



Impact of User Generated Content on P.G students: An Empirical Study at University of Mysore

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ABSTRACT

The new media 'User Generated Content' is a widely discussed, debated and investigated theme in our times. The new technology world is known as the information age and new information and communication technologies have converted the modern society into an information society. The new media and User Generated Content have become prominent instruments of research and development across the globe. Therefore, the advanced technology and New Media has led to the birth of User Generated Content in the modern times. The present study evaluates Impact of User Generated Content on Post Graduates students in the University of Mysore, Karnataka State and aims to bring to the fore front the accessibility of user-generated content by students, its distribution pattern in the New Media, quantify students' involvement in UGC and how it affects their day to day lives. The present study approached the problem through a systematic survey method.

KEYWORDS : User Generated Content, new media, advanced technology, competitive learning

Introduction

New Media is changing the world dramatically in the era of Technological development. New Media has affected the information flow, entertainment and communication process. We have witnessed that old media is being replaced by use of e-words; e-news, e-content, e-books, e-journals, e-zines and blogs. Advanced technology and New Media has led to the birth of User Generated Content, a widely discussed and investigated subject in the technology and Media fields. UGC is not only in the media but in computer science as web 2.0 and commerce where it is being used to expand audience for different brands. Now a day's User Generated Content (UGC) is succeeding because of the young generation's need of constant interaction, participation, and sharing of their ideas, thoughts, and opinions instantly and globally. These digital consumers are now termed as Millennial and spend a lot of time consuming content online than from traditional media sources. The trend is check social networks for latest updates, latest reviews on attractions, gadgets, hotels or restaurants and then plan accordingly. Site owners know UGC works best when it is linked to news, products and markets.

What is User Generated Content?

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines UGC as fitting the following requirements:

- A content which is made publicly available through internet,
- Boasting a certain level of creativity and
- Contents created outside of professional practices
- Most user-generated content outputs are created without expectation of any kind of profit.

One of eminent scholars Paul Bradshaw (2010) states that User Generated Content can refer to anything from a comment posted by a one-time anonymous website visitor, to a 37-minute documentary that one of your readers spent ten years researching. The most accurate definition might simply be that User Generated Content is material media organization has not commissioned and paid for.

Key Features of User Generated Content

Original unedited content published regularly on social media sites and distributed by the creator with the potential to reach millions of the people.

No space limitations and the content has its own management system in the form of links.

Mass amateurism – people making content for the love of it not for financial gain.

Review of Literature

Katherine A. MacKinnon (2012) analyzed the major difference between User Generated Content and Advertising on the consumer and advertisers perspective. The author has examined the consumer confidence on user generated content and consumers' conviction of advertising as it relates to user generated content and word of mouth in the research. The researcher have found that about 66.3% of consumers surveyed do rely heavily on user generated content when attempting to make purchasing decisions.

Neil Thurman and Alfred Hermida (2008) have examined how national United Kingdom newspaper websites are integrating user-generated content (UGC). The scholars have identified a move towards the use of moderation due to editors' persistent concerns about the reputation, reliance, and legal liabilities, indicating that the newspaper websites in UK are adopting a traditional gate-keeping role towards UGC.

Nitesh V. Chawla, Lussier, and Troy Raeder (2014) have scrutinized the consumption of user generated content and social media networking in knowledge sharing among users. The researchers have stated that Knowledge-sharing online social networks are becoming increasingly pervasive and popular in the present times. The researchers have gathered from digg.com to present novel findings of the study. They have also investigated the level of Reciprocity in the network and uncover relationships that are significantly less balanced than expected.

Ethics and Legalities of UGC

The analysis entitled "Ownership-of-user-generated-content" by Nandita Saikia (2010) questions the ownership of content whether it belongs to information producers or social sites owners. The author asks; would it be legally possible to effectively decide that one owns the property of another person without paying that person anything? According to Nandita Saikia, there is need to look at the Doctrine of Unconscionability which is part of contract law were; 'if a contract is excessively one-sided, a court may intervene to aid the injured party.'

Effect of User Generated Content

In analysis written by Steven Rosenbaum (2014) on "User Generated Content is Dead as Video Evolves", Steven examines how amateur videos are taking over professional print content. 'No longer is there a sharp dividing line between professional content and the internet. In fact, without fanfare, the walled-gardens have come down, amateur content has become little more than background noise. And web content creation has moved front and center.'

