

**Brand Video Virality: The role of audio, visual and plot
characteristics**

by

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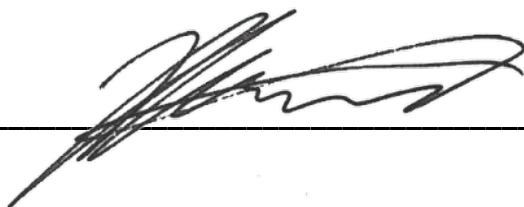
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ABSTRACT

Drawing on theoretical insights from multidisciplinary research in the fields of Multimedia, Internet Marketing, Business Management and Information Systems, this research is set out to explore how video content characteristics affect brand video virality. In this way, this research attempts to address a well-documented gap in existing research on the contributing factors that make brand videos viral (West, 2011; Cashmore, 2009). More specifically, it investigates the effect that particular content characteristics (visual graphics, audio and plot) might have in driving large numbers of consumers/social media users to create online stories about the same brand video by sharing, commenting or liking it in social networks.

To examine this, engagements of Social Media users with brand videos were analyzed and monitored by using the method of netnography. Following Dobele et al (2007)'s sampling approach, four brand videos selected on the basis of three main criteria: being global, being viral and being examples of a recent viral marketing campaign, were examined. In addition, two online surveys of a total of 351 Social Media users were conducted. The online surveys included open-ended and closed-ended questions regarding the participants' engagement with different video content characteristics that were included within the brand videos examined.

The results of this research suggest that the separate characteristics/components constituting a brand video's content may have an independent effect on the virality of the brand video. More specifically, across the video content characteristics examined, plot was the most powerful in terms of its impact on a Social Media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks and consequently, enhance its virality. Moreover, the presence of a familiar character/actor within a brand video's visuals can significantly increase the possibility of the brand video going viral. In respect to the audio, there was evidence that for a brand video to go viral, "music fit" is vital.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

During the last decade, providers of both services and physical goods have recognised that the Internet is essential to their success. Indeed internet offers a virtual channel embedding many new E-Marketing functions which can clearly assist and institute a competitive advantage (Robins, 2000, Gay et al., 2007). Viral Marketing is one such popular “new” technique which helps interaction and communication with customers while increasing brand awareness through social networks (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube etc.) and public blogs. This is achieved by passing audiovisual marketing messages/buzzwords from one customer to another. For this reason viral marketing is also known as the “online word of mouth”.

The above statements prove that nowadays, social media users are not passive consumers and receivers of media messages. They become actively involved in the creation, sharing and exchanging marketing messages (Hanna et al., 2011). Indeed, within the online world, the transmission of marketing messages no longer follows a linear route from the advertiser to the potential consumer but it is rather based on the consumer’s judgment and willingness to accept and share the message.

This research will focus primarily on viral brand videos and how individual video content characteristics (visual graphics, audio, and plot) drive a large number of consumers/social media users to create online stories by sharing, commenting or liking specific brand videos in social networks. Although some authors argue that viral marketing messages should always build an emotional connection between the campaign and the recipient in order to ensure that the message spreads (Dobele et al., 2007), other authors support that in the context of the “Social Media ecosystem”, video content characteristics are becoming increasingly influential (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011).

To this date, and as shown within the literature review of this study, there has been limited research in the field of viral brand videos in general, the contributing factors that make video content viral, and on how video content characteristics can drive brand

videos becoming highly popular in Social Media. These gaps have been emphasised by numerous authors including West (2011) and Cashmore (2009).

The next paragraphs provide more information on the purpose of this study as well as information about the different research outcomes, contributions, aims and objectives. Additionally, the final part of the Introduction provides explanations and definitions of different terms that are used throughout this study.

1.1. Purpose of the study

This research moves well beyond the level of individuals' emotions to explore whether the engagements of social media users with individual video content characteristics affect sharing, commenting or liking online content and consequently creating online stories about an audiovisual marketing message in social networks.

Drawing on theoretical insights from multidisciplinary research in the fields of Business, Internet Marketing, Social Media and Information Systems, this study will try to fill a gap in existing research in regard to the contributing factors that make video content viral, and the content characteristics that drive viral videos being highly popular in social media. This gap has been emphasised by numerous authors including West (2011) and Cashmore (2009). More specifically, the main purpose of the proposed study is to explore how the individual video content characteristics (visual graphics, audio, and plot) influence brand video virality. This will be accomplished by assessing the different forms of each of the content characteristics separately and by measuring how each one affects the social media user's decision to create an online story (share/like/comment) about the audiovisual marketing message in social networks.

1.2. Research Outcomes/Contribution

The fact that there is a gap in existing research concerning the video content characteristics that make Social Media users create online stories about the same brand video in social networks is what makes this study unique and original. While previous studies focus on the emotional response that a video triggers from a single viewer, this

research suggests that visuals, sound and plot can engage Social Media users and enhance video virality. This will also be a contribution to the research field since the findings might benefit future research and generate further research activity.

Additionally, by showing that video content characteristics play an important role in brand video virality and in the Social Media user's decision to share, like or comment a brand video, this research will strengthen previous research findings that conceptualize: 1) videos as "digital objects" amenable to wide manipulation and revision (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011), and 2) Social Media as "ecosystems" whereby users are actively involved in the creation, sharing and exchange of marketing messages (Hanna et al., 2011).

Last but not least, after exploring ways in which the research results could be translated into good practice, the findings of this research will provide a code of practice which will be offered to practitioners. In this way, the researcher will develop long-term and on-going collaborative relationships with the industry, which will extend beyond the timeframe of this PhD study.

1.3. Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this research is to explore whether individual video content characteristics (visual graphics, audio, and plot) influence brand video virality in Social Media. This will be accomplished by evaluating how each one of the video content characteristics affects the Social Media user's decision to create an online story (share/comment/like) about an audiovisual marketing message.

Aim of the proposed study:

Explore whether individual video content characteristics influence brand video virality in Social Media.

Research Objectives:

- To evaluate whether visuals impact the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.
- To evaluate whether audio impacts the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.
- To evaluate whether plot impacts the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.

Research Hypotheses:

- **H1:** Visuals impact the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.
- **H2:** Audio impacts the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.
- **H3:** Plot impacts the Social Media users' decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.

1.4. Terms and Definitions

Digital Marketing: The process of developing and maintaining relationships with customers through digital communications and online activities in order to facilitate the exchange of messages, ideas, products or services (Mohammed et al., 2002).

Viral Marketing: Any strategy that encourages people to pass on marketing messages to others, thus creating the potential for exponential growth in the message's influence and exposure (Wilson, 2000).

Viral Videos: Videos which are becoming popular and are viewed by a great number of people online, normally as a result of knowledge about the video being spread rapidly through the Internet population via online word-of-mouth (Burgess, 2008).

Branded Content: Branded content is any content that consumers can associate with a brand. Branded content comes in various forms, such as branded entertainment,

advertiser funded programming, native advertising, viral videos, and many more (Asmussen et al., 2014).

Co-Creation: A practice that brings different parties in cooperation (for instance, a company and a group of customers), in order to produce a mutually valued outcome (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004).

Social Media: The broad variety of mobile and Internet-based services that allow Internet users to join online communities, participate in online exchanges or contribute to user-created content (Dewing, 2010).

Social Networks: Web-based networks that allow Internet users to (1) develop a public or semi-public profile within a bordered system, (2) choose a list of other Internet users with whom they share a connection and information, and (3) view and extend through both their list of connections and those made by others within the network (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

Information Communication Technologies: Technologies which enable users to access, store, transmit, and manipulate data. These technologies assist the integration of telecommunications (telephone lines and wireless signals), computers as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage, and audio-visual systems, (Bamidis et al., 2015).

Marketing Information Systems: A set arrangement of methods and actions for the ordinary, premeditated collection, presentation and analysis of data/information for use in making marketing decisions (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

User Generated Content: Any form of content such as digital images, video, audio files, wikis, discussion forums, blogs, posts, tweets, chats, podcasting, pins and other forms of media that are created by users of an Internet-based system, network or service (Chua et. al, 2014)

Virality: The propensity of any digital information such as an image, video, or piece of text to be spread rapidly and widely from one Internet user to another; the quality or fact of being viral (Rathore and Panwar 2016).

Audio Branding: Audio Branding refers to the process of brand management and brand development by use of audio elements within the framework of brand communication. Audio Branding normally aims at steadily building a brand sound that represents the identity and values of a brand in a unique, distinct way (Audio Branding Academy, 2016).

Ethnography: A qualitative methodology that includes the study of the social interactions, beliefs or behaviours of small societies. It involves participation and observation over a period of time, and the interpretation of the information/data collected (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

Netnography: The method of performing ethnography online by studying online communities and making use of their publicly available information in order to identify their behaviours, needs and desires (Ampofo, 2011).

1.5. Breakdown of Chapters

This section provides information about the content of the different chapters that constitute this PhD Thesis.

Chapter 1 - Introduction: This first chapter provides introductory information about the research performed. Moreover it provides information on the purpose of this study, the research gaps, as well as information about the different research outcomes, contributions, aims and objectives. Additionally, the final part of the Introduction chapter provides explanations and definitions of different terms that are used throughout this study.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review: The second chapter presents the current knowledge including substantive findings and definitions, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions around the topic of this study. In addition to the examination of previous research that was performed in directly related areas such as traditional marketing, digital marketing, social media, viral marketing, viral videos, content sharing, co-creation, video content characteristics, audiovisual production and other, this chapter gives details about

the research framework of this thesis and explains how the research methods used during this study were previously used in similar research cases.

Chapter 3 - Methodology: The third chapter presents the research methods that were used during this study. In addition to explaining how each research method was used, this chapter provides more details about the brand videos that were selected to be examined, the pilot study and the way that participants were selected. Moreover, this chapter provides information on data preparation and on the statistical analyses that were used throughout the study.

Chapter 4 - Data Analysis and Results: The fourth chapter provides clear explanations of the data collected through netnography, questionnaire one and questionnaire two. Moreover, this chapter clarifies how the statistical tests and procedures explained within Chapter 3 were used for data analysis and provides a clear presentation of the data collected and subsequent results.

Chapter 5 - Discussion: This fifth chapter provides a discussion around the overall findings of this research. More specifically, this chapter discusses the impact of each video content characteristic on brand video virality separately. Moreover, as part of the discussion, the case study of KIA's "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video is introduced. Additionally, as a further contribution, this chapter links some of the findings of this study with findings of previous research as they were discussed within previous chapters.

Chapter 6 - Conclusions: This sixth and final chapter presents the overall conclusions that were drawn throughout this study. Additionally, this chapter provides implications for practice and presents the main limitations of this research. Finally, this chapter provides suggestions for future research activities.

The following figure (Figure 1) represents the visual roadmap of this thesis and demonstrates how the different chapters interact. The coloured links between chapters represent the information's flow and demonstrate how the different chapters of this thesis inform each other.

Figure 1: Thesis Diagram and Information Flow



CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the current knowledge including substantive findings and definitions, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions around the topic of this study. Understanding how and why brand videos go viral requires an examination of several areas of literature. Therefore, this review of literature examines and presents previous research that was performed in areas such as traditional marketing, digital marketing, social media, viral marketing, viral videos, content sharing, co-creation, video content characteristics and audiovisual production. Additionally, this review of literature gives details about the research framework of this thesis and explains how the research methods used during this study were previously used in similar research cases.

2.1. From Traditional Marketing to the Digital Shift

The American Marketing Association (2013) defines Marketing as “the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have the value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large”. As The Saylor Foundation (2014) explains, by closely reading this definition, one could clearly notice that there are four main components/activities that define marketing:

1. Creation: The process of creating offerings by collaborating with suppliers and customers.
2. Communication: The process of communicating and describing the offerings to the customers.
3. Delivery: The process of getting the offerings to the customers in a way that optimizes value.
4. Exchange: The process of trading value for those offerings.

Another key component of Marketing’s definition is the word “value”. Many authors argue that marketing does not only deliver value to customers. That value also translates into a competitive advantage for the firms as it develops loyalty, a reliable

customer base as well as increases its sales and profitability (Gronroos, 1994; Heskett et al., 1994; Nilson, 1992, The Saylor Foundation, 2014).

During the last few years though, the emergence and growth of Information Communication Technologies and the large amount of information available around these technologies have forced the business industry to a digital shift. This digital shift – that is the digitization of information and the generalization of the Internet protocol, has not only transformed the way businesses create, market, distribute and exchange their products/services but has also transformed the way that value is added and the way that customers consume the products and services (Simon and Bogdanowicz, 2012). The above changes have given birth to the need of a new type of marketing, the Digital Marketing.

2.1.1. The birth of Digital Marketing

According to the Institute of Direct Marketing, Digital Marketing is the use of the Internet and related digital information and communication technologies in order to achieve marketing objectives (Gay et al, 2007). Moreover, similarly to the American Marketing Association's definition of traditional marketing, Mohammed et al. (2002) describes Digital Marketing as "the process of building and maintaining customer relationships through online activities and digital communications in order to facilitate the exchange of ideas, products or services". According to Chaffey (2008), the term digital communications refers to:

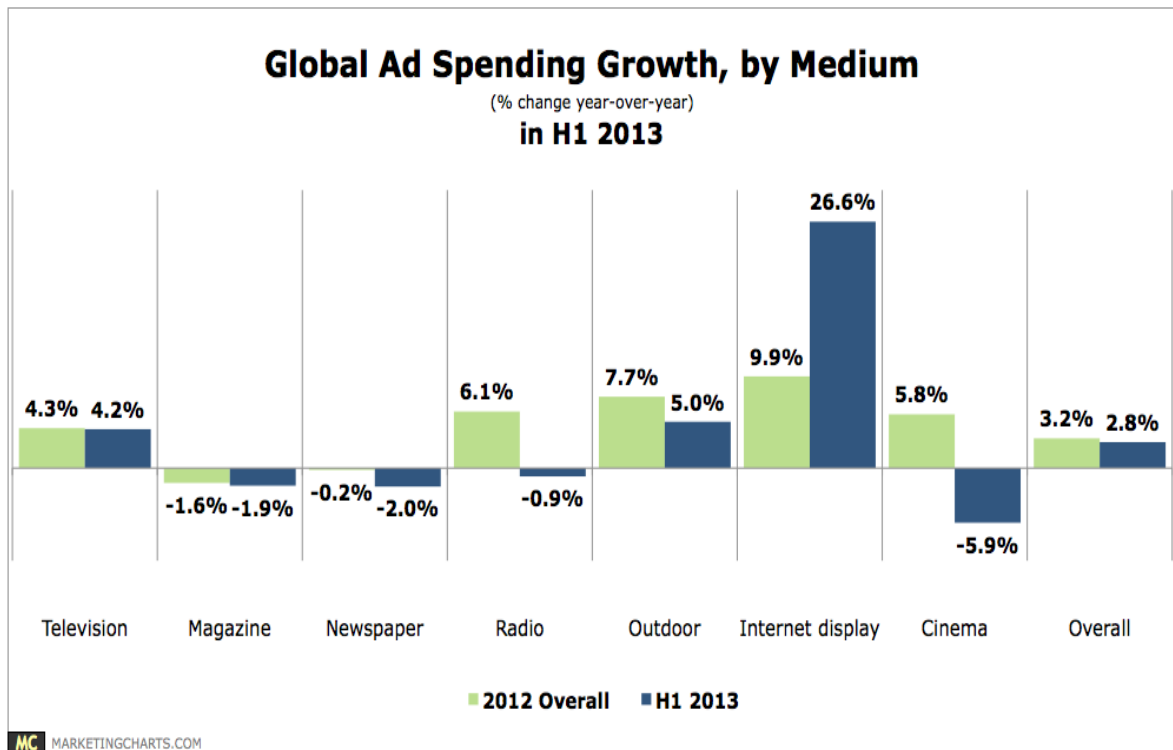
1. The utilization of Internet-based (TCP/IP) network technologies for communications within an organization using an intranet; beyond the organization to partners such as suppliers, distributors and key account clients using password-based access to extranets and the open Internet where information is accessible by all through Internet access.
2. The utilization of web servers or sites in order to enable financial or informational exchanges such as e-commerce transactions.
3. The utilization of other digital access platforms such as interactive digital TV, mobile or wireless phones and games consoles.

4. The utilization of e-mail for managing enquiries (inbound e-mail) and for promotion (outbound e-mail).
5. Integration of the digital access platforms and e-mail with other information systems such as client databases and applications for client relationship management and supply chain management.

(Chaffey, 2008, p. 502)

Unquestionably, the number of online business activities and business websites has increased dramatically during the last 5-7 years. Nowadays, Digital Marketing activities constitute an essential part of any business strategy. What is also important to recognize is that with more than 3 billion Internet users worldwide (International Telecommunication Union, 2014), and with almost a 2 billion global smart-phone audience (eMarketer, 2014), Digital Marketing is rapidly becoming far more popular than the traditional ways of advertising and promoting products. Figure 2 presents the global advertising spending growth in 2012 and 2013.

