Chapter 93

User-Generated Cinema:
A New Way of Consumer Co-Creation?

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ABSTRACT

The rise of Web 2.0 technologies increasingly promotes a new openness of production and services. In contrast to the former production within closed systems, companies have to open up for new ways of value creation. The openness can be implemented either with regard to interdepartmental cooperation or in terms of collaboration beyond company boundaries – in cooperation with other companies (B2B) or with customers or users (B2C). The latter is also known as consumer co-creation, where users participate voluntarily without compensation or treaty-defined tasks. Core challenges are the successful coordination of all participants as well as the trustworthy producer-consumer relationship, irrespective of whether or not a company initiates such a co-creation actively. The chapter analyses the mechanisms of consumer co-creation and discusses the required confidence and motivation on the basis of a case study to explain opportunities and challenges of a user-generated approach to media production.

INTRODUCTION

New web-based technologies enable previously passive users to engage as producers and become an active part in the innovation and production of content. They raise the possibilities to articulate oneself, to participate or to balance the commercial coverage. It can be said, that participatory media provides the chance to lower the obstacles of access and to address more potential users. But due to high political and normative demands, such participatory projects often result in insufficient encouragement and popularity. To motivate people to participate, it seems to be necessary to offer not only open access, but also social, interesting, entertaining experiences that result in a high involvement of the (prod)users. Therefore it is essential to find new ways to integrate entertaining tasks and a normative perspective.

But the high potential of interactive and participatory applications via the Internet does not only concern normative assumptions of common

citizens participating in the public sphere. It is also worth to be considered in terms of new ways of marketing and consumption, as "participative consumer behaviour is […] fundamental to a modern understanding of marketing" (Lusch & Vargo, 2006).

While several studies show that users have little interest in online participation (especially in terms of political participation), Potts et al. (2008) find that in terms of entertaining media products "consumer-producer interactions are an increasingly important source of value creation" (p. 459), seen as part of the value-added chain (Zerfaß & Sandhu, 2008, p. 288). Following Bourdieu (1993), Potts et al. argue that creativity as the process of innovation is situated within socio-technical networks and arises from creative contexts of social interaction and institutions. Consumer co-creation therefore is seen as a new phenomenon, not as new socio-economic order but rather as "an evolution of the extant economic and cultural order to account for consumer's greater access to the 'means of production" (Potts et al., 2008, p. 462) through new technologies.

They state a shift from producer-centric to consumer-centric innovation, where consumer creativity (also 'wisdom of crowds', 'crowdsourc-ing', 'open innovation'; Surowiecki, 2004; Zerfaß & Sandhu, 2008; Chesbrough, 2003) within the domain of new digital media becomes an increasingly important part of the global model of media production. One can state that the new entertaining culture is a part of contemporary digital culture, which includes some ways of participation and involvement of users. This opens up an evolutionary process that requires new ways of thinking – an experimental phase (Potts et al., 2008; Daugthery et al., 2011).

The media evolution (especially the new ways of interactivity online) seems to result in a potential empowerment of citizens in terms of User-Generated Content (UCG) as well as consumers in terms of Consumer-Generated Content (CGC; cf. Daugthery et al., 2011, p. 148). Wang

and Rodgers (2011) state that CGC are more trusted by consumers than traditional advertisements and may lead to most effective electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) advertising.

This article aims to figure out how consumer co-creation as an experimental phase of a new entertainment culture can be constituted. The rise of consumer co-creation will be considered with regard to former projects and lessons learned out of them. The article focuses on media consumer co-creation and the effects of different ways of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As it deals with a new field of consumer involvement, it uses a case study to explain opportunities and challenges of a user-generated approach of media production. On the basis of DYSTOPIA, a concept of User-Generated Cinema, it demonstrates the challenges of finding expert, skilled and knowledgeable consumer co-creators (Potts et al. 2008), mediating intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Jodl, 2010) and conducting the involvement of users.

BACKGROUND

With the rise and spread of interactive ICT, collaborative partnerships and the relating economic and cultural potentials became increasingly popular both in theory and practice. Indeed, there have been studies and considerations regarding the benefits of collaboration prior to the technical implementation of interactive ICT (cf. Allen, 1983; Picot & Reichwald, 1994; Rotering, 1993), especially dealing with collaboration within the scientific community itself (Katz & Martin, 1997, provide a good overview regarding the meaningfulness and benefit of collaborative research). But only with the development of Web 2.0 technology, based on so-called Social Software, various ways of collaboration and their potential attracted the attention of creative professionals and companies.

This is reflected by Chesbrough's publication on Open Innovation (2003), which also intensified the emerging debate. It argues against the prevail-

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