Chapter 1.13
Knowledge Transfer:
Revisiting Video

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge transfer has been an important issue for organizational knowledge management programs. This article reviews the plethora of user-generated video activity and the issues it creates for knowledge management activities. Video's media richness combined with its ability to convey rich narratives can facilitate sensemaking and learning. However, structure and culture are important factors that must be considered in story telling activities to increase the opportunity for effective sensemaking and message retention. Evidence and arguments are presented that should motivate organizations and academics to review video generation activities both internal and external to the organization. Issues concerning video content delivery, liability, spam, and search engine capabilities are discussed. Opportunities for new research inquiries are identified.

INTRODUCTION

The knowledge sharing landscape has changed with the advent of widespread video creation and sharing by individuals. Organizational employees and customers are far less versed in video development, content management, presentation techniques, and liability issues than the professionals who develop videos for firms.

This article examines the user-generated video phenomena and its implications for organizations and their knowledge management activities. It provides a comprehensive overview of video-related issues by examining the role of video in knowledge transfer activities, the importance of video's richness to tacit knowledge sharing, the need to consider storytelling techniques and structure when creating videos for tacit knowledge sharing, and the importance of culture in sensemaking activities. Video search capabilities and potential content liability issues are also examined. The article concludes by identifying

opportunities for research. The objective of revisiting video capabilities and issues is to focus knowledge management's awareness on the rapid growth and proliferation of video content so that an effective approach to managing user-generated video creation and sharing activities can be developed. In creating an organizational strategy, it is important that it be grounded in a clear understanding of how user-generated videos can be both a potential asset and a liability to the organization.

Video created and shared by individuals has become omnipresent. Time Magazine demonstrated in its "Person of the Year" how powerful and ubiquitous video technology has become. In selecting "**You**" as the Person of the Year, Time Magazine described Web-based video generation and its user community and collaboration as a massive social experiment (Grossman, 2006).

This video-based social phenomenon is impacting organizations. Melcrum (2007), a research firm, reports that while much of the interest in social media has centered on the adoption of blogging as a business tool for communicating with customers and staff, online video is, in fact, the number one application. They point out that corporations have taken note of the popularity of sites like MySpace, YouTube and Bebo and that they are beginning to integrate the same functionality and networking tools within their corporate intranets. Melcrum (2007) reports that the two most important applications for internal user-generated video are identified by organizations as improved employee engagement and improved internal collaboration.

Aniisu (2007) concurs that employee-generated videos are now becoming an integral part of internal organizational communication campaigns. He asserts that the medium is widely accepted due to its interactivity and its ability to treat content creatively.

That organizations are actively promoting and supporting user-generated video content can be illustrated. For example, at Southwest Airlines employees created and distributed videos to share their feelings about the September 11th World Trade Center Tragedy (Inside the Cubicle, 2006). Delta Airlines launched SiteSeer where employees are the stars of videos that provide travel tips for their customers (Webdriven, 2007). At Google, an employee posted videos for public access showing how the Google search engine works (Allen, 2006). And professionals and executives are now being observed using video-based social networking to consult with or commiserate with their peers online (Vascellaro, 2007).

However, sometimes videos created by employees and customers are posted that can compromise an organization. For example, some of the distributed user-generated video content on video sharing sites is commentary on the world's leading brands (Beasty, 2007), which can be either positive or negative. This is confirmed by a survey of corporate use of social networking applications conducted by Melcrum (2007). They found that while there is widespread enthusiasm for social media in the corporate world, 45% of respondents agreed that employees or customers discussing their organization or brands online posed a significant risk to its reputation.

An illustration of the potential liability issues that user-generated videos can create for organizations is further evidenced by a recent case in Great Britain where a supermarket employee posted a video on a social networking site of one worker hitting another worker. Because the clip revealed the internal activity of the supermarket, the employer decided to fire the employee. The employee then sued the supermarket's executives, won a claim for unfair dismissal, and was awarded compensatory damages (Popa, 2007).

VIDEO AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The more salient impact of unmanaged video sharing is that it can further exacerbate existing

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