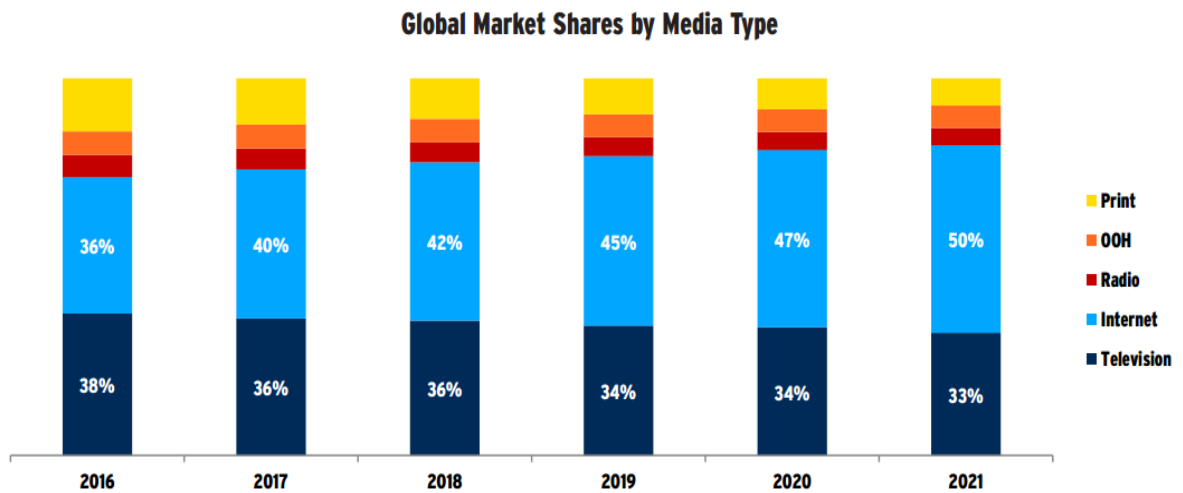
Figure 2: Global Ad Spending Growth, by Medium (MarketingCharts Staff, 2013)



The spread of global ads across major media grew by 2.8% in the first half (H1) of 2013, with faster growth noted in the second quarter - Q2 (3.5%). During H1, Internet display advertising (though measured in a subset of markets) posted the fastest growth rate, of 26.6%. Television continued outpacing the overall average, with a 4.2% increase in spending, although it was outdoor that increased most rapidly among traditional media (5%). Some media followed predictable spending patterns: newspaper advertising was down by 2%, while magazine ad spend dropped by 1.9%. Cinema didn't improve on a poor Q1, decreasing by 5.9% overall for the first half. Finally radio also found itself showing a slight decrease of 0.9%.

Recent reports by Letang and Stillman (2016) showed that in 2016, digital channels outperformed all offline-based (Print, Out-Of-Home, Radio, Television) media sales. They also estimate that in 2017 internet ad sales will surpass linear television and that they will become the largest portion of advertising budgets. Figure 3 presents the global ad market shares of 2016 as presented by Letang and Stillman (2016) with estimations for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Figure 3: Global Ad Market Shares, by Media Type (Letang and Stillman, 2016)



Certainly, for marketers, Internet penetration plays an important role when deciding where to expand Digital Marketing or e-business operations. As the Internet is a worldwide phenomenon which connects organizations and individuals across borders, it is clear that it also plays an important role in the whole process of globalization. For this

reason, according to Gay et al. (2007), there are many issues that need to be considered before developing an international e-marketing strategy.

First of all, marketing planners must try to understand the different landscape of the international online environment as well as how it impacts upon the organization's marketing mix and associated activities. It is remarkable that many online companies use international market entry strategies in a similar way to traditional offline businesses. Gay et al. (2007) also state that the level of Internet complexity and adoption varies from country to country and this may well influence the countries and strategies selected. This is because different countries are influenced by different traditions, tastes, languages, cultures, legal aspects and environmental factors. An example can be found in the studies of Hofstede and Mooij (2002) on the important role of national cultural values. Nowadays, Social Media such as Facebook and Youtube, can make a stand against these factors as they help organizations to collect, list and study most of this information online and without any costs.

From a consumer's perspective, having the ability to buy from websites that have a global online presence, offers a wider or more exclusive range of products and sometimes at better prices. Nevertheless, consumers may be concerned about the reliability and identity of an international online company. In addition, consumers may be concerned about the full cost of the purchase including local and imported taxes. Other issues may concern delivery times, cancellation and return policies (Shergill and Chen, 2005; FindLaw, 2013). For these reasons, from the organization's point of view, study and understanding of the buyer's behaviour, culture and values of the different markets are more than essential. As argued in the following sections, the role of online consumers is changing as they are becoming part of an expanding ecosystem that generates and spreads useful quantitative and qualitative marketing information.

2.2. The Role of Social Media

Traditionally, consumers were using the Internet simply to expend content. However, nowadays consumers are utilising online platforms such as blogs, sharing sites

and social networks to modify, create, co-create, share, comment or discuss Internet content. According to Kietzmann et al. (2011), this represents the Social Media phenomenon. Other authors such as Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) define Social Media as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and allow the creation and exchange of user generated content”. Moreover, Ahlqvist et al. (2008) describe the Social Media phenomenon as one of the most remarkable developments in the Internet during the last few years. This might be because Social Media has introduced substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities and individuals. With more than 152 million blogs around the Internet (Gaille, 2013), 4 billion online videos being watched everyday (Perez, 2012) and with almost 2.2 billion users on Facebook (Edwards, 2014), the Social Media phenomenon naturally arouses the interest of both business people and researches who want to know what’s coming and how they should position themselves in the fast moving Social Media arena.

2.2.1. Social Media as Marketing Information Systems

From a Business and Marketing perspective, it is true that online Social Media and Social Networks (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Youtube) offer a new form of interaction between businesses and their customers. Also, this new form of interaction and communication could give the opportunity to increase revenue. For this reason, businesses are increasingly trying to find ways to promote products and services, connect with customers, and drive revenue through Social Media. Since successful marketing involves passing the right message to the right person at the right time, before using Social Media as an e-marketing tool, businesses need to consider which Social Media is more appropriate for their marketing strategy, their business objectives and their vision in general. While noting that innovation and change are rife, at this time, there are basically seven kinds of Social Media according to Mayfield (2008):

- 1) Social Networks such as Facebook and MySpace: Sites that allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communicate.

- 2) Blogs: Online journals with entries appearing with the most recent first.
- 3) Wikis such as Wikipedia: Websites that allow people to add content or to edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database.
- 4) Podcasts: Audio and video files that are available by subscription, through services like Apple iTunes and Spotify.
- 5) Forums: Areas for online discussion, often around specific topics and interests.
- 6) Content Communities such as Flickr and Youtube: Communities which organize and share particular kinds of content.
- 7) Microblogging sites such as Twitter: Sites that combine social networking with bite-size blogging, where small amounts of content (Updates) are distributed online.

(Mayfield, 2008, p. 6)

All the available types of Social Media are implemented as marketing tools in many different ways. Companies, for instance, may study in depth the Social Media presence of their competitors as well as the existence of their target market in each one of the available Social Media, before making a decision on how to incorporate them into their marketing strategy. In addition, companies may review the different benefits that each one of the Social Media has to offer to their strategies, and to study how these benefits could be connected with the company's aims and objectives. For example, a B2B company that aims on building relationships with other companies might prefer using the LinkedIn Social Network instead of Facebook for the achievement of this goal since LinkedIn was purely developed for this purpose. Finally, by using social networks, companies may increase brand awareness globally (since social networks are not restricted by geographical boundaries), pass their messages easier and increase sales. However, this research argues that implementation of Social Media as marketing tools goes well beyond their affordances as platforms for brand awareness and direct advertising. They are increasingly understood as marketing information systems. The reason for this change, as discussed in the following sections, is strongly related to the emergence of a new, more active and creative type of consumer, the Social Media user.

Indeed, Social Media have become the strongest and most popular communication channel for Internet users (Pelling and White, 2009) and have emerged as primary online "hang outs" (Chu, 2011). By joining social networks like Facebook, users interact with each other and share information with ease and speed; this offers a promising platform for advertisers to build viral-driven, multidirectional communication with consumers (Holzner, 2008). As consumers increasingly turn to Social Media (e.g. Facebook groups, Blogs or Forums) as trusted sources of information and opinions, new opportunities arise to build consumer-brand relationships and viral advertising platforms. The following section discusses the changing role of online consumers as online Social Media users.

2.2.2. Co-creation in Social Media

The changing role of consumers in a Social Media context and the new challenges that disrupt the traditional marketing function pose a pressing need for new conceptualizations of Social Media marketing, one that acknowledges their role as Marketing Information Systems. The uncertainty surrounding "what important information is" to support marketing strategies in a Social Media context and how to capitalize on the more active role of consumers, calls for an updated understanding of what the impact of Social Media in the marketing function is.

The new challenges for marketing in Social Media can be theoretically understood in the context of a new "ecosystem" (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011; Hanna et al, 2008). Drawing on theoretical insights from social studies of information systems and Social Media, this thesis suggests that digital marketing in the Social Media era is not simply a task performed by a specific department of an organization. Instead, the digital marketing function is a process of co-creation that is performed within the broader Social Media community, which this research theoretically conceptualizes as an ecosystem. This ecosystem, describes an ensemble of stakeholders, processes, systems, operations and devices that make the production, mixing, and dissemination of digital content possible (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011). In reference to the changing role of consumers in the Social Media ecosystem, discussed earlier, they can now be understood as "digital

consumers” who are accustomed to the fact that information-based digital content is readily accessible and interoperable (Deuze, 2007) and who are assuming a more active role in co-creating marketing content with companies and their specific brands.

For analytical purposes we shall understand the Social Media ecosystem as having technical, social and cultural/emotional constituents. The technical aspect refers to the functional interoperability amongst different Social Media platforms and the ways in which it is possible to link them together. One example is the fact that we can share Youtube videos on Facebook and Twitter or how the last two make possible the simultaneous sharing of content and comments in these two platforms. This functional interoperability enables brand consistency, content creation and content sharing. The social aspect refers to the formulation of online communities around certain brands, products and services and how information about these is shared as part of social relations within and beyond those communities. One example is how online communities of travelers discuss on Twitter about the cameras that they use on their travels. Indeed, the online travel community Travel Talk On Twitter (or #TTOT), which also maintains a Facebook page, define themselves as “a Social Media travel event and a social travel “hash-tag” on Twitter”. What is interesting here is the understanding of an online community as an “event” which gives the community a high degree of ephemerality (e.g., the community does not necessarily require high degree of commitment from its members). Also, we may observe that hash-tag, a symbol on our keyboard, has come to define the way we understand communities in a Social Media context. We are a hash-tag on Twitter, means we are an online community that expresses ourselves in the social space provided by a specific Social Media platform. Finally, the cultural/emotional aspect refers to how users co-create the marketing messages by linking the content characteristics of a digital object, such as, a video or a picture, with certain cultural references or emotions that were created elsewhere. A good example is the “cutesification” trend when brands achieve increasing shares in Social Media just because their marketing content appears “cute” to consumers (Heritage, 2013).

In a Social Media ecosystem, all these technical, social and cultural/emotional forces contribute to the creation of a social space in which digital consumers are creating, interpreting and sharing marketing content. The role of businesses and advertisers for the purposes of digital marketing is being redefined in order to find ways of understanding the behaviour of the new digital consumers and successfully engaging them in the process of co-creation of their marketing messages and campaigns. Understanding e-marketing as a process of co-creation between businesses and digital consumers helps us integrate our understanding of Social Media as e-marketing platforms as well as spaces where Social Media users can be engaged (Chu and Kim, 2011; Evans, 2010) and become part of a company's marketing information system.

While some companies realised the importance of integrating customers into their marketing information system, some other companies moved a step forward and tried to use the online space to also integrate customers into their product and service development. A great example of integrating customers into their new product and service development activities in order to achieve what we call "value co-creation" delivers the American Global Coffee Company Starbucks, which established the online platform MyStarbucksIdea.com in 2013 (Romero et.al, 2014). On this platform, their customers can share their product or experience ideas, participate in open discussions about provided ideas, and vote for them. With the vision of "building it (the Starbucks experience) with them and they are already there" instead of "build it and they will come" the Starbucks Company found a way to keep its customers more loyal while reducing risks in new product or service development (Ramaswamy, 2009).

A key constraint companies face in actively integrating customers in their NPD (new product development) activities is that similarly to marketing message co-creation, value co-creation only works when customers are willing to cooperate and openly share their ideas and knowledge as well as honestly evaluating existing products and new ideas (Füller, J. 2006). Co-creation happens solely on a voluntary basis and customers need to spend time, knowledge and effort in enhancing the quality of existing products as well as providing reviews or valuable ideas for new products and services. Respectively, the

benefits a company receives from co-creation are clear without ambiguity. From the customers' perspective the profits they gain as customers are less definitive as they hardly benefit instantly (Füller, J. 2006). Whereas recent research has especially focused on the different stages at which companies can involve customers as well as the different kinds of benefits customers perceive when participating in co-creation activities, less is known about the different motives customers actually have towards the possibility to participate in online co-creation activities (Romero et.al, 2014). Companies specifically rely on customers that are willing to contribute their marketing, ideas, thoughts and knowledge to co-creation processes so that new knowledge and value creation can occur as otherwise the concept of co-creation would fail (Füller et.al, 2006). Therefore, it is necessary for companies to understand how to ensure that their customers are willing and motivated to contribute to co-creation activities online in order to effectively support companies in their marketing and value creation processes. This research gap was emphasized by Romero et.al (2014) and led the authors to the following research question: "What are the motivators for customers to participate in online co-creation?". Their research ended up with four main motivators that were solely focused on benefits that consumers get during the process of online co-creation. According to the authors, these benefits/motivators include: personal integrative benefits, hedonic benefits, social integrative benefits and learning benefits.

The objectives of this research (as presented in section 1.3) are strongly connected to the research gap emphasised above. By evaluating whether individual video content characteristics impact the Social Media users' decision to create online stories about brand videos in social networks and consequently participate in the online co-creation process, this research could end up with alternative motivators for consumers to participate in online co-creation. This time however, the motivators will not be solely focused on the benefits that consumers get while being involved in the process of online co-creation but on the motivators that occur as result of the social media user's engagement with individual video content characteristics of brand videos.

2.3. The Role of Consumers

The potential of the Internet as a marketing channel that would give businesses the opportunity to reach global audiences was identified from its early days. However, the emergence and popularity of Social Media was a determining factor in engaging those audiences in a more active way with the Internet phenomenon. As mentioned earlier, in comparison to more traditional marketing media, in Social Media, users are more active and involved in the process of exchanging and communicating marketing messages.

2.3.1. User-Generated Content

The use of user-generated content (UGC), for example, is one of the activities that prove the changing role of the consumers of the 21st century. Chua et. al (2014, p. 7) define user-generated content as “any form of content such as blogs, wikis, discussion forums, posts, chats, tweets, podcasting, pins, digital images, video, audio files, and other forms of media that was created by users of an online system or service”. As Van Dijck (2009) suggests throughout his paper, with the emergence of many UGC sites, business interest has apparently shifted away from consuming activities and gravitated towards producing activities, empowering users over content since they add business values. In particular, according to Cha et.al (2009), UGC sites like Youtube, are creating new viewing patterns and social interactions, empowering users to be more creative, and developing new business opportunities. This occurrence is strongly connected with the “customer-made” phenomenon where businesses create marketing messages, goods, services or experiences in close cooperation with creative consumers, and in exchange giving them a direct say in what actually gets designed, processed, manufactured or developed (TrendWatching, 2006). In this way, customers contribute to their business’ marketing strategies and advertising campaigns, which are part of a marketing activity called user-generated advertising.

A recent example of user-generated advertising is L’Oreal’s “You Make The Commercial” contest where users were equipped with just a production kit and the challenge to create a 30 second video advertisement for either L’Oreal Paris Colour Juice

or Studio Line "Hot" brands, Granite Bay's commercial, "Juicy,". The contest created so much "buzz" that every production kit was distributed in less than a week and the top 25 video advertisements posted for online voting received more than a quarter million votes in less than a month. Another example is Firefox's "Flicks" contest where Firefox was asking creative users to create and submit short videos about the power of the Web on mobile devices. Both, L'Oreal's and Firefox's contests, were asking users to share their productions in order to get votes. In this way, consumers helped companies to create a huge "buzz" about their products and services. Other similar examples of user-generated advertising are the classical Heinz Ketchup's videos, MasterCard's "Write a Priceless Ad", JetBlue's "Travel Stories" and McDonalds' "Global Casting".

What is important here is the fact that in most of the examples mentioned above, companies were asking consumers to vote in order to indicate the winners. This made users share their productions in Social Media, ask for votes and start a "buzz" around the campaigns. This brings us to another vital (for companies) consumer activity, which is called "content sharing". When people share/forward online content in social networks, most probably it means that they suggest it to their social neighbours and online friends. This helps companies increase their audience, become more popular and create a "marketing buzz". This view is also supported by Shi et.al (2010) who argue that content sharing in Social Media mimics word of mouth by face-to-face communication in our physical world. For this reason, Shi et.al (2010) also argue that content sharing is an integral part of the Social Media experience.

On the other side of sharing information in Social Media is the awareness amongst consumers that Social Media constitute an important source of information about products. This awareness has led consumers to start searching in Social Media for products and product information before they make a purchase. A decade ago, companies were reaching their consumers through print advertising, trade shows and other traditional marketing methods. Today, consumers start their shopping experience by searching on the Internet, in search engines, blogs and Social Media. They have the opportunity to compare prices and look for other users' feedback on products and

services before making a buying decision. Indeed, many people are familiar with Amazon's product evaluations and Trip Advisor's ratings on hotels and other hospitality services. Especially in times of economic crisis, as new research from Greece reports, consumers are making a more sophisticated use of the Internet tools available to them in order to access the best products in the best possible prices (IELKA, 2014).

