

Chapter 4

Collective Problem–Solving and Informal Learning in Networked Publics: Reading Vlogging Networks on YouTube as Knowledge Communities

Simon Lindgren
Umeå University, Sweden

THE RISE OF SMART MOBS

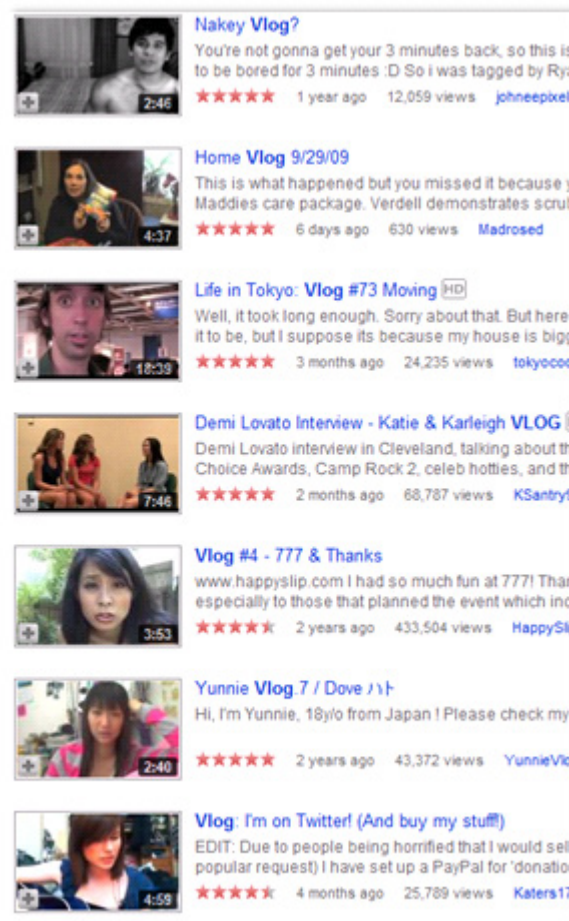
This chapter will focus on community aspects of *vlogging* (video blogging) on *YouTube* (Figure 1). This site, familiar to most, is a popular video sharing platform with built-in social networking functions such as tagging, commenting, favoriting and the possibility to leave video replies. The typical vlog entry consists of a clip that is a few minutes long and features the vlogger looking straight into the camera, addressing the viewers.

Vlog entries are generally based on oral narratives that sometimes build on previous entries by the same person, and sometimes serve as video replies to entries posted by other vloggers.

The chapter is based on a qualitative case analysis focusing on vlogging as *participatory culture* (Jenkins, 2006, 1992). While *YouTube* started out as a straightforward video sharing platform, it has increasingly come to offer a number of social networking site (SNS) features (Lange, 2008). The meanings of SNS practices vary across sites and individuals (boyd, 2006). This case study will explore how the affordances of the site may be

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-60960-206-2.ch004

Figure 1.



employed by vloggers in order to establish and maintain social networks. My analyses serve to illuminate, from various perspectives, community and social network aspects of *YouTube*. The overarching question has to do with finding basic dynamics of this cooperation system.

American technology writer Howard Rheingold (2002) predicts that one result of the ongoing development of digital media will be the rise of ever more so called *smart mobs*. These are communities – much like the vlogger community – which “consist of people who are able to act in concert even if they don’t know each other. The people who make up smart mobs cooperate in ways never before possible because they carry devices

that possess both communication and computing capabilities. Their mobile devices connect them with other information devices in the environment as well as with other people’s telephones” (Rheingold, 2002, p. xii). But similar to what Henry Jenkins writes about convergence culture – we are still “testing the waters and mapping directions” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 246) – there is a need for more practical knowledge of the dynamics of these cooperation systems (Rheingold, 2002, p. 202).

In the early forms of virtual communities (Rheingold, 1994), participation was limited to being present in physical spaces where internet connections were available. Those types of virtual communities transcended space in the sense that

13 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/collective-problem-solving-informal-learning/51535

Related Content

Chinese POS Disambiguation and Unknown Word Guessing with Lexicalized HMMs

Guohong Fu and Kang-Kwong Luke (2009). *Human Computer Interaction: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1595-1607).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/chinese-pos-disambiguation-unknown-word/22335

A Multi-Facet Analysis of Factors Affecting the Adoption of Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS)

Judy Chuan-Chuan Lin and Chin-Lung Hsu (2009). *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction* (pp. 18-36).

www.irma-international.org/article/multi-facet-analysis-factors-affecting/37463

Anticipation of Problems in Innovative Projects Based on OTSM-TRIZ: Operative Algorithm to Assess Resources and Solutions in Project Development – Innovative Projects Based on OTSM-TRIZ

Christopher Nikulin, Constanza Céspedes Domínguez, Raul Stegmaier, Sabrina Estefanía Nino, Pablo Viveros and Niccolò Becattini (2019). *Handbook of Research on Industrial Advancement in Scientific Knowledge* (pp. 182-204).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/anticipation-of-problems-in-innovative-projects-based-on-otsm-triz/220156

The Practical Accomplishment of Location-Based Game-Play: Design and Analysis of Mobile Collaborative Gaming

Frode Guribye, Jo Dugstad Wake and Barbara Wasson (2014). *International Journal of Mobile Human Computer Interaction* (pp. 32-50).

www.irma-international.org/article/the-practical-accomplishment-of-location-based-game-play/116484

Is Information Ethics Culture-Relative?

Philip Brey (2007). *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction* (pp. 12-24).

www.irma-international.org/article/information-ethics-culture-relative/2904