timing of the upload, the precise language of subtitles, or the inclusion of trending features, even when videos have the same editing style and thematic material. To tailor their material for algorithmic favor, content providers must be aware of these subtle factors. In essence, videos with higher engagement may be more prone to land on the "For You Page." In doing so, it creates a positive feedback loop and allows the algorithm to recognize the said creator's videos as engaging. Understanding that, content creators need to edit beyond just content replication that scores a holistic approach beyond videos that are already popular.
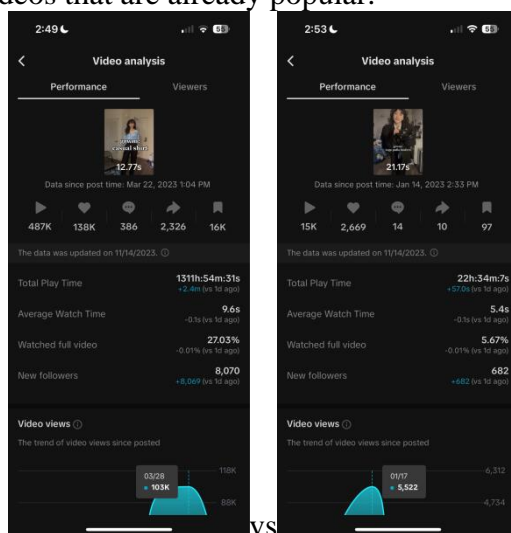

Figure 1: Same Content Different Video Engagement Analysis)

8. Content Type Impact Study

This compares the engagement levels of videos with different content types. Through comparison it determines whether or not the type of content that resonates the most with the audience would increase engagement. (See Figure 2. Below)

Through making the comparison of engagement between the unboxing video with the mini-vlog type of video content, it is evident which video performed better. The algorithmic frameworks and user habits that control these platforms are reflected in this change. Material producers are negotiating a landscape in which producing engaging material for viewers and strong engagement metrics turns into a strategic need, often at the price of strictly creative or unique projects.

This change is in line with a larger trend in media consumption, which is that media is being produced more and more with consumers' preferences in mind rather than their needs. The emphasis on relatability and accessibility has increased due to the democratization of video creation on platforms such as TikTok. Content producers are faced with the challenge of producing material that meets the tastes and expectations of their audience as media becomes increasingly user-centric. In summary, the move toward material that prioritizes interaction over pure creation highlights how digital platforms are changing. The difficulty is striking a balance that both meets the audience's changing tastes and retains the integrity of creative expression, even while creators may need to make calculated tweaks to conform to algorithmic preferences. This phenomena highlights the reciprocal link between content makers and viewers in the digital age and is a reflection of a bigger trend in media where content is increasingly personalized to appeal to the audience.
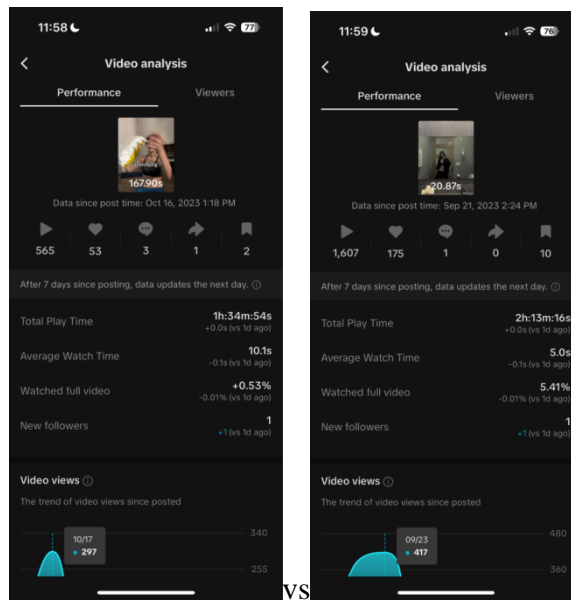
Figure 2: Different Content Different Video Engagement Analysis

9. Conclusion

The goal of the study was to examine how the conventional distribution of factual information is giving way to a paradigm in which the audience's consumption of news becomes an emotional one. News organizations must adjust and innovate in their communication tactics to be relevant and interesting as digital media platforms grow and people's attention spans become shorter due to information overload.

The ramifications of this study go beyond news companies, as we find ourselves at the crossroads of media evolution, audience behavior shifts, and technology advancement. The understandings gained here add to the larger conversation on communication strategy adaptability in the face of a media ecosystem that is changing quickly. It's clear that news communication is changing dramatically, and this study's findings will be crucial for scholars, media practitioners, and communicators as they negotiate the shifting waters of the digital era.

References

[1] Emotional gratification in entertainment experience. why viewers of ... (n.d.). https://www.tandfonline. com/doi/ full/10.1080/15213269.2012.693811

[2] Abraham O, Slonac E, Paulsen Z. Pharmacists' perspectives on MedSMART: A serious game to educate youth about opioid safety[J]. Journal of the American Pharmacists Association, 2023.

[3] Boyle E, Connolly T M, Hainey T. The role of psychology in understanding the impact of computer games[J]. Entertainment computing, 2011, 2(2): 69-74.

[4] Caldwell, S. (n.d.). Uses and Gratification Theory. Uses and gratifications theory - mass communication context. https://www.uky.edu/~drlane/capstone/mass/uses.htm