Along with the examples of Amazon and Trip Advisor, another example of the importance of user rating and "trust" within the online market is the way that Ebay works where people can rate the services and products of each one of the sellers. Ebay, also includes a feedback score for each seller which increases every time a buyer leaves a positive feedback for the seller's products or services. In this way, Ebay helps users get what they really want by choosing and buying products and services from sellers who have good ratings, seem trustworthy and have a first-class selling history. To gain business value, then, organizations need to incorporate community building activities as part of their implementation of Social Media (Culnan et al, 2010).

In order to remain competitive, companies have also realized that they need to be found online by consumers who are already searching for their products and services. In order to achieve this, companies have started adopting a strong online presence in Social Media. Indeed, Social Media enable the creation of virtual customer environments (VCEs) in which communities of interest are formed around certain products or services (Culnan et al, 2010). As part of these communities, consumers such as Social Media users are engaged in activities that would increase their trust towards a certain company and the products or services they are offering. For example, companies such as Microsoft, Cisco, Nokia, Volvo and Nike have established online customer forums. The forums range from simple online discussion groups to more sophisticated prototyping centres. In this way, companies use the information gathered from these environments to develop new processes and products. For example, by interacting with customers, Nokia Corp. has tapped into pioneer design concepts. Similarly, AB Volvo has accelerated its product development by involving customers in virtual product concept tests while Microsoft

Corp. has realized substantial savings by having “expert” clients provide product support services to other clients.

This research argues that Social Media is not only a medium of communication amongst the users; it is not simply a social “hang out” place (Chu, 2011). It is the space where a new “information economy” was created based on the building of trust amongst consumers who are Social Media users. In this economy, information is the new currency since users create, collect and share information. It is a space where the transmission of marketing messages no longer follows a linear route from the advertiser to the potential consumer. It is rather based on the consumers’ judgment, creativity and willingness to accept and share the message with their online friends.

In summary, the emergence and dominance of Social Media has created new social spaces in which consumers assume a more active role. Indeed, as consumers are part of online communities, they are involved in a series of activities that generate and spread information about products and services, which disrupt the more traditional, linear, marketing function. Through their active engagement with Social Media, consumers become part of what may be understood as an emerging marketing information system, consisting of people (e.g. Social Media users), equipment (e.g. Social Media platforms) and procedures (e.g. sharing) (Armstrong and Kotler, 2007) which businesses need to embrace and integrate into their marketing practices.

2.3.2. Content Sharing

Due to the changing role of consumers as generators and sharers/distributors of marketing and advertising content, Social Media can be understood in two ways. In the more conventional and popular sense, they can be perceived by businesses as a new way of reaching diverse customer audiences globally. This is the vision that has been associated with the Internet as a whole since its infancy in the early to mid-1990s and indeed has in a sense been realized by an increased Social Media presence by all kinds of businesses. However, as consumers become increasingly active in Social Media, by generating and sharing content and by their overall behaviour in a Social Media context,

there is a new emerging vision around these popular networking platforms. More specifically, they have become an important source of information that would help businesses make decisions to support their marketing practices and strategies. Nowadays, the amount of data that is generated by users' behaviour and has become available in Social Media is enormous.

For example, according to Kelly (2012), Facebook currently stores, accesses and analyses more than 30 Petabytes (30000 Terabytes) of user generated data. Companies can collect Internet analytics and insights about user clicks, likes, comments, page visits, shares, demographic information and more. But which of these analytics are the most important for businesses? It seems that the answer to this question changes over the years. Initially, companies focused on the "number of clicks". More recently, they have also started to measure "virality" and "attention" (Upworthy Insider, 2014). This shift shows that over the years, different "forms" of information have become valuable and attract the attention of businesses and marketers. The speed however in which new valuable forms of information emerge and gain value, shows that the marketing function is surrounded by rather high levels of fluidity and uncertainty. To put it more simply, the industry has not yet concluded with certainty on which form of information is most valuable, how to measure it and how to interpret it for marketing purposes.

Nevertheless, recent findings suggest that "content sharing" in social networks has become a valuable information-generating consumer activity for Social Media marketing (Dervojeda et.al, 2014). In the previous section, this thesis has addressed user generated content sharing where companies, as part of their Social Media strategy, are inviting creative consumers to produce and share marketing content. However, there are times when companies engage consumers to share content that they have created themselves, an activity that is known in Social Media marketing as "content marketing". Companies with a huge online presence in Social Media like "Coca Cola", "Nike" and "American Express" create unique and interactive material that people want to share, and, in turn, new methods of content marketing mean new avenues for reaching and conversing with their customers. Carter and Marketo (2013) emphasise the importance of content sharing

in Social Media marketing and the strong connections between content sharing, user engagement and content virality. “Number of shares”, then, replaces “number of clicks” as valuable forms of information in e-marketing.

In general, debates around effective digital marketing are not only focused on how to use the Internet to distribute marketing messages to diverse customers (i.e., function of the Internet as an expanded marketplace), but also on how to use information generated by online customer behaviour (i.e. sharing, liking and commenting) in order to help companies develop, release and promote their marketing message. For example, by reviewing online content that was highly shared, Carter and Marketo (2013) found that highly shareable marketing messages do at least one of the following: Give, Advise, Warn, Amuse, Inspire, Amaze and Unite. Moreover, the Customer Insight Group (2011) argues that the key factors to influence sharing are:

- 1) Appealing to consumers’ motivation to connect with each other – not just with the brand
- 2) Trust is the cost of entry for getting shared
- 3) Keeping it simple
- 4) Appealing to their sense of humor
- 5) Embracing a sense of urgency

Indeed, all of the above prove that “sharing” has become an important activity that makes online consumers active stakeholders of a company’s online marketing strategy. However, all these changes and debates bring new challenges and rules to the “marketing game”, rules that companies and marketers need to study and adopt in order to remain competitive.

2.4. Viral Marketing and Viral Videos

To demonstrate how digital marketing is performed in a Social Media ecosystem as a process of co-creation between marketing professionals and digital consumers, this research mainly focuses at the case of viral video marketing. The case of viral videos and

how they travel in Social Media is ideal in helping this research illustrate the active role of digital consumers and how they are embedded in the marketing function for certain brands.

As mentioned earlier, during the last decade, providers of both services and physical goods have recognised that the Internet is vital to their success. Indeed Internet offers a virtual channel embedding many new marketing functions which can clearly assist and institute a competitive advantage (Robins, 2000, Gay et al., 2007). Viral Marketing is one such popular “new” technique which helps interaction and communication with customers while increasing brand awareness through social networks (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, etc.) and public blogs. This is achieved by passing audiovisual marketing messages/buzzwords from one customer to another.

Viral Marketing is also known as the “online word of mouth”. More specifically, it refers to the word-of-mouth (WOM) empowered by the Internet (word-of-mouse) (Goldenberg et al., 2001), and to the broad buzz marketing (Thomas, 2004). This includes the marketing strategy behind it (Gruen et al., 2006) which is focused on advertising (Phelps et al., 2004) and branding (Dobele, et al., 2005). Wilson (2000) describes Viral Marketing as any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing message to others creating the potential for exponential growth in the message’s exposure and influence. In doing so, customers are recruited to be sales agents and spread the word about the product (Solomon et al, 2006). As a result, brand awareness is built quickly, sales increase and marketing costs are lower compared to traditional marketing techniques.

As noted by Porter and Golan (2006), there is much uncertainty about the definition of viral marketing as both scholars and professionals use the terms stealth marketing, buzz marketing, viral marketing and viral advertising interchangeably. Porter and Golan (2006) argue that viral marketing is different than viral advertising. “While the latter refers to a comprehensive marketing strategy that may include several (viral) components, viral advertising refers to a specific online advertising practice (Golan and Zaidner, 2008 p. 961). “Essentially, viral advertising refers to an online advertising sharing

method that relies on word of mouth distribution via email or social network platforms as the means of reaching target audiences” (Golan and Zaidner, 2008, p. 962).

Viral advertising comes across as natural rather than forceful. Rogers (1994) points out that innovations spread better in an exchange of information than they do via direct persuasion. Therefore, viral advertising dissemination should be more effective than persuasion by an organization or institution. According to Porter and Golan (2006), viral advertising can be defined as “unpaid peer-to-peer communication of proactive content originating from an identified sponsor using the Internet to persuade or influence an audience to pass along content to others” (p. 29).

Although the research landscape on Viral Marketing appears to be rather fragmented as it is characterised by dissimilar approaches, visions and terminologies (Camarero and San Jose, 2011), it is broadly accepted that as a type of unconventional marketing (Cova *et al.*, 2008), the Viral Marketing phenomenon drives people to receive and pass along original and creative messages (Southgate *et al.*, 2010) rapidly, and in an exponential manner (De Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). What is also broadly accepted, is that the more recent emergence and growth of online Social Media, has moved Viral Marketing to another level (The Economist, 2008). One example that most people are familiar with, is the posting and sharing of videos on Social Media platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. More specifically, this research refers to online branded videos that are developed by advertisers as part of a marketing campaign of a product. This marketing activity is also known as video marketing or video advertising.

Since the arrival of YouTube, online videos have played a critical role in advertising and marketing. According to Cheng *et al.* (2008, p.1), “YouTube has become the most successful Internet website providing a new generation of short video sharing service since its establishment in early 2005”. For this reason, entrepreneurs, business owners and even small companies are trying to take advantage of its power. Leaders in every sector including retail, health care, banking, food and beverages and travel are sharing videos to demonstrate their products and services, to showcase their industry knowledge and to educate consumers. Furthermore, what is also remarkable is that Cisco (2013)

predicted that by 2017 online video will be used more widely than Twitter and Facebook. According to Cisco’s Visual Networking Index forecast, online video services had around 1 billion users worldwide in 2012 (Cisco, 2013). The company estimates that this number will almost double by 2017, reaching close to 2 billion users worldwide (Table 1). This means that by 2017, 81 percent of the world’s Internet population will also use online video services. In 2012, that number was still at around 58 percent. Cisco also predicted that:

- Online video will account for 69 percent of consumer Internet traffic by 2017 (up from 57 percent in 2012).
- Internet-to-TV streaming will grow from 1.3 exabytes per month in 2012 to 6.5 exabytes per month in 2017.
- Mobile video will grow 16-fold from 2012 to 2017, and account for 66 percent of all mobile data traffic during that year.
- The number of web-enabled TVs in consumers' homes will grow from close to 180 million in 2012 to 827 million in 2017.
- Game consoles will become slightly less important as a way of bringing Internet video to the TV screen, while dedicated streaming boxes will see the biggest growth.

Table 1: Residential Services: Global Adoption (Millions of Subscribers or Users)

Source: <https://gigaom.com/2013/05/29/online-video-will-be-more-popular-than-facebook-and-twitter-by-2017/> (Accessed in June 2014)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	CAGR 2012-17
Digital TV	928	1048	1151	1248	1316	1379	8.24%
PVR	118	135	166	166	176	184	9.22%
VoD	256	293	359	359	388	402	9.44%
Residential VoIP	615	675	808	808	887	971	9.56%
Social Networking	1205	1317	1536	1536	1645	1731	7.50%

Online music	1090	1216	1495	1495	1635	1754	9.98%
Consumer IM	1106	1144	1216	1216	1246	1272	2.83%
Online Video	1066	1245	1617	1617	1811	1985	13.24%
Online Gaming	1070	1186	1425	1425	1545	1639	8.92%

What is also important to go through at this point, is the phenomenon of “Viral videos”. Viral Videos describes the phenomenon in which online videos become extremely popular through rapid, user-led allocation (sharing) via the Internet and Social Networks. In other words, viral video refers to those videos which are viewed by a great number of people, normally as a result of knowledge about the video being spread rapidly through the Internet population via online word-of-mouth (Burgess, 2008). Additionally, in his post on the technology business weblog Techcrunch, Greenberg (2007), defines viral videos as videos that have travelled all around the Internet and been posted on YouTube, Google+, Facebook, blogs, etc. – videos with millions and millions of views.

While trying to analyse the reasons behind the high virality of certain videos, Briggs (2009) published a viral video case study in which he analyses the "BlendTec Will it Blend" campaign. According to the author, this campaign has been wildly popular and is a valuable example of the methodology behind viral videos. He suggests that the main reason that this campaign was successful was because BlendTec achieved creating buzz content.

2.5. Video Content Characteristics

To understand how marketing messages are embedded in videos which are then shared in Social Media, this research looks at the individual video content characteristics as the main constituents of brand videos. This research argues that it is with a video’s content characteristics that consumers are engaged and co-create the marketing message. More specifically, the focus of this research is on the videos’ *visuals*, *sound* and *plot* as the main carriers of meaningful video messages.

2.5.1. Visual Content Characteristics

Starting with visuals such as video graphics, there are different ways in which marketers can communicate their marketing video messages visually. Computer animation for instance (2D or 3D), is one type of visuals that has affected the way products are sold (Callcott and Lee, 1994). Computer animation has been shown to be effective in web advertising due to its ability to get the attention of the potential consumers (Sundar and Kalyanaraman, 2004).

Another, more expensive, complex but realistic method of creating a marketing video is “live-action”. This method involves recording live footage by using appropriate equipment (i.e. professional video cameras) and normally requires the involvement of actors. Both methods (animation and live action) have unique advantages to offer to marketers and entail different levels of viewers’ response and engagement.

A great example of a brand video that went viral with more than 17 million views mostly because of its use of visuals is Dove’s “Evolution of Beauty” (Image 1). For the specific video, Dove used a photography/animation technique called “Time Lapse” where a large number of images are used to make motion movie footage. The video starts with an ordinary woman entering and sitting down in a studio. Two lights are switched on and the camera then switches to a time lapse sequence, showing a makeup and hair artist, transforming her into an outstandingly beautiful billboard model. When the final physical alterations of the woman’s appearance have been made, the team members move off-camera and a series of camera flashes begins as the photographer takes photographs of the woman in a variety of poses. One photograph is selected from the batch and moved into a generic image editing software, where a series of image editing alterations are made to alter the woman’s appearance even further, including, but not limited to: adjusting the curve of her shoulders, altering her hair and skin, lengthening her neck and enlarging her mouth and eyes. The final image, now rendered almost unrecognizable, is then transferred to a billboard advertisement.

Image 1: "The Evolution of Beauty" brand video (by Dove),

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U> (Accessed in June 2014)



Indeed, visuals and graphics play an important role in the advertising industry. Advertisements for services and products are most effective when visuals stand out while upholding relevance to and transparency of the marketing message. Right visuals can attract the consumer's attention and increase the possibility that the viewer will buy the product or service. Additionally, effective use of colour and visuals can increase attention and appeal to the consumer's emotions and behaviour. Great examples are the visuals being used in Coca Cola's advertisements and the effective use of the red colour which is stimulating and alerts consumers to pay attention. In fact, colour is so important to a product's brand identity that the Supreme Court ruled in 1995 that a particular shade of colour, such as Coca-Cola red, could serve as a legally defensible trademark (Lamancusa, 2003). By having all these in mind, someone could argue that visuals are as important as the marketing messages that they are supposed to communicate.

3D Animation

3D Animation in advertising is strongly connected with the term "spoke-character advertisements" (Callcott and Lee, 1994). Characters designed for use in advertising campaigns may be referred to as spokes-characters or trade characters. Phillips (1996b, p.146) defines a trade character as "a fictional, animate being or animated object that has been created for the promotion of a product, service, or idea".

Spokes-characters are used as walking metaphors for what cannot be said or presented directly. Phillips (1996b) identified three ways that spokes-characters are used to communicate with customers: promoting brand personality, creating a product identification, and providing a promotional continuity. Spoke-characters help connect the advertising campaign with the product and sometimes with packaging as well. A great example is the "Energizer Bunny". Duracell's advertisers hope that when a person hears these words he/she may first think of a pink bunny beating on a drum. Their mind will probably turn to the series of advertisements that feature the bunny meandering into different animated commercials. Successively, the person would then think of the product itself (Duracell batteries). The whole line of cognition can be spurred by the mention of the spokes-character alone.

Research suggests that animated spokes-characters are popular with audiences and effective for advertising purposes because they can be nostalgic. According to Callcott and Alvey (1991), spokes-characters create identity for the brand or advertiser, therefore serving as a positive effect cue because consumers start to enjoy watching them and associate positive feelings with them, which in turn leads to positive feelings for the product.

The first function of the trade character's personality is to give meaning to the brand by symbolizing the character of that brand or its products and services. It does this by transferring its own cultural meaning to what can be viewed as an otherwise meaningless product (Phillips, 1996a). For example, an ant may be viewed as a strong, hard-working, industrious insect. When presented in connection with a product or service, the advertiser hopes that the audience will project the character traits onto the product

itself. In this way, the character will use its personality and symbolic meaning to transfer meaning onto the brand. Additionally, according to Aaker (1993), a strong congruence between an animated character's personality and the brand personality has been found to strengthen brand equity.

What is also interesting is that Callcott and Alvey (1991) found that animated characters created specifically for a product or brand, such as Duracell's bunny, produced a higher percentage of correct product recall than "celebrity" endorsers such as Garfield or Bugs Bunny did when they were used to represent several products. Commercials featuring animated characters were watched more often than other types of commercials and attitude toward the brand is affected by a spokes-character's likability (Callcott and Phillips, 1996). Stewart and Furse (1986) also found that advertisements with animated characters score above the average in their ability to change brand preference.