User Generated Content in India

In a conference entitled "VCCircle Digital Content & Investment Forum 2011" in Bangalore, BG Mahesh discusses UGC in India: Its Evolution & Opportunities calling it 'free content'. The most popular of UGC being education, cricket, movie and travel sites. People are happy to contribute to sites until it becomes big then trouble starts and they request for money for their contribution. The best example is 'Huffington Post's sagawhine' were some authors started to demand money after the sale.

Research Methodology

The present study approached the problem through a systematic survey method, which is most popular in media studies. The impact of user generated content among P G students were evaluated through a scientific empirical investigation. Appropriate statistical tests were conducted to analyze the primary data, draw inferences, test the hypotheses and make suggestions and recommendations.

Data collection

Primary data was obtained from PG students by use of structured questions distributed to respondents directly, through emails and personal interviews. Since UGC studies have never been carried out in Media scholarships in India particularly Karnataka, getting secondary data was hard. Hence more e-sources used to acquire most data. Secondary data was acquired from research papers, articles, dissertations, journals, e-papers, theses, e-magazines and other sources relating to the problem.

Study area

The study was aimed at measuring the 'Impact of User Generated Content on Post Graduate students' was confined to the University of Mysore, Karnataka, India. In the present study, 31 questions were assembled based on the objectives. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed and finally the researchers have selected valid 130 scripts among PG students. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used in analyzing and presenting the data.

Findings and Analysis

Table 1 Detail of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	49	37.7
Female	81	62.3
Total	130	100.0

The total number of respondents was 130 out of which 37.7% (49) were male and 62.3 % (81) were female. There was more number of female respondents (62.3 %) among the study sample. The majority of the respondents are digital natives, falling in the age range of 21 to 24. Majority of respondents 83.8% come from urban areas while 16.2% are Rural based.

Major findings of the study

The study findings revealed that respondents were more aware of numerous sites for UGC. 61.5% respondents were more aware of more than 1 site where UGC is published or accessed. 20% were aware of Wikipedia, 9.2% know about Facebook, 6.9% about Youtube and 2.3% are aware of Blogger Forum where UGC is published.

The analysis of the data shows that 65.4% of the respondents were trust User Generated Content more than Media content. While about 34.6% of respondents were not trust UGC over Media content published.

The majority of the respondents 46.2% were participate in more than one type of UGC. 13.8% participate in discussion Forums, 10% post videos, 9.2% post wikis, 7.7% post reviews, 6.9% post digital images, 3.8% publish blogs and 2.3% participate in audio podcasts.

Majority of respondents 47.7% have stated that generating their own content for more than 2 years as compared to 23.1% have stated that creating content in one to six months. Other respondents have stated that creating for 7-11 months and 1-2 years for 14.6% each. Usage of UGC is directly related to high family annual income and age group of 21-24.

On average, respondents who post between 2 to 5 contents were 52.3% those who post one item were 37.7% and 10.0% post more than 5 items.

Majority of the respondents 77.7% were influenced by website owners to produce content. 22.3% of respondents have stated that they were not influenced by websites to produce UGC.

Most of the respondents have stated that Production of UGC is passion driven at 42.3% while 33.1% said it is necessary in this digital era. Others at 20% indicate its fashion or trendy to create content. A smaller percentage of 2.3% each think it's a waste of time to create UGC.

User Generated Content has brought change in 71.5% of respondents' lives while 28.5% indicate there's no perceptible change in their lives due to UGC.

A majority of respondents 48.5% have stated that indicated lack of time as the major hindrance to UGC production. While 13.8% indicated lack of writing skills, another 13.8% lacked guidance, 8.5% preferred what others created, 6.9% had more than one limitation, 5.4% lacked access to internet facilities and 3.15 were limited by finances.

Most of the respondents 34.6% have indicated how it is important for site owners to give number of viewership to motivate them. 30.8% want incentives to be given to creators of content, 20.8% require payment for their content and 13.8% require a ranking scheme for users and their content.

Conclusion

User Generated Content is now at the heart of Journalism and more so Mass Communication. We cannot discuss Journalism without the understanding the influence and development of UGC. Before UGC was confirmed to computer Science in the unit of web 2.0. The proliferation of Audience-based content brings to the forefront the question of how Media is going to be able to determine the audience needs and preference when the audience itself is a creating. There is need to analyze the psychological, physiological impact of UGC on creators. The various Universities should make UGC part of the syllabus to enable students gets hands on experience for future prospects and marketing. The UGC providers are currently setting the agenda, changing the sources of information and reinforcing existing beliefs globally.

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