Advertisers frequently use animal spokes-characters because they can utilise standard symbols of human qualities. Referring to the ant example above, a test was conducted by Phillips (1996a) and showed that most people agree on the same characteristics of ants such as: "hard-working", "strong", "determined", and "industrious".

2D Animation and Motion Graphics

Motion graphics or moving graphics are created by using animation or video technologies and also by making an illusion of movement or changing the appearance of 2 dimensional visual elements. The term "motion graphics" was first used by John Withney, a well-known animator, in 1960. Moreover, Saul Bass was the first one who used motion graphics in his work (Yu, 2008).

In order to form an appropriate communication with the audience of the work/marketing message, according to the type of message and its audience, there are different methods for creating 2D animation and motion graphics each of which has its own characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. On the other hand, it is important to have in mind that each graphic designer has their own taste which is in conformity with their personality (Shir and Asadolla, 2014).

Researchers have examined motion graphics as a tool to create dynamic and effective communication design for television, film, and the Internet (Curran, 2000). Also, according to Goux and Houff (2003), motion graphics are part of entertainment, advertising, videography, animation, cinematography and storytelling.

Focusing on visual communication elements, motion graphics and 2D animation can also be defined as "all moving image sequences which are dominated by typography or/and design" (Manovich, 2006, p.9). In 2D animation, visual elements are mixed with visual effects of rhythm, contrast, and emphasis. For example, text in 2D animation is "kinetic" and when combined with dynamic and rhythmic images, backgrounds, and sound it can deliver the message in the form of unique visual impact and movement in motion graphics (Krasner, 2008).

As concerns their development, 2D motions are a group of computer images which include 2D models like 2D geometric figures, digital images and text. This method involves an exact number of pictures which are played one after another at a specific pace. In order to produce 2D animation, separate transparent layers and objects (images) are used. Then, eyes, mouth, feet, hands, clothes, or other graphics/elements are moved by the animator in the key frames. The differences in the appearance among the key frames are identified by the computer in the process of morphing or "tweening". At the end, the animation is rendered (Shir and Asadolla, 2014). In fact, all of what we see on display screens are flat 2D animations. In the production of these animations, intermediate frames as well as key frames play important roles.

Graphic designers have recognised the effectiveness of motion graphics. As Plummer (2014) explains, motion graphics and 2D animation help in promoting contents, capturing audiences' interests, helping data visualization, and illustrating a story, product, service or process. Shir and Asadolla (2014) also emphasise the effectiveness of motion graphics as a visual communication method, indicating that compared to other visual techniques, motion graphics are more effective in influencing audiences.

Live Action

The next method of creating a marketing video is “live-action”. As mentioned earlier, this method involves recording live footage by using appropriate equipment (i.e. professional video cameras) and normally requires the involvement of actors.

According to Voltz and Grobe (2013), online viral videos are about raw, unfiltered experiences and don't need much editing and camera moves since viewers need to feel that they are actually there while the plot develops and that there are no barriers between them and what is happening. As Trish Sie, the Grammy-winning choreographer behind several of OK Go's hit viral videos, has said, "You want to stick to that original feeling of: if you were in the room, this is what it really looked like" (Voltz and Grobe, 2013). The fact that many of the biggest viral videos of all time are unedited footage shot with a single, fixed camera with absolutely no edits (e.g. "The sneezing Baby Panda", "Numa Numa", "Evolution of Dance") comes to support this view.

On the other hand, online video advertisements that went viral like Volvo's "Epic Split" and John Lewis's "Monty The Penguin" prove that when it comes to video advertising, the use of camerawork, actors, lighting, sets and related high production values does not stop a video from going viral. In general, the impact of these high production values on brand video virality is a topic that has not received enough attention from researchers.

Visual Special Effects

Visual Special Effects (also known as VFX) can range from the small (animated graphic objects) to the big (whole scenes treated with specialized looks). VFX give to content extra values, ranging from a real “wow” factor to a more delicate shine that makes video ads innately more appealing.

Just as content providers have long understood the worth of VFX, so have advertisers, particularly for expensive, high-profile TV ads (Richmond, 2011). Nowadays, with the relocation of audiences to online video, and the interest of companies in

increasing their spending in this medium, VFX can similarly improve the ROI and effectiveness of online video ads. That's the conclusion of a recent research study from GenArts (2011), a leading VFX provider. GenArts (2011) presented video advertisements for a national sneaker brand to viewers, both with and without visual effects. The videos with effects caught viewers' attention more, made the prospect of watching the advertisement a second time more desirable and led to greater interest in the brand.

In more detail, a sample of 518 participants, aged 18-54, evenly split between women and men, were randomly shown two different ads targeted towards males, from footwear maker Puma. One ad was treated with VFX and one was not. Participants were then asked 20 questions about preference, likeability, engagement and purchase intent. Unsurprisingly, the VFX-enhanced ad was proved more unique, more appealing and more likely to be viewed again, with 90 percent citing the visual effects as the key differentiator. Men were particularly drawn to the VFX advertisement, with 14 percent finding it considerably more appealing. They were 9 percent less likely to dump the ad and 13 percent more likely to consider purchasing the advertised footwear. Importantly, there were negative consequences from viewing the advertisement that did not include VFX too, as they were 11 percent more likely to absolutely not consider the brand compared with the VFX ad. Follow-on action was also more motivated by VFX; viewers of the non-VFX ad were 13 percent less likely to download an online available coupon. The key findings as presented by the authors of this case study were the following:

- Visual effects increase video appeal, preference, and likelihood of watching again
- Visual effects increase viewers' brand consideration, likelihood of purchasing, and likelihood of downloading a coupon for the advertised product and lessened negative responses along similar measures
- Visual effects are the reason cited for preference over the same content without visual effects

As concerns the business implications provided by their study, the authors explain that the use of visual effects can drive video popularity, increase the value of published

content, and improve the return on advertising investment. These business implications will be examined throughout this study by evaluating the extent to which individual visual content characteristics impact the social media users' decision to share, like or comment a brand video in social networks and consequently create online stories about it and improve its virality.

2.5.2. Audio Content Characteristics

Another attention-grabbing video content characteristic is the audio. The audio used in marketing videos is normally a mixture of speech, sound effects and background music. Cooper (2013) emphasises the importance of strategic audio branding while other studies in the digital sphere also point to the positive effects of audio on engagement (Nortcliffe and Middleton, 2008). Furthermore, Lusensky (2011) explains that music strategy creates brand awareness and attention by involving the consumer in a conversation about the music. Moreover, the author argues that the power of sound, its suggestive capabilities and ability to reach into a consumer's emotions and imagination, is maybe the most under-estimated asset of branding/advertising. Great examples of effective use of audio in marketing are the advertisements of Compare the Market and Coca-Cola.

According to Smith (2013), the token response of "Simples" by Compare the Market's Meerkat has entered the national vernacular. Additionally, Coca Cola's "Always Coca-Cola" audio signature has proven that even one single creative execution has the power to be known all over the world. It is important to mention that both companies have remarked on the positive impact that the audio has had on their marketing. However, the impact of sound effects and speech on brand video virality is also a topic that has not received enough attention from previous researchers.

Music in Advertising

In Greek mythology, travelers had more to worry about than just the waves, wind and other natural perils of the ocean. In the event that they wandered excessively near to specific islands, they would hear the alluring songs of sirens. Those who heard the singing

were not able to resist, following it to their deaths as their boats crashed into the island's rocky shores. Although few would argue nowadays that music is sufficiently strong to render audiences as defenseless as the doomed Greek travelers, studies show that music does have the ability to influence individuals exploring the waters of today's media-soaked society (Allan, 2008; Bruner, 1990; North and Hargreaves, 2008). Music is utilised as a method of influence in commercial advertising and political messages. Experiential research in media impact recommends that music, in blend with other content characteristics (e.g., narrative structure, visual images, words), applies a enticing impact through emotional and cognitive procedures. Alexomanolaki et al. (2007) state that "Music may play several roles and have many effects in advertising; it may attract attention, carry the product message, act as a mnemonic device, and create excitement or a state of relaxation" (p. 51).

Through television, an average American aged 18 or above is exposed to approximately 150 advertising commercials (or just over an hour of advertising) every day (Holt, Ippolito, Desrochers, and Kelley, 2007). This number would be considerably higher if internet advertising was included. These advertising messages usually comprise music. More than 80 percent of TV ads in the United States contain music (Allan, 2008; Furnham, Abramsky, and Gunter, 1997), and the rate might be considerably higher in different nations (Murray and Murray, 1996). Content examinations of TV and radio ads provide information such as whether an ad includes any music and whether the music is a jingle, contains lyrics, or is effortlessly identifiable (Stewart and Furse, 1986). Allan (2008) analysed 3,456 US prime-time TV commercials circulated on CBS, ABC, NBC, and Fox. Results uncovered that 14 percent contained popular music, 5 percent utilised jingles, and 81 percent utilised generic, pre-assembled, multipurpose musical components.

Different studies have analysed particular characteristics of the music itself. For instance, Hung and Rice's (1992) content analysis utilised a typology that followed Bruner's (1990) examination of musical elements, including time (e.g., tempo), texture (e.g., volume) and pitch-related (e.g., modality) structural components of music. Additionally, it included consideration of mnemonic devices (e.g., theme song, jingle) and

musical style (e.g., easy listening, jazz, fanfare/march) to account for musical components that could possibly contribute to user affect and recall of the content of advertisements. This was tested on 292 advertisements aired on three US networks (ABC, NBC and CBS) on a weekday at various times: 9–10 a.m., 1–2 p.m., and 8–9 p.m. The investigation uncovered that 80 percent of the music in the examined plugs was instrumental (no lyrics). There was an assortment of musical styles, including adult contemporary (29.1 percent), classical (20.1 percent), easy listening (13.1 percent), jazz (12.7 percent), rap/dance (6.1 percent), fanfare/march (5.7 percent), atmospheric (5.7 percent), and hard rock/ metal (5.7 percent). The music was likely to be in a major mode (72 percent), soft (62 percent), and have a moderate tempo (49 percent). Most had a particular melody (52 percent), but only 10 percent utilised a jingle (defined as ‘an identifiable musical or otherwise audio fragment which is associated with a brand name across different ads of the same brand’; Hung and Rice, 1992, p. 225).

In most cases, the main goal of persuasive messages is to produce an intended behaviour, such as donating to a cause, voting for a candidate, buckling seatbelts, spreading the word or buying a product (Petty, Briñol, and Priester, 2009). Social psychologists and media researchers have considered how input variables such as the message, message source (e.g., spokesperson), and the recipient might each impact persuasion through various mental procedures (output variables), including exposure to the message, attention, yielding to a new attitude, comprehension, and action in light of the attitude (McGuire, 1985). According to McGuire (1985), music constitutes one input variable that communicates with other input variables to impact output variables in the persuasion procedure.

Allan (2007) explored 28 studies from 1982 to 2006 examining the impacts of music in advertising and found that musical properties such as mode (major or minor), tempo (i.e., speed or pace of the music), and fit with other elements may affect an assortment of psychological variables (e.g., brand recall, attitude toward an advertisement, perception of advertisement time, pleasure, message processing, mood, arousal, product preference, and purchase intention). Factors that may interact with

music include audience characteristics (e.g., familiarity with the music), the type of product, imagery, or other additional musical implications in the message. For instance, Allan reported studies demonstrating that attitude toward a brand can turn out to be more positive if the implications of the music and the rest of the advertisement fit well together from the audience's point of view (North, MacKenzie, Law, and Hargreaves, 2004) but attitude may turn out to be more negative if they do not (Shen and Chen, 2006). Allan summarised the review by saying that "the influence of music in advertising can be effective, but it is 'complicated'" (Allan, 2007, p. 28).

While studying the literature that exists around music in advertising, it was noticed that although there are many studies concentrating on this subject, no studies were found that examined how music affects brand video virality and the decision of a social media user to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. Moreover, although some studies found that many video advertisements include popular music (Allan, 2008), no studies were found that examined whether the inclusion of popular music within online brand videos affects the chances of the brand video to go viral. This is a hypothesis that was tested during this study by running a binary logistic regression on some of the data collected throughout the second questionnaire (see "Data Analysis and Results" chapter).

Music Fit

According to Macinnis and Park (1986), musical fit refers to the subjective perception that the music in an advertisement is relevant or appropriate to content characteristics of the advertisement, such as the visuals, the plot or the central message. For example, if a television advertisement for a luxury car presents words and images that depict the car as high-end and sophisticated, most people would probably say that classical background music fits the commercial better than bluegrass music. The measure of musical fit is based upon 'pattern activation' as depicted by Gawronski and Bodenhausen (2006, pp. 693, 698–700). In pattern activation, the matching of two stimuli initiates recollections common to both, making their shared attributes more salient. A decent case can be drawn from Cook's (1998) examination of a TV car commercial in his

book "Analysing Musical Multimedia". Visually, the video advertisements presents scenes of artistic painters in the farmland interjected with pictures of a car "racing along a country lane" (p. 6). The opening of Mozart's overture to the Marriage of Figaro initially occurs only when the car is shown, but it later accompanies the images of both the painters and the car.

Furthermore, Cook (1998) clarifies that, independently, the music could have an expansive scope of implications and the visuals might not make much sense. Within the context of one another, however, the music gives meaning to the visuals and the visuals give meaning to the music, through the remarkable quality of shared attributes. The overture and car each have properties of "liveliness and precision" (Cook, 1998, p. 6). Subsequently, the consolidated visuals and music impart that the car has a lively engine and precise street-holding. The painters and music both have associations with prestige and high art. Cook expresses that implications emerge out of these attributes to communicate that the car "represents an ideal synthesis of art and technology" (p. 6). Regarding musical fit, we can say that the classical music fits with both the technological features of the car and the painters, permitting the audience to relate the car with a favourable meaning constructed from the music and painters.

The example drawn from Cook (1998) considers the musical fit of the meaning of visuals, but the principles presented by Macinnis and Park (1991) and Gawronski and Bodenhausen (2006) propose that musical fit could result from coordinating patterns amongst music and many other variables, including words, plot, emotion, product and spokesperson traits, the emotional state of an audience member or the overall tone or style of an advertisement.

Then again, the lyrics of a song and perceived mood of the music may also influence the degree of musical fit. In an investigation with Taiwanese college students, Chou and Lien (2010) found that older, familiar Mandarin pop songs in TV ads not only evoked positive nostalgic thoughts and good moods, but they also enhanced attitudes toward an advertisement if the songs had lyrics with high relevance to the advertisement (see also Olsen and Johnson, 2002). In regards to mood, Alpert, Alpert, and Maltz (2005)

asked college students to assess advertisements of greeting cards for the occasion of either a friend having a birthday (happy occasion) or a friend who was sick in the hospital (sad occasion). Either a happy or sad prelude from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier (determined by pretesting) played in the background during the commercials. The participants who heard the sad music—regardless of the occasion for which they were supposed to be purchasing the card—reported feeling considerably sadder than those who heard the cheerful music. Participants reported more probability of purchasing the card if the musical mood was consistent with the purchase occasion.

The examples portrayed above are not the only types of musical fit or effects that can occur. Factors such as culture and congruity between audio and visual formal structures could also have an effect (Iwamiya and Hanako, 2004; Shen and Chen, 2006). Like images and words, music can be associated with concepts of people, qualities, social processes, and cultures (Barthes, 1985; Shevy and Kristen, 2009). When integrated into advertising, music can also help portray an activity, occasion, venue or type of person (as exemplified by sex, race, lifestyle, appearance and age).

Once again, although the above studies concentrated on the effects of music fit in advertising, no studies were found that examined whether music fit affects the chances of a brand video to go viral. This hypothesis was also tested by running a binary logistic regression on some of the data collected throughout the second questionnaire (see "Data Analysis and Results" chapter).

2.5.3. Story and Plot

In addition to audiovisual characteristics, another video content characteristic that is a main carrier of meaningful messages is the plot that the brand video follows. This content characteristic is strongly connected to a new marketing trend called "story advertising". According to Gossner (2013), story advertising is a new form of content marketing which involves producing advertising videos that present stories, normally with a beginning, a turning point and an end. Audi's "Prom", Volkswagen's "The Force", Old

Spice's "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" and Pepsi's "Uncle Drew" commercial series are all examples of successful advertisements that use this new form of marketing.

Stories inform, instruct, entertain, warn and warm. According to Zemke (1990), a good story touches something familiar within us and shows us something new about our world or our lives. In general, it is widely accepted that one of the major activities in marketing is the provision and expenditure of stories. This fact is so pervasive and general that it commonly escapes attention or it is so prominent and noticeable that it interpenetrates all experience. Stories are brought and sold, they are part of the media of exchange, and they are the vehicles for all other services and products. According to Escalas (1998), advertisers appear to be implicitly aware of the power of narratives because many ads tell stories. Additionally, Escalas (1998) defines a narrative ad as an ad that tells a story. Advertisements that tell stories are able to entertain and involve consumers and, more importantly, are able to model and communicate how products may be used to create meaning (Escalas, 2004). Other research performed around this subject includes: narrative processing (Escalas, 2004; Adaval and Wyer, 1998), drama ads (Deighton et al., 1989), self vs. narratives (Escalas and Bettman, 2000) and story grammar analysis to advertising (Mick, 1987). However, little has been explored with regard to the elements of narratives.

Aristotle, the famous Greek philosopher and scientist, was the first who created a theory about story. More than 2000 years ago, Aristotle indicated that stories should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Also, they should include complex characters as well as a plot that incorporates a reversal of fortune and a lesson learned. Furthermore, the storyteller should be so engaged with the story- visualizing the action, feeling what the characters feel- that the listeners become drawn into the narrative's world (Aristotle, 1987). In the past few decades more theories about "storyline" have been developed. Bruner (1990), Burke (1969) and Mandler (1984) for example, suggest different viewpoints about story elements such as acts of meaning and motives. Indeed, there is no common agreement on elements of story, particularly across differing academic fields.

At this point, it is also essential to mention the importance of authenticity in story advertising. When speaking of storytelling in general, authenticity is usually treated as a basic element. Authenticity can be defined as a sense that we gain from material that makes us associate with a psychological feeling or the past and reality (Chen et al., 2009). Stories which are authentic convince the audience easier. Furthermore, Godin (2005) suggests that a great story is true. Consumers have the ability to sniff out inconsistencies for a marketer to get away with a story that's just slapped on. According to Edwards (1990), the cognition-based component of attitude includes judgments, beliefs and thoughts associated with an object. The author also argues that watching or reading story-form ads with higher authenticity may help them build knowledge about the product or service.

Moreover, a significant element of a story is its reversal. Reversal is a change, a turning point and the climax of a scene. According to Reichman (2003), it is the point when the action and/or the emotion takes either a surprising twist or reaches an unexpected intensity. The story containing reversal might let listeners remain in suspense and curious – wondering what is going to happen next (Guber, 2007). When a good story develops, the protagonists (main characters) always faces a series of crises or reversal, thus forcing him (her) to struggle against the problems (Grant, 1999). Without reversal, the story and the character would become boring and flat. Alwitt (2002) suggests that a key emotional reaction to the continuing events in the narrative is the alternation of hope and fear as the story unfolds. This arousal of the emotion could be persuaded by reversal in the story. The feelings and emotions with reference to a particular brand or product constitute the affective component of an attitude (Breckler, 1984; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

2.6. Co-Creation in Viral Videos

After going through the video content characteristics of a brand/advertising video, some questions that may arise in respect to spreading the word about these videos and their marketing message are: What happens after video developers and advertisers develop a brand video with the intention of becoming viral in Social Media and spreading

the marketing message to diverse audiences? How are Social Media users involved in the process of co-creation of the marketing message in the Social Media ecosystem? To answer these questions, this research suggests an understanding of videos as “digital objects” (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011). More specifically, videos that are shared in Social Media in the familiar form of a Youtube video constitute a substantially new breed of editable artefacts amenable to wide manipulation and revision. In relation to conventional objects, digital objects manifest an “openness”, an “editability” and “expandability” and in this sense, they never achieve the definite closure of traditional objects (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011). What makes this openness possible is, to borrow a term from the Sociology of technology, the high degree of “interpretive flexibility” (Pinch and Bijker, 1992) that digital objects present.

This means that technological objects/artefacts may have different meanings and interpretations by various groups. Therefore, the attempt to embed a complete and fixed meaningful (marketing) message in a technological object like a digital video is more or less futile. It is an absolute certainty that the meaning of the initial message that is embedded in a video’s content elements (sound, visuals, plot) is never fixed; rather it is altered, edited, re-interpreted as the video appears in different Social Media contexts. More specifically, when a digital video goes viral in the ecosystem of Social Media, it generates a process by which Social Media users actively participate in the co-creation of the marketing message carried in this video, by placing a video’s content elements (sound, plot, visuals) within different cognitive and cultural frameworks. For example, when a video is shared in a specific Social Media platform it generates comments, further shares, likes and so on, which contribute to the co-creation of the message that the video carries.

To get a closer look at this phenomenon, this research examines brand videos that have recently gone viral and how users have contributed to the co-creation of the message that the video is carrying. To achieve this, some of the comments that users were making while sharing the viral videos on Google+ (Google’s social network) through Youtube were examined.

2.7. Emotions and Sharing

While this research focuses on identifying the impact that each of the content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) of a brand video has on its virality, another view that is supported by previous literature is that Viral Marketing messages should always build an emotional connection between the campaign and the recipient in order to ensure that the message spreads (Dobele et al., 2007). Similarly to this research, the authors selected nine global and successful Viral Marketing campaigns to study. Success was judged from the initiator's perspective through increased turnover, sales, or brand development, or in terms of how far the message spread. Their results suggest that the common emotion elicited from all these nine campaigns was the emotion of surprise. Other emotions elicited included the emotions of joy, sadness, anger, disgust and fear. Moreover, Nelson-Field et al. (2013) talk about “arousal” (a physiological approach to measuring the strength of an emotional response) and argue that in advertising, an emotional response is important in driving further cognitive or behavioural responses.

While Berger and Milkman (2012) were the first to use the term “emotional arousal” in the context of online sharing, others before them had investigated how emotional strength affects the pass-long rate of a different type of content: “memes”. Coined by the famous biologist Professor Richard Dawkins, “meme” is a term that describes rumours, folklores, chain letters, urban legends and suchlike, all of which need to be passed along by their audience in order to survive. The idea that arousal is linked to content diffusion is also aligned to the psychology literature that refers to “social sharing”. In this context, researchers suggest that emotional experiences are shared shortly after they occur, typically in the course of a conversation. As with memes, it is suggested that the extent of sharing is directly related to the strength of the emotion left (Luminet et al., 2000; Rime et al., 1998).

What is less agreed upon is the role that positive or negative emotions play in content sharing. The term used to describe this is “valence”. Marketing scientists argue that valence plays an important role and that positive content drives sharing (Dobele et al. 2007; Berger and Milkman, 2012; Eckler and Bolls, 2011). A number of psychology

researchers disagree, concluding that when compared to positive experiences, episodes of negatively valence high-arousal emotions are equally likely to be shared (Rime et al., 2011). Meanwhile, biologists argue that stories succeed in terms of sharing based only on their ability to evoke highly arousing negative emotions.

Considering these arguments, Nelson-Field et al. (2013) studied the influence of emotional reactions to the sharing of social video content. Their findings were based upon a combination of two large data sets (n=800 videos). Emotional reactions to each video were recorded by 28 coders (each video was examined by two coders). Then, for each video, actual levels of daily sharing online were captured using aggregator websites and software. Although they found that content that draws a high-arousal and positive emotional response is shared more often than content that draws any other emotional response from its audience, at the end of their study they conclude that emotional responses do not guarantee that a video will go viral and that there is more to the sharing puzzle.

2.8. Summarizing Key Literature and Gaps

Although scholars argue that viral video is a new driving force of pop culture (Linkletter et al. 2009; Burgess, 2008), it is obvious that existing literature on viral videos and on the definite reasons that drive large numbers of social media users to create online stories about specific online videos/brand videos in social networks is still rather blurry. What is also obvious is that existing literature on this topic is characterised by debates, dissimilar approaches, viewpoints, terminologies and findings.

As discussed earlier, much research around viral marketing has focused on the impact of emotional responses (Dobele et al., 2007; Berger and Milkman, 2012; Eckler and Bolls, 2011; Nelson-Field et al., 2013). However, according to the findings of Nelson-Field et al. (2013), emotional responses cannot guarantee virality by themselves. Burgess (2008) on the other hand studied a sample of 4.300 popular Youtube videos and found that much of her sample size included the element of irony. But what about the videos that managed to go viral without including the element of irony? Table 2 summarizes the existing

literature that is directly related to the role of emotions in viral marketing and in brand video virality. Since content characteristics are the main video elements that evoke emotions (Burger & Milkman, 2012), the literature presented within Table 2 informs all the research hypotheses of this study (H1, H2, H3).

Table 2: Existing literature on the role of emotions in brand video virality

Authors	Year	Suggestions/Findings	Hypotheses informed
Dobele et al.	2007	Viral marketing messages should always build an emotional connection between the campaign and the recipient in order to ensure that the message spreads.	H1, H2, H3
Nelson-Field et al	2013	Although emotional responses are important, they cannot guarantee that a video will go viral . There is more to the sharing puzzle.	H1, H2, H3
Burgess	2008	Most viral videos include the element of irony.	H1, H2, H3
Eckler & Bolls		Emotional tone (pleasant, unpleasant, coactive) of viral video ads affects attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, and forwarding intentions.	H1, H2, H3
Berger & Milkman	2012	Content that evokes high-arousal positive (awe) or negative (anger or anxiety) emotions is more viral.	H1, H2, H3

Other scholars have tried to focus on the creative aspects of viral videos. Southgate et al. (2010) for example suggest that creative details behind video advertising can be used to predict a video's virality. The question here is "which are these exact creative details and how do they impact large numbers of social media users creating online stories about specific brand videos in social networks?" While trying to answer this question, GenArts (2011) found that the use of visual effects can drive video popularity. However, Voltz and Grobe (2013) debate this view by suggesting that in order to go viral, a

video should be raw, unfiltered and without any effects. Table 3 summarizes the existing literature that is directly focused on the creative aspects of viral videos and their role in brand video virality. In addition, Table 3 explains which hypotheses of this research were informed by each study.

Table 3: Existing literature on the role of creative aspects of viral videos in brand video virality

Authors	Year	Suggestions/Findings	Hypotheses informed
Southgate et. al	2010	Creative details behind video advertising can be used to predict a video's virality	H1, H2, H3
GenArts	2011	The use of visual effects can drive brand video popularity	H1
Voltz & Grobe	2013	Online viral videos are about raw, unfiltered experiences and don't need much editing	H1, H2

As concerns the research performed around individual video content characteristics and their impact on video advertising in general, some scholars ended up with interesting findings but their research does not directly connect those findings with video/brand video virality. Shir and Asadolla (2014) for example emphasised the effectiveness of motion graphics as a visual communication method, indicating that compared to other visual techniques, motion graphics are more effective in influencing audiences. Callcott and Phillips (1996) argued that commercials featuring animated characters were watched more often than other types of commercials. But is this the case in 2016? Lusensky (2011) explains that music strategy creates brand awareness and attention by involving the consumer in a conversation about the music. Moreover, Allan (2007) and North et. al (2004) suggest that attitude toward a brand can become more positive if the meanings of the music and the rest of the advertisement fit well together from the listener's perspective while other authors argue that attitude may become more negative if they do not (Shen and Chen, 2006). Furthermore, Godin (2005) and Chen et al. (2009) suggest that great stories are true and that stories which are authentic convince the audience easier. Table 4 summarizes the existing literature around individual video content characteristics and their impact on advertising in general. These studies were not

dierclty related to brand video virality but their findings were somehow related to this research. Table 4 also explains which hypotheses of this research were informed by each study.

Table 4: Existing literature around individual video content characteristics and their impact on advertising

Authors	Year	Suggestions/Findings	Hypotheses informed
Callcott & Phillips	1996	Commercials featuring animated characters were watched more often than other types of commercials	H1
Lusensky	2011	Music strategy catches the attention and involves the consumer in a conversation about the advertisement's music	H2
Cook	1998	In video advertising, music gives meaning to the visuals and the visuals give meaning to music.	H2
Godin	2005	In advertising a great story is true and authenticity is really important.	H3
Guber	2007	Without reversal an advertising story becomes boring and flat	H3
Shir & Asadolla	2014	Compared to other visual techniques, motion graphics are more effective in influencing audiences	H1
Allan	2007	Attitude toward a brand can become more positive if the meanings of the music and the rest of the advertisement fit well together	H2
Chou & Lien	2010	Fittingness of music and lyrics to an advertisement's visuals and plot can improve the overall attitudes toward the advertisement.	H2

In general, and as presented above, while the impact of sound, visuals and plot in advertising has been researched extensively, much less attention has been given to the role of these video content characteristics in brand video virality. In other words, although many scholars have studied the influence of different audio, visual and story elements on audiences and on video advertising (Shir and Asadolla, 2014; Lusensky, 2011; Allan, 2007; Godin, 2005), there is not enough research on how these elements can improve brand video virality. This is the main theoretical contribution and research gap that this research is trying to bridge by analysing the impact that individual video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) have on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. While filling this research gap, this research also reinforces all the previous studies mentioned above in several ways. This reinforcement is explained throughout the last two chapters of this thesis.

As concerns the practical contribution of this study, the final findings can help companies get more chances in developing brand videos with higher potential of going viral and consequently in meeting key business objectives that are strongly connected to viral marketing. According to De Bruyn & Lilien (2008) these key objectives are: creating awareness, triggering interest, and generating sales or product adoption.

2.9. Research Framework

As part of the literature review chapter, this section provides explanations, definitions and information concerning the research framework and methods used during this study in order to meet the research objectives mentioned earlier. In other words, this section presents literature and explanations related to appropriate research methods as they were used and presented during previous studies in similar context. One of the most important aspects of any research study is the research methodology which is to be followed. Depending on the nature of the study, a quantitative approach, a qualitative approach, or a mixed methods approach may be appropriate.

Qualitative research and qualitative analysis of data are the key factors in order to discover patterns, themes, forms and qualities. Labuschagne (2003) also refers to the word "qualitative" to emphasise the procedures and implications that are methodically examined, but not measured in terms of amount, quantity or frequency. Qualitative research and qualitative data analysis involve various types of data collection such as direct observations, in depth, open-ended interviews, case studies and written documents. As Easterby-Smith et al. (2006) argue, by utilising case studies, authors maintain more adaptability within their research. The quantitative methodology on the other hand involves procedures such as analysing, interpreting, collecting and writing the results of a study. A number of methods of quantitative research exist in both experimental and survey research which involve identifying a sample of population, indicating the strategy of inquiry, gathering and analysing data, making interpretations, introducing results and, as Creswell (2003) explains, writing the research in a manner consistent with the survey or experimental study. Similar to qualitative methods, quantitative methods have their own advantages. As Frankfort and others (1992) state, the quantitative approach helps in expressing the research problem in precise and set terms. In addition, quantitative methods can accomplish high levels of reliability of gathered data due to proscribed observations, mass surveys, laboratory experiments or other type of research manipulations (Balsley, 1970). Additionally, while a few experts argue that quantitative research has limited outcomes to only those outlined in the original research proposal due to closed type question and structured format, others such as Kealey and Protheroe (1996) answer that in any event quantitative research can minimise (or sometimes eliminate) subjectivity of judgment.

Nevertheless, performing research online might complicate the neat division between qualitative and quantitative research. Creswell (2009) supports that the main difference between these approaches is that qualitative is useful for exploring and understanding meanings, while quantitative research is used for testing theories by examining the relationship between quantifiable variables. However, Sudweeks and Simof (1999) question this dichotomy, by arguing that "each methodology has its own set

of costs and benefits, particularly when applied to Internet research, and that it is possible to tease out and match the strengths of each with particular variables of interest" (p.32).

What is commonly agreed throughout the literature is that the research method chosen should include data and analysis capable of answering the research questions under investigation. Since the research question of this study is concerned with the impact that video content characteristics have on a Social Media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks, in addition to a mixed method approach, another research method chosen to be used is a research method that is commonly used in similar research and it's called "netnography". As Kozinets (2010) argues, netnography, like its older sibling, ethnography, is promiscuous. It attaches itself to and incorporates an enormous variety of different research techniques and approaches. The next section explores this method in detail. However, the exact way in which netnography was applied alongside other research methods in order to meet the research objectives of this research is explained later on (within the methodology chapter of this thesis).

2.9.1. Netnography

According to Kozinets (2002), "netnography" is a form of ethnography that is adapted to the study of online communities. In other words, netnography can be described as a type of digital ethnography. As a qualitative research method, netnography is faster, simpler, and less expensive than traditional ethnography, and more naturalistic and unobtrusive than focus groups or interviews. It enables researchers to immerse themselves in the web context they seek to investigate, treating online communications not as mere content, but as social interaction, as embedded expression of meaning and as cultural artefact (Kozinets, 2010). This research technique can provide online data and deeper insights into consumers' opinions, motives, and concerns while also complementing data collected by questionnaires (Orgad, 2009). Additionally, Ampofo (2011) describes netnography as studying online communities and utilising their publicly available information to identify their needs and desires. Like a grounded theory (Glaser, 1992), netnography is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it

represents (Andreassen and Streukens, 2009). It allows researchers to increase knowledge from data systematically gathered and analysed. Furthermore, the choice of netnography is well provoked by its multi-method and flexible nature. In fact, it combines well with other methods, both online and off, and moves smoothly from social networking sites to newsgroups, wikis, blogs, virtual worlds, mobile online/offline communities and podcasting (Kozinets, 2010).

The netnography research technique has become a widely accepted form of research and thus, has been used in a similar context by numerous authors. It has been used to tackle a large variety of topics, from applied questions of online advertising to more general investigations of social relations, learning, identity and creativity. For example, Carida and Colurcio (2013) used netnography to investigate the effects that a Viral Marketing Communication campaign produces on performance of brand and company by gathering data through the direct observation of the means of online communication used by the "Wilkinson" company. Furthermore, Schau and Gilly (2003) revealed and analysed the self-presentation strategies that people use to construct a "digital self". Netnography was also used to show how video-gamers respond to product placements and brand advertising (Nelson et al., 2004). Another example of using netnography is a study on the coping strategies used by brides to manage cross-cultural ambivalence (Nelson and Otnes, 2005). Moreover, netnography has been used to investigate consumer activism (Kozinets and Handelman, 1998), global ethics and perceptions of illegal peer-to-peer file sharing (Cohn and Vaccaro, 2006) and how knowledge creation and learning occur through a reflective virtual re-experiencing (Hemetsberger and Reinhardt, 2006).

As Kozinets (2010) argues, many netnographies on a broad variety of topics have been conducted over the last decade by scholars from around the globe. Given the changes in our social world, this is not a surprise. In 1996, there were approximately 250,000 websites offering published content to approximately 45 million global users, who were mainly located in Western Europe and North America. By 2009, there were over 1.5 billion Internet users (22% of the world's population) and by 2014 there became

approximately 3 billion. All these users are actively communicating with one another and reaching out to express, form, and deepen their social alliances and affiliation. According to Kozinets (2010), netnography has been developed to help researchers understand online users' worlds.

Netnography has expanded in the area of consumer research and marketing, an applied, interdisciplinary field that is open to the rapid adoption and development of new techniques. Consumer research and marketing integrate insights from a range of fields, such as sociology, anthropology and cultural studies, selectively applying their fundamental methods and theories in a way similar to the way pharmaceutical researchers might apply basic chemistry (Kozinets, 2010).

Although netnography is considered as a type of ethnography, it is important to recognize some of their differences. First, entering an online culture or community is distinct. It differs from face-to-face entrée in terms of approach, accessibility and the span of potential inclusion. Moreover, since data are usually freely available, “participation” can mean something different online than in person. So does the term “observation”. Secondly, gathering data and analysing it has particular challenges as well as new opportunities. The amounts of data can be different. The ability to apply particular analytic techniques and tools changes when the data are already in digital form (Kozinets, 2010). Additionally, the way the data should be treated might be different as well. As mentioned earlier, the exact way in which netnography was used for the purpose of this study is clearly explained within the methodology chapter of this thesis.

2.9.2. Online Surveys

In addition to netnography, in order to collect more qualitative and quantitative data, this study made use of online surveys. The online survey method is the application of surveys using web-pages or other online formats.

Surveys can be used to inform a range of important questions about online communities and cultures (Kozinets, 2010). More specifically, and for this particular study, surveys will be useful for providing an initial overview of how video content characteristics

affect the Social Media user's decision to create an online story (share/like/comment) about a brand video in the online community/ecosystem of Social Media. As Kozinets (2010) argues, surveys can tell us much about people's activities in online communities. In this study, the online community is the Social Media ecosystem while the people's activity is brand video sharing.

Literature supports that online survey methods are growing rapidly throughout the years (Andrews et al., 2003; Lazar and Preece, 1999). From practically a standing start, online surveys have become the major method for investigating a wide variety of social questions. Online surveys are an excellent way of gaining a particular kind of understanding about online communities and culture (Kozinets, 2010).

Whereas the traditional ways of surveying (telephone or mail surveys) excluded a lot of potential researchers from large scale data collection (Couper, 2000), online surveys are much more accessible and easy to use. A great example is an online survey service called SurveyMonkey.com which is really simple to set up and use and includes a ready group of participants that researchers can use. Other popular online survey services include SurveyPro, Zoomerang, Surveywiz and many others.

Furthermore, Weible and Wallace (1998) also argue that online survey research can be quite inexpensive when compared with mail surveys. Research by Watt (1999) even proves that the cost-per-respondent decreases dramatically as the online sample size increases, something that doesn't happen with any other form of survey. In terms of accuracy, literature thus far indicates that online survey results seem not to differ considerably from the results of traditional postal surveys, but offer powerful advantages in distribution and turnaround time (Andrews et al. 2003; Yun and Trumbo 2000).

Online Survey Design

It is clear that their distinct characteristics such as their technological features, the particular patterns of respondent responses and the particular demographic characteristics of the groups they survey on the Internet make online surveys unique. These unique characteristics change the way that survey designers must write their

questions, when the survey can be used, how to involve traditional non-responders (also known as Internet “luckers”), and how to analyse the survey results accordingly (Andrews et al., 2003; Sohn, 2001). The following list, summarises some criteria for quality electronic survey design extracted from different electronic survey studies. At this point, it is important to make clear that different capabilities of e-mail and Web-based software may inhibit the implementation of all of the extracted design criteria. These capabilities may be the following:

- Support multiple platforms and browsers/e-mail clients (Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Control for browser settings (Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Detect multiple submissions automatically (Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Present questions in a logical or adaptive manner, for example, provides control of when and how questions are displayed (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996; Norman, Friedman, Norman, and Stevenson, 2001)
- Allow saving responses before completion (Smith, 1997)
- Collect open-ended or quantified-option responses (Bachmann and Elfrink, 1996; Kiesler and Sproull, 1986; Loke and Gilbert, 1995; Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Provide automatic feedback with completion (Smith, 1997)
- Use paper questionnaire design principles (Dillman, 2000; Preece, Rogers and Sharp, 2002)
- Provide automatic transfer of responses to a database (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996; McCoy and Marks, 2001; Smith, 1997)
- Prevent survey alteration (Witmer et al., 1999)
- Provide response control and economical displays (Preece et al., 2002; Stanton, 1998)
- Provide for links to definitions, menus, button and check box options, animation, sound, graphics options, and so forth (Preece et al., 2002; Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Do not require familiarity with survey presentation software (Sheehan and Hoy, 1999)
- Display appear quickly to participant (Couper, Traugott, and Lamias, 2001)

- Track response source of response failure (Paolo, Bonamino, Gibson, Patridge, and Kallail, 2000)

(Andrews et al., 2003, p. 187)

What is also important to notice, is that various paper-based survey design principles apply to electronic surveys as well (Dillman, 2000; Preece, Rogers, and Sharp, 2002). Moreover, according to Andrews et al. (2001) technology does not limit either the use of open-ended questions or all forms of structured questions. Format controls, textual options and graphics can include check box selections, links, radio buttons and menus (Preece et al., 2002). Animation, images, videos and colour can enhance survey presentation (Yun and Trumbo, 2000) but at the same time they may increase download time and affect some answers (Couper et al., 2001). However, dropout rates may increase when there are too many open-ended questions, multiple answers in a single open-ended question (Crawford et al., 2001), questions that are required rather than optional or questions arranged in tables or inconsistently formatted (Knapp and Heidingfelder, 1999). Additionally, variations in browser settings, e-mail software, survey software, and participant skills can increase response error and lead to higher attrition rates (Dillman, 2000).

Confidentiality and Privacy

According to Cho and LaRose (1999), there are four possible types of electronic survey confidentiality and privacy infringements: (a) physical (unsolicited requests), (b) informational (personal information control), (c) interactional (relationship control) and (d) psychological (personal choice control) privacy infringements. Their study also reveals that the flexibility of the Internet and the ease with which false identities can be created aggravate trust and confidentiality issues and can deliver unreliable survey results. The four types of electronic survey confidentiality and privacy infringements mentioned above were earlier explained by other authors as well. For example, Schillewaert et al. (1998) clarify how pre-notification e-mail and follow-up notes can be considered as "spam" while Burgoon et al. (1989) explain that psychological and interactional privacy protection can be violated when individuals are not allowed to preview the survey. Moreover,

information privacy may be violated when participants are not allowed to control conditions of release or disposal of personal data (Andrews et. al, 2003).

On the other hand, there are multiple studies focusing on the lack of anonymity and its impact on response rates. Surprisingly, Couper (2000) suggests that it may not affect response rates while Kiesler and Sproull (1986) state that it may be important to response rates. As Andrews et. al (2003) explain, these conflicting findings may be the result of survey topic subject matter differences or the 14 years of Internet experience. In addition, their study provides the following list that summarizes electronic confidentiality and privacy quality criteria:

- Participants can designate conditions of release, use, retention and disposal of personal data
- Sample only from public e-mail lists, online communities and automated mailing lists
- Send invitations and surveys separately
- Collect data through Web pages
- Provide multiple response options
- Use “re-mailers” to ensure anonymity
- Do not troll through observation
- Do not use “cookies”
- Do not use links from personalized sites
- Provide disclosures
- Provide third party privacy certification
- Use credible domains
- Use encryption for sensitive material
- Use hypertext links for long disclosures
- Disclose sampling procedures
- Obtain community leader consent
- Provide survey results to respondents
- Use self-selected user identifications and passwords (option)

- Provide “rather not say” response option (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996)
- Allow people to “opt-in” (Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Establish credibility quickly through subject lines and opening statements (Yun and Trumbo, 2000)
- Guarantee that no one will see one’s personal data, not anonymity as researchers will know who the participants are, and explain the method for maintaining confidentiality (Sheehan and Hoy, 1999)

(Andrews et al., 2003, p. 188)

Participant Selection and Sampling

As many authors explain, sampling is the process of selecting units (e.g., people, organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample researchers may fairly generalize their results back to the population from which they were chosen (West, 2008; Fink, 2003; Levy and Lemeshow, 1999). Obviously, by gathering data from a sample compared to the entire population, researchers save time and money. Selecting a sample to represent the population should be done with careful thought. If done incorrectly, the results of the study may be biased and may not reflect the opinions of the population of interest. For this reason, it is important to understand the relationship of the sample to that wider population. The nature of that relationship is of fundamental importance to how researchers conceive the nature and purpose of their research, the kind of knowledge that they claim to generate from it, and the practical procedures they follow in selecting that sample (Lynch, 2011).

Two standard classifications of the sampling method exist. These two classes are called probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is when each sampling unit has a known probability of being incorporated in the sample. Since there is a known probability of being included, the laws of mathematical probability can be utilised to make inferences about the population, and the outcomes can be generalised to the study population. According to West (2008), probability sampling techniques also reduce the potential for the researcher to select sampling units in a biased manner. According to Fielding et al. (2008), types of probability sample include:

- Simple random sampling (SRS), which is a method in which any two groups of equal size in the population are equally likely to be selected. Mathematically, simple random sampling selects n units out of a population of size N such that every sample of size n has an equal chance of being drawn.
- Stratified random sampling, which is useful when the population is comprised of a number of homogeneous groups. In these cases, it can be either practically or statistically advantageous (or both) to first stratify the population into the homogeneous groups and then use SRS to draw samples from each group.
- Cluster sampling, which is applicable when the natural sampling unit is a group or cluster of individual units. For example, in surveys of Internet users it is sometimes useful or convenient to first sample by discussion groups or Internet domains, and then to sample individual users within the groups or domains.
- Systematic sampling, which is the selection of every element from a sampling frame or from a sequential stream of potential respondents. Systematic sampling has the advantage that a sampling frame does not need to be assembled beforehand. In terms of Internet surveying, for example, systematic sampling can be used to sample sequential visitors to a website. The resulting sample is considered to be a probability sample as long as the sampling interval does not coincide with a pattern in the sequence being sampled and a random starting point is chosen.

(Fielding et al., 2008, p.199)

Table 5, presents the four different types of probability sampling (Simple, Systematic, Stratified and Cluster) as also presented by Henry (1990).

Table 5: Probability Sampling Methods (Henry, 1990)

Probability Sampling Methods	
Type of Sampling	Selection Strategy
Simple	Each member of the study population has an equal probability of being selected.

Systematic	Each member of the study population is either assembled or listed, a random start is designated, then members of the population are selected at equal intervals.
Stratified	Each member of the study population is assigned to a group or stratum, then a simple random sample is selected from each stratum.
Cluster	Each member of the study population is assigned to a group or cluster, then clusters are selected at random and all members of a selected cluster are included in the sample.

On the other hand, non-probability sampling is when there is not a known probability of being included in the sample. Although sampling error can be computed from a non probability sample, these statistics would be technically invalid. However, there are times when a non probability sampling technique is acceptable because of the purpose of the study or because it is the only way to select participants for a study. For example, it may be best to use a non probability sampling technique when running a pilot study, when surveying hard-to-identify groups or when surveying specific groups (West, 2008). According to Fielding et al. (2008), specific types of non-probability samples include the following:

- Quota sampling which requires the survey researcher only to specify quotas for the desired number of respondents with certain characteristics. The actual selection of respondents is then left up to the survey interviewers who must match the quotas. Because the choice of respondents is left up to the survey interviewers, subtle biases may creep into the selection of the sample (see, for example, the Historical Survey Gaffes section).

- Snowball sampling which is often used when the desired sample characteristic is so rare that it is extremely difficult or prohibitively expensive to locate a sufficiently large number of respondents by other means (such as simple random sampling). Snowball sampling relies on referrals from initial respondents to generate additional respondents. For this reason, this technique can dramatically lower search costs.
- Judgment sampling which is a type of convenience sampling in which the researcher selects the sample based on his or her judgment. For example, a researcher may decide to draw the entire random sample from one 'representative' Internet-user community, even though the population of interest includes all Internet users. Judgment sampling can also be applied in even less structured ways without the application of any random sampling.

(Fielding et al., 2008, p.200)

Henry (1990) on the other hand separates the convenience and judgment sampling types and presents a list of four different types of non-probability sampling (Convenience, Purposive, Snowball and Quota) as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Non-Probability Sampling Methods (Henry, 1990)

Non-Probability Sampling Methods	
Type of Sampling	Selection Strategy
Convenience	Select cases based on their availability for the study
Purposive	Select cases that are considered to represent similar characteristics
Snowball	Group members identify additional member to be included in the sample
Quota	Interviewers select a sample that yields the same proportions as the population proportions on easily identified variables

At this point, it is important to mention that as with all research methods, sampling provides some room for error on the part of the researcher. Being aware of those possible errors is essential in selection of the sampling method used as well as calculation of the data collected. Simply being aware of possible errors is often not enough. According to Fink (2003), no matter how methodical and proficient the researcher is, sampling bias or error is inevitable. Lohr (1999) defines several types of sample errors as under-coverage (selecting a sample that is not large enough), non-response (some members of the population who are eligible to be sampled are unwilling to participate or do not answer all the survey questions), and sloppiness in data collection.

Response Rate Management

According to Bosnjak and Tuten (2001), valid online questionnaire responses may include (a) a complete response where all questions are answered and the survey is submitted; (b) a unit response where all questions in some but not all survey sections are answered, and the survey is submitted; and/or (c) a partial item response - where only some questions are answered, and the survey is submitted. The authors also explain that when the survey is never submitted, attritions (dropouts while taking the survey) and non-responses (read the invitation) are indistinguishable.

During the last decades many authors have focused on survey design features that affect response rates. For example, Sheehan (2001) states that shorter questionnaires do not necessarily produce higher response rates while Tuten et al. (2000) explain that cash incentives can increase the number of responses twice as much as altruistic motives. However, in an older research, Kehoe et al. (1997) state that cash incentives may introduce a systematic bias. Furthermore, Crawford et al. (2001) found that perceptions of the effort required to complete a survey may affect response rates. During their research, those who were told a survey would take less time, those receiving an automated (embedded) password, and those who received more frequent reminders were all more likely to accept an invitation to participate but not more likely to complete the survey.

Research also suggests that distribution procedures sometimes affect response rates of online questionnaires. For instance, according to Sheehan (2001), when using e-mail for distributing a questionnaire, surveys presented in a single e-mail containing both an invitation and the survey are likely to cause high non response rates. On the other hand, the author suggests that response rates are higher when a short, pre-notification invitation e-mail introduces the approaching e-mail survey and provides “opt-in” or “opt-out” options to participate. The following list summarises criteria that encourage high response rates. These criteria were introduced by a number of different studies:

- The survey has been tested across many platforms to avoid technical breakdowns (Watt, 1999).
- The survey is salient to participants’ interests (Watt, 1999).
- There is no systematic judgment by the survey population (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996; Sheehan, 2001).
- Privacy and confidentiality are assured (Couper, 2000)
- Participants can inspect entire survey before taking the survey (Crawford et al., 2001)
- Personal (demographic) data is requested first, not last (Frick et al. 1999)
- Financial incentives are offered (e.g., lottery prizes, coupons or discounts; Frick et al., 1999; Couper, 2000; Kehoe et al. 1997)
- Automated (embedded) passwords that have no ambiguous characters in passwords are used (Crawford et al., 2001)
- A multistep invitation and survey presentation process is used (Cho and LaRose, 1999; Sheehan, 2001)
- Estimated time to complete the survey and periodic reminders to complete the survey are provided (Crawford et al., 2001)
- An appropriate subject line in the invitation, e-mail address of sender and sender’s name are used (Sheehan, 2001)
- Multiple ways to contact and invite participation are part of the distribution strategy (Sheehan, 2001)

- The survey is customized to the target population—invitation language, type of notification media, and follow-up process (Sheehan, 2001)

(Andrews et al., 2003, p. 192)

Survey Piloting

Oppenheim (1992, p. 64) defines survey piloting as "the process of conceptualizing and re-conceptualizing the key aims of the study and making preparations for the fieldwork and analysis so that not too much will go wrong and nothing will have been left out".

When piloting a survey, research recommends using a multistage testing process that combines an array of different testing techniques and a four-stage process (Dillman, 2000; Oppenheim, 1992; Preece et al., 2002). In Stage 1, a review by conversant analysts can ensure question efficiency, completeness, relevancy, scale, and format appropriateness. In Stage 2, "typical/potential" participants take the survey using a "think-aloud" protocol while designers/developers observe and follow-up with retrospective interviews. Question interpretation consistency, survey language, logical question sequencing, and survey "look and feel" are evaluated. In Stage 3, a small study emulates all the procedures proposed by the main study. In Stage 4, one last check is done to catch typos and errors unintentionally introduced during the last revision process.

As concerns the "think aloud" protocol mentioned in stage 2, the use of verbalisations as indicators of cognition is a decades-old data collection technique. Psychologist Karl Duncker (1945) originally depicted think aloud verbalizations as "productive thinking" and an approach to comprehend his subjects' development of thought. Think aloud protocols are turning out to be more common in research due to the richness of data and information that can potentially be derived from the methodology. Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) utilised think aloud protocols broadly in their research on how readers occupied with an assortment of abstract exercises. The protocols the readers produced in response to the method provided the researchers with profitable information on how readers of varying abilities acclimate to different types of text. Kopriva's (2001)

work with English language learners inspected appraisals utilising think aloud techniques. The scholar prescribed that all test designers use think aloud techniques to better comprehend test design and its impact on student test-taking procedures. Additionally, research in related fields, has demonstrated that utilising think aloud data can prompt better designed products. Shriver (1984, 1991), for instance, used think aloud data to enhance readability of written documents. Similarly, Camburn et al. (2000) and Nolan and Chandler (1996) conducted think aloud experiments during the pilot stages of survey development and utilised data to improve the accessibility and readability of surveys. Think aloud methods are by no means meant to replace other assessment evaluation techniques (sensitivity reviews, statistical analysis of results, etc.) but may provide otherwise undiscovered data about test design.

Moreover, piloting can reveal undeliverable, declined, and completed survey rates, which are all useful for estimating the amount of oversampling required (Sheehan and Hoy, 1999). Survey log files can measure response rates at a question level to identify question problems if each question is on a separate page (Bosnjak and Tuten, 2001; McCoy and Marks, 2001). Overall, a consistent and complete piloting of the survey instrument, distribution process, and response and attrition behaviour creates a high-quality electronic survey.

Data Measurement and Likert Scales

The utilisation of surveys in IS research has been intensely criticised in the past for lack of psychometric rigor and appropriate modeling techniques. With a specific end goal to cure this issue, general standards for conducting surveys have to be enhanced and constantly questioned (Pinsonneault and Kraemer, 1993; Newsted et al., 1996). When constructing a survey questionnaire, researchers are faced with the task of finding a proper scale to quantify the construct(s) under investigation. Regularly this is done by consulting previous literature and adopting an arrangement of items which has been previously tested for validity and reliability. A usual procedure for developing constructs is the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix (Campbell and Fiske, 1959), which guarantees that constructs which hypothetically should be related are in reality interrelated (convergent

validity), and constructs which hypothetically should not be related are not in reality related (discriminant validity). Because of the numerous problems which have occurred with this strategy, alternative approaches have been developed (for an overview see Straub et al., 2004). However, by utilising previously tested scales, analysts ensure validity and reliability, but this does not promise that the data being generated are appropriate for all subsequent procedures, i.e. that they conform to the statistical techniques being utilised. Accordingly, Smith and Albaum (2005) list a sum of nine issues which should be considered when constructing a measurement scale, including the number of categories, the decision whether an odd or even number should be chosen, the determination of descriptive adjectives and the procedure being utilised to account for raters' bias.

As it will be also stated further down within the methodology chapter of this thesis, a data measurement technique that was used within the questionnaire of this research is the Likert Scale technique.

The usage of Likert-type scales has become widespread practice in current IS and marketing research (Teriblmaier and Filzoser, 2009). Those scales require individuals to choose between a limited number of choices, and have been criticised in the literature for causing loss of information, allowing the researcher to affect responses by determining the range, and being ordinal in nature. The use of online surveys allows for the easy implementation of continuous rating scales, which have a long history in psychophysical measurement but were rarely used in IS surveys. This type of measurement requires survey participants to express their opinion in a visual form, i.e. to place a mark at an appropriate position on a continuous line. That not only solves the problems of information loss, but also allows for applying advanced robust statistical analyses (Teriblmaier and Filzoser, 2009).

In general, the concept of measurement is fundamental to all empirical social science research, including Information Systems and closely related disciplines such as Marketing and Psychology. Given its widespread and frequent application in countless studies, it seems peculiar that Allport and Kerler (2003, p. 356) caution that "measurement is perhaps the most difficult aspect of behavioural research". The classic

definition of measurement was given by Stevens (1946), who described it as the assignment of numerals to events or objects according to rules.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methods that were used during this study. In addition to explaining how each research method was used, this chapter provides more details about the brand videos that were selected to be examined, the pilot study and the way that participants were selected. Moreover, this chapter provides information on data preparation and on the statistical analyses that were used throughout the study.

3.1. Applying Netnography

The “netnography” marketing research technique was applied during this study in order to gain primary data and user insight concerning the engagement of Social Media users with brand video content characteristics. These data included user comments/posts regarding the content characteristics of brand videos that had already gone (or are currently going) viral. This research technique has become a widely accepted form of research and has thus, been used in a similar context by numerous authors. As mentioned earlier, it has been used to investigate a large variety of topics, from applied questions of online advertising to more general investigations of identity, social relations, learning and creativity. For example, Carida and Colurcio (2013) used netnography to investigate the effects that a Viral Marketing Communication campaign produces on performance of brand and company. During their research, in addition to gathering data through the direct observation of the means of online communication used by the "Wilkinson" company, they analysed in depth activities and features of online tools developed by Wilkinson as well as the contents of comments and posts published involving fans and bloggers. Moreover, similarly to this research, in order to frame how the campaign affected the fans and customers, Carida and Colurcio (2013) considered their "active doings" in term of number of video shares, number of video likes, and number and content of comments on Youtube. These "active doings", is what this research refers to as "ways of creating an online story".

As mentioned earlier, in order to understand how marketing messages are embedded in videos that are then shared in Social Media, we need to look at the individual content characteristics as the main constituents of brand videos. This thesis suggests that it is with a video's content characteristics that consumers are engaged and co-create the marketing message. More specifically, the focus of this research is on *visuals*, *sound* and *plot* as the main carriers of meaningful video messages. For this reason, similarly to Carida and Colurcio (2013), the data that this study exploited through the method of "netnography" include comments and posts of Social Media users on Youtube and Google+ that refer to the video content characteristics of brand videos that went, or are currently going viral. These two social networks were chosen since accounts that exist on Google+ also exist on Youtube. In this way, this study was able to clearly determine whether a user was sharing the videos on Google+ while also commenting on the videos on Youtube. Image 2 shows the feedback that Youtube users get in the comments section of a Youtube video when another user shares that video on Google+. In addition to a notification that the video was shared on Google+, Youtube users are also able to see the comment that was made by that specific user while sharing the video.

Image 2: Sharing and commenting a video on Google+ through Youtube



By using the method of netnography, this research examined four brand videos that recently went viral, the engagement of Social Media users with the videos' content characteristics and how users contributed to the co-creation of the message that the videos were carrying. The brand videos that were selected to be examined are Wren's "First Kiss", Volvo's "Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split", John Lewis's Christmas Advert of 2014 "Monty The Penguin" and Budweiser's "Puppy Love". At this point it is important to mention that the videos which were monitored were selected on the basis of four main criteria: making different use of video content characteristics (visuals, sound and plot),

being global, being viral and being examples of a recent viral marketing campaign (conducted during the past 3 years). This method of analysis (selecting and analysing campaigns that have already gone viral) was also used by Dobele et al. (2007) in a similar context.

After studying the content of the 1000 most recent comments that each one of these videos received, it was interestingly found that there were many users who commented on video's visuals, sound or plot. Some of them also commented on video content characteristics while also sharing the videos on Google+, which suggests that video content characteristics had a strong impact on their decision to share them and consequently create an online story about them in social networks. Some of the users where commenting about the audio (i.e. *"what is the music used here?"*, *"nice soundtrack"*, *"I love the music"*, *"With this song!! I love it!!"*, *"the song is Enya- only time"*, *"Im here just because of the song lol"*, *"Whats the music"*, *"Enya <3"*, *"What is this song?"*). Others commented about the visuals and the actors (i.e. *"I love the art behind this video"*, *"oh it's black and white you know this is going to be such art"*, *"what a view!"*, *"Love it Van Damme"*, *"I want that penguin"*, *"that pet is so cute"*, *"I know that guy, he is an actor"*, *"Van Damme – the best"*, *"best animated penguin ever"*, *"lol that grandma is so cool"*, *"loving the sunrise"*). Finally, some users were commenting on the actual plot (i.e. *"this is so cute"*, *"this story will make you smile"*, *"actors or just strangers?"*, *"the power of the first kiss"*, *"the cutest story I've ever seen"*, *"loving the plot"*, *"this story made me cry"*, *"years don't matter"*, *"I find this soooo sweet"*, *"this is touching and very remembering"*, *"what a split!! Is this for real?"*). The fact that video content characteristics drove a large number of users to the decision to comment the brand videos and consequently create online stories about them in social networks, shows that indeed video content characteristics can impact a brand video's virality. This indication is examined in detail throughout this research.

3.2. Video Selection

With so many brand videos going viral during the past few years it was really difficult to select and study only four for the purpose of this study. At this point, it might be important to recognize that the relatively small number of videos examined (four videos) might be considered as a possible limitation. However, due to the time constraints of this project, it was really difficult to closely and accurately examine more brand videos. To narrow down the options, and in order to make the findings of this research more reliable, as mentioned earlier, the four videos which were monitored were selected on the basis of four main criteria: making different use of video content characteristics (visuals, sound and plot), being global, being viral and being examples of a recent viral marketing campaign (conducted during the past 3 years). The criterion "making different use of video content characteristics" refers to the use of different kinds of visuals (animation, live action, visual special effects), audio (background music, speech, sound effects) and plot (storyline, narrative, authenticity, reversal) as presented within the literature review chapter. This helps us distinguish the impact that each one of these individual video content characteristics has on the user's decision to create a story (like, share or comment) about that video in the social networks that he/she is using.

Moreover, at this point, it is important to make clear that the term "creating a story" refers to any action taken by a user in social networks that creates some kind of a story for other users to see on their News Feed. This might include sharing a post, liking a post, commenting on a post, checking-in at a place, tagging a photo, writing a recommendation and so on. As mentioned earlier, the "stories" that this research is examining are stories created by liking, sharing or commenting since these are the main actions that a Youtube user can take after watching a Youtube video.

What is also important to make clear at this point is that the final selection of brand videos could not be a completely random process due to the size of the topic. For example, a Google search of the term "viral videos" generated about 12,000,000 video results, far too many for a PhD research on brand video virality. As such, it was necessary to develop an alternative approach to video selection. Individual brand videos were

identified on the basis of a convenience sample of brand videos that had been watched recently by friends, family, and work colleagues. This approach was also used by Dobele et al. (2007) in similar context and resulted in a long list, which was then shortened to four brand videos that were judged to meet the criteria mentioned. As mentioned earlier, the brand videos that were selected and examined for the purpose of this research are Wren's "First Kiss", Volvo's "Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split", John Lewis's Christmas Advert of 2014 "Monty The Penguin", and Budweiser's "Puppy Love". The following sections will examine in detail the four videos.

3.2.1. "First Kiss" by WREN

The "First Kiss" (Image 3) is a black and white video that was produced and released on the Internet by a clothing company called "WREN". The company is based in Los Angeles and was founded in 2007 by Melissa Coker. WREN mainly focuses on womenswear and the label is named after literary character Jenny Wren, who the designer (Melissa Coker) lovingly portrays as "a winsome creature who makes dresses for dolls in Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*—she emblemised the brand's air of free-spirited exuberance mixed with a tomboy's touch." According to specialists, Coker manages to bring that nostalgic mood to her contemporary collections, a quality that has earned her fans in girls like Alexa Chung and Zooey Deschanel.

The "First Kiss" was released in March 2014 and was viewed more than 80 million times in less than 2 months. According to the company, for the video's purpose, 20 strangers were asked to kiss in front of the camera for the first time. The soundtrack of this video is called "We Might be Dead by Tomorrow" and was recorded by Soko. After the release of the "First Kiss" video, the soundtrack debuted at #9 on the Billboard Hot 100 and #1 on the Streaming Songs list (Into The Gloss, 2014).

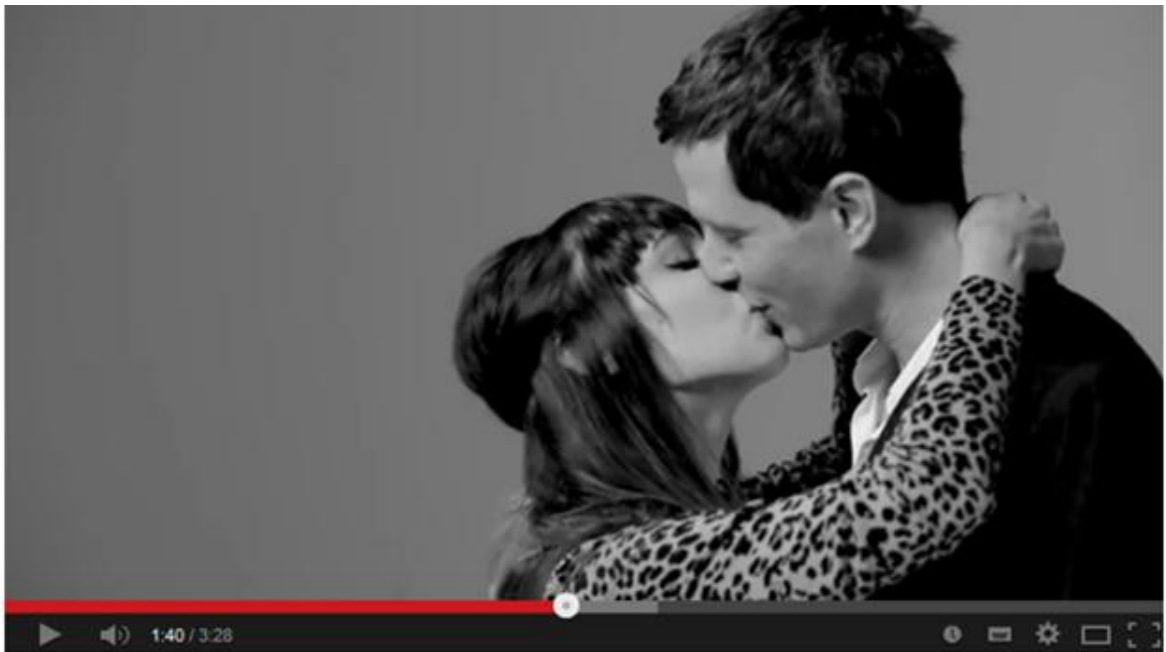
What is also remarkable is the fact that the video was published on Youtube by Tatia Piliieva (and not by WREN), whose channel was already highly popular on Youtube with more than 100,000 subscribers. According to Barakat (2014), this was an extra push that helped the video become so popular on Social Media. Moreover, the author marked

the video, entitled “First Kiss,” as a missed opportunity to include the brand’s name on its title (e.g. First Kiss, by Wren), especially for a brand that was not well-known. After the release of the brand video, Wren’s social channels did not become popular in terms of followers and fans on Twitter and Facebook (3,176 and 5,124, respectively). When “First Kiss” exploded on Facebook, many publications picked up on its wide appeal, reposting both to their social channels and websites. But the video was largely presented without any mention of the clothing line.

Barakat (2014) also states that WREN has indeed increased its name recognition, but that resulted less from the initial social shares and more from the negative media attention unmasking the video’s commercial underpinnings. This point is supported by the fact that not long after the video went viral, many media outlets self-righteously pointed out that consumers were tricked into believing the actors, models and musicians in the video were ordinary people when in fact they were expert role playing actors in WREN Clothing.

Image 3: "First Kiss" brand video (by Wren),

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpbDHxCV29A> (Accessed in Jan 2016)



3.2.2. “The Epic Split” by Volvo Trucks

“Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split” (Image 4) is a video that was produced and released on the Internet by Volvo Trucks. Volvo Trucks is a global truck brand based in Sweden, owned by Volvo Group (AB Volvo). Founded in 1927, Volvo is one of the globe's leading heavy commercial vehicles and diesel engines manufacturers. The Volvo Group provides a complete range of customised solutions in leasing, financing, insurance and service, as well as complete transport systems for urban traffic. It's been over 80 years since the first Volvo truck was built (back in 1928), and 40 years since the first truck was sold in the United Kingdom. Today Volvo is the second largest developer of heavy trucks, creating consistent transport solutions for clients all over the globe.

What is remarkable, is that Volvo Trucks is mainly a B2B brand; some might argue that this sector rarely develops highly creative campaigns. Trucks are costly business tools; they tend to be bought by serious individuals in grey suits who care little about the campaign's entertainment level. However, according to Krstic (2014), this point of view may be a little out of date since today the truck buying target audience is much more mixed and decisions are more influenced by individuals around them. The video shows actor Jean-Claude Van Damme carrying out his famous split between two reversing Volvo trucks.

In 2012, Volvo Trucks planned the launch of a new line of European heavy duty trucks and approached the well-known ‘creative’ Swedish agency Forsman and Bodenfors with a B2B campaign brief. Each of the five new trucks had something special about it. But great engineering is not very exciting for most people. The agency actually declined the offer quite a few times, because they did not really consider B2B marketing to be their area of expertise. However, in the end, Forsman and Bodenfors agreed to accept this challenging brief (Krstic, 2014).

“Usually in the commercial automotive (van and truck) industry, brands are rather traditional. Now we wanted to take advantage of the opportunities offered by social media. We quickly understood that there are more people interested in trucks than just

men in grey business suits. People around them are also big influencers: families, families friends and spouses. Everyone has a say. That is why we planned a viral marketing strategy,” says Anders Vilhelmsson, Public Relations Manager at Volvo Trucks. Volvo Trucks did not start off with a big budget, which made the development of a global campaign for a dotted audience even harder. Since outspending was not an option, the agency knew that the only way forward for Volvo Trucks was for them to outsmart their competitors (Krstic, 2014).

Indeed, Volvo Trucks and Forsman and Bodenfors agreed on a viral marketing campaign, something which is very unusual in the B2B category (Krstic, 2014). A series of live test videos were produced, all showcasing diverse new technical aspects of the new Volvo trucks. The first video was released in the summer of 2012. So as to show the stable progress on the road of the Volvo FH, a tightrope walker, Faith Dickey, was challenged to walk across a rope tied amongst two speeding Volvo trucks before the trucks went their separate ways through a two-lane tunnel.

After a year, Volvo Trucks president Claes Nilsson was asked to stand on the front panel of a Volvo FMX construction truck that had been lifted more than 20 metres above the water in Gothenburg harbour. This clip proved that the front towing hooks on Volvo Trucks are truly consistent. According to Krstic (2014), the same day, Volvo posted a video showing the ground clearance of Volvo FMX by driving ‘over’ one of their technicians, covered up to his neck in sand.

Next, another piece of outstanding content was released. A hamster running in a specially designed treadmill attached to the steering wheel managed to steer a truck in a quarry. Soon after, Volvo posted a video of its smallest truck maneuvering through the labyrinths of a city in Spain. The catch – the truck was chased by angry bulls. So the bar had been set high; Volvo Trucks were getting a reputation for original and creative viral videos that told stories about innovations in its new trucks (Krstic, 2014).

Then came the real star of the Live Test series – Jean-Claude Van Damme’s ‘The Epic Split’, featuring ‘JCVD’, the famous martial arts action movie star, performing a spectacular stunt with 2 Volvo FM trucks. “The campaign actually consists of 6 different

films. 'The Epic Split' is a fantastic film, but it was built up by the other films in Live Test series. Without the other films it couldn't have been as successful. All of them are viral hits," says Anders Vilhelmsson, Public Relations Manager at Volvo Trucks (Krstic, 2014). The other films included in this campaign are "The Ballerina Stunt" (9,640,847 views), "The Hook" (with 3,075,256 views), The Technician (with 980,870 views), The Hamster Stunt (with 6,240,232 views) and "The Chase" (with 2,351,806 views). All the videos together have more than 130 million views on YouTube and have been shared more than 8 million times. There have been over 20,000 reports about the videos in the media worldwide.

Shot in a single take, at dawn on an airstrip in Spain, 'The Epic Split' placed the action hero (Jean-Claude Van Damme) on top of two trucks reversing at low speed. The video showcases the precision of Volvo Dynamic Steering which enables two truck drivers to maintain the exact same distance apart and speed while travelling in reverse. Meanwhile Van Damme, performs his famous 'split stunt', standing on the wing mirrors of the 2 trucks.

This brand video was released in November 2013 and was viewed more than 40 million times in less than 3 months. For some, the entertainment value is provided by the middle-aged Belgian actor, for others, by the amazing steering by the truck drivers. As concerns its audio, the soundtrack of this video was recorded by the Irish singer *Enya*, and was officially released in November 2000. Interestingly, after the release of "Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split" in 2013, the song re-entered the Billboard Hot 100 (Menyes, 2013).

Overall, as Krstic (2014) found, the videos produced a huge ROI for Volvo Trucks. The creators of the video claim that the production was not particularly expensive compared to a typical automotive launch media budget they might have had. According to the company, it is estimated that the whole campaign achieved 126 million euro worth of earned media. This shows that the company made a relatively small investment for which they got a massive return. Arguably 'The Epic Split' has become one of the most successful automotive launch films ever made.

Image 4: "The Epic Split" brand video (by Volvo Trucks),

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7Flvfx5J10> (Accessed in March 2016)



3.2.3. "Monty The Penguin" by John Lewis

"Monty The Penguin" (Image 5) is a Christmas advert that was released on the Internet by the John Lewis Partnership. The John Lewis Partnership is an employee-owned UK company which operates John Lewis department stores, Waitrose supermarkets and some other services. The company is characterized by a trust on behalf of all its employees (known as Partners) who contribute in the running of the business and obtain a share of annual profits. This share is usually a significant addition to their salary. The group was the third largest UK privately owned business in the Sunday Times Top Track 100 for 2010. Moreover, John Lewis also has the merit of being the UK's best high-street website after pasting Marks and Spencer in October 2010 (Bold, 2010). The chain's image is upmarket, and it appeals strongly to middle and high society consumers. Lately, however, John Lewis has widened its marketing strategy and the expansion of the business towards all types of consumers, by introducing the 'Value' range to John Lewis and the 'Essential' range to Waitrose.

As of 2012 the John Lewis division runs 30 full-line department stores, 1 John Lewis convenience store at London Heathrow, 1 John Lewis click and commute at London St.

Pancras International, 10 John Lewis at Home Stores and a web store. The stores are located in a mixture of regional shopping centre and city centre locations. The flagship Oxford Street store in London remains the largest John Lewis outlet in the UK.

The storyline of this brand video focuses on a real friendship that exists between a boy named Sam and his imaginary friend which is a cuddly toy penguin called Monty. This brand video was released in November 2014 and was viewed more than 22 million times in less than a month. As concerns its audio, the soundtrack used in “Monty The Penguin” was Tom Odell’s cover of John Lennon’s song “Real Love”. Interestingly, just after the release of the video, and in a one-week period, more than 20,000 UK users tried to “Shazam” the ad (Shazam is a smart phone application for identifying music) in order to identify its soundtrack (Ghosh, 2014).

The research performed, revealed that the MPC VFX team (creators of Monty) spent five months affectionately crafting Monty the Adelie penguin, in photo-real 3D before placing him into the in-camera environments, thus helping to create the heart-warming Christmas narrative. The spot was directed by Blink’s Dougal Wilson and conceived by adama&eveDDB. Studying detailed reference footage next to director Dougal, the 3D team produced an initial model using ZBrush, a digital form of clay. Once Monty had his bone and muscle systems in place, a number of motion tests were carried out, determining his movement style and adding distinguishing character quirks along the way (MPC, 2015).

According to MPC (2015), VFX Supervisor and CG Lead Diarmid Harrison Murray said, “The John Lewis Christmas ad is one of the most talked about campaigns of the year, so the stakes were high to create a CG character the viewers would relate to and ultimately engage with throughout the film. We’d spent several months working with Dougal and playing around with Monty’s look - it sounds strange but after all that time you start to form a sort of strange relationship with a CG character. We all breathed a collective sigh of relief when the agency team met ‘Monty’ at MPC and were just as taken with him.”

There was a big focus on the interaction between Monty and Sam, and flawlessly compositing him into the live footage was the biggest challenge for the 2D team (MPC, 2015). To create the lake scene of the brand video, crew wet-suited up and got into Victoria Park lake, using stand-in plastic penguin figures to generate the perfect amount of splash effect. Many of the splashes were then re-created to ensure the interaction was flawless.

According to MPC (2015), the key of this project was the transmission of Monty's emotions, without giving him human characteristics. Lead animator Tim van Hussen explains, "The face isn't the only place to convey emotion, so with Monty we also focused strongly on his physical performance. Most animated creatures portray emotions by eliciting behaviour we recognize from real life, so the flapping of the wings when meeting his new friend for the first time is taken from when real penguins are reunited after months apart during breeding season" (MPC, 2015).

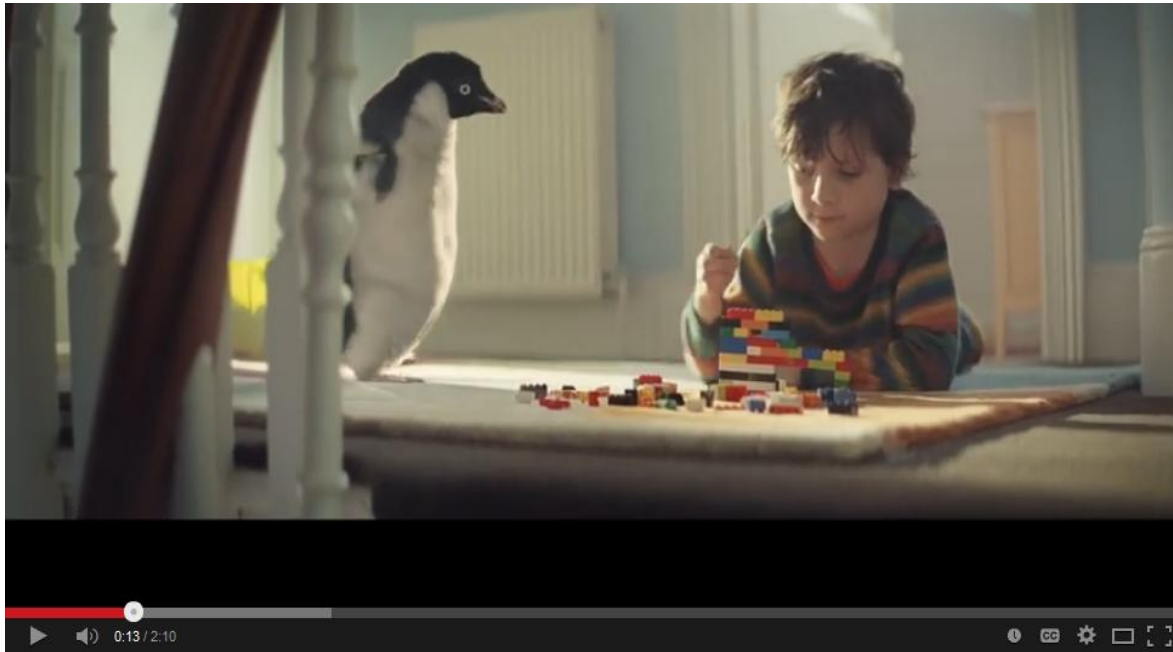
Apart from creating Monty, the team added visual effects (including frosty breath and snow), extended sets and created a number of matte painted surroundings. As Sam points eagerly out the window at the first winter snow, the scene outside is a built-up image of matte painting with additional computer graphics to animate the snow. The short sledging scene was shot in mid-summer in three separate places; the wide shot in a park to capture enough fake snow, Sam in front of a green screen for his close-up and a separate park location for the loved up couple. Monty and all the elements came together during compositing in the studio (MPC, 2015).

In addition to the brand video, MPC provided Monty assets for the wider campaign, including outdoor billboards, posters and 6-sheets for a tube station takeover. MPC also collaborated with the 4Creative agency for the teaser campaign that ran on Channel 4 as an introduction before the official release of the brand video.

What is also remarkable about this project is the fact that MPC were honored with an impressive two Lions at Cannes's Film Craft festival, including the only VFX Gold Lion for a second year running. John Lewis, 'Monty's Christmas' was the big winner of the Film Craft category, collecting the overall Grand Prix and the only VFX Gold Lion of the festival.

Image 5: "Monty The Penguin" brand video (by John Lewis),

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iccscUFY860> (Accessed in June 2014)



3.2.4. "Puppy Love" by Budweiser

The "Puppy Love" ad (Image 6) was released on the Internet by Budweiser in 2014. Budweiser is an American pale lager beer produced by Anheuser–Busch InBev. Introduced in 1876 by Carl Conrad and Co. of St. Louis, Missouri (Lockhart et al., 2006), Budweiser has grown to become one of the best selling beers in the United States. Although the beer is available in over 80 markets worldwide, due to a trademark dispute, it cannot be sold in all markets under the Budweiser name. It is made with up to 30% rice in addition barley malt and hops (Protz, 2004). Produced in various breweries around the world, Budweiser is a filtered beer available both in draught and packaged forms.

The Budweiser (from Budějovice) has been called "The Beer of Kings" since the 16th century. Adolphus Busch changed this slogan to "The King Of Beers. According to Carey and Kiviniemi (2010), although the beer is known as Budweiser in most European countries, the Czech Budweiser is sold as Budejovicky Budvar.

Anheuser-Busch is known for its videogame sponsorship, sport sponsorship and humorous advertisements, some of which have entered the popular culture in the United

States. They include a long line of television advertisements in the 1990s featuring three frogs named "Bud," "Weis," and "Er;" lizards impersonating the "Bud-weis-er" frogs, the Budweiser Ants; the "Whassup?" campaign, and a team of Clydesdale horses commonly known as "The Budweiser Clydesdales." The Budweiser Clydesdale has become an iconic horse. In the "Clydesdale Donkey" brand video the donkey dreams of becoming a Clydesdale horse. The donkey does everything he can think of to attempt and become one of these horses, and finally when the day comes for his try-out, he makes the cut and becomes what he has always dreamed. According to Shikes (2011), this commercial ended up being in the top five for the most memorable Budweiser commercials.

The beer company's 90-second "Puppy Love" commercial is a sequel of sorts to Budweiser's "Brotherhood" which was one of the strongest and best-loved Bud ads in a long time, about a baby Clydesdale and its trainer. Sticking with the baby theme, "Puppy Love" does more than depict the friendship between two (adorable) furry animals. As a puppy repeatedly attempts to escape the kennel and find the Clydesdale, a relationship also develops between the kennel owner and the horse-keeper. The video culminates when horses bar the puppy from leaving in a car, and the humans consent to let them play together in peace. The ad was developed by the agency Anomaly and was voted the top commercial during the game by viewers on Hulu (an American online ad-supported streaming service). It also earned the top spot on USA Today's Ad Meter, which is calculated through online surveys of Super Bowl viewers each year. The spot received more than 37 million views and more than 1 million shares in just 5 days (Luckerson, 2014).

What is also remarkable is the fact that the "cute" commercial was not only the most shared video online, but also the ad which attracted the most TV coverage (Civolution, 2014). According to data collected and provided by media tracking company Civolution (2014), in the US, "Puppy Love" appeared on national TV channels 75 times prior to the game and on local broadcasts 1,200 times, which is nearly four times the next most popular advertisement, Volkswagen's "Wings" commercial, with 318 local broadcasts (Civolution, 2014). In order to perform its research, Civolution uses a platform called Teletrax and tracks paid and earned media for brands across 2,200 channels from

more than 60 countries, including all 210 markets in the United States, representing all calculated U.S. TV households. Its international network also covers TV stations across Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Canada, South and Central America, and Australia.

In respect to visuals and pacing, the brand video was produced and directed by RSA's Jake Scott. The same actor from "Brotherhood", Don Jeanes, gets the role of the Clydesdale trainer. The scenes come off as both iconic and sweet, small yet grand particularly the beautiful moment where the Clydesdales surround the car of the man who has come to take the puppy away. According to Adweek (2014), the plot of this brand video also taps into Budweiser's affinity for dogs, as seen in its ad history, particularly the Dalmatian spots from the late 1990s.

As concerns the audio of this brand video, the soundtrack used was "Let Her Go" by Passenger which was accompanied by some real world sound effects (puppy barks, horse neighs etc.). The song was released in July 2012 as the second single from Passenger's third album "All the Little Lights". From the very beginning, the song achieved international success, topping the charts in many countries around the globe, and has sold over 1 million digital copies in the UK, and over 4 million in the US as of July 2014.

Image 6: "Puppy Love" brand video (by Budweiser),

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dINO2trC-mk> (Accessed in March 2016)



3.3. Development of Online Survey Questionnaire

There are multiple reasons why the research method of contacting online surveys was chosen for this study. First of all, as research suggests, online survey research can be quite inexpensive when compared with traditional surveys (Weible and Wallace, 1998). Research by Watt (1999) even proves that the cost-per-respondent decreases dramatically as the online sample size increases, something that doesn't happen with any other form of survey. In terms of accuracy, literature thus far indicates that online survey results seem not to differ considerably from the results of traditional postal surveys, but offer powerful advantages in distribution and turnaround time (Andrews et al. 2003; Yun and Trumbo 2000).

As mentioned earlier, in our case, the online survey was developed in order to provide an initial overview of how video content characteristics affect the Social Media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in the online community/ecosystem of Social Media. As Kozinets (2010) argues, surveys can tell us much about people's activities in online communities. In this study, the online community is the Social Media ecosystem while the people's activity is the creation of an online story about a brand video through sharing, liking or commenting. Moreover, it is important to make clear that the online questionnaire was developed based on the review of the literature. As concerns the actual development of the survey, I used "SurveyMonkey" which (as mentioned earlier) is an online survey and questionnaire development tool.

It is clear that their distinct characteristics such as their technological features, the particular patterns of respondent responses and the particular demographic characteristics of the groups they survey on the Internet make online surveys unique. These unique characteristics change the way that survey designers must write their questions, when the survey can be used, how to involve traditional non-responders (also known as Internet "lackers"), and how to analyse the survey results accordingly (Andrews et al., 2003; Sohn, 2001). For the above reasons, while developing the online survey questionnaire, the list of criteria for quality electronic survey design which is provided within the literature review (page 34) was taken into consideration.

As Yun and Trumbo (2000) suggest, the questionnaire developed for this research supports and provides controls for multiple platforms and browsers. As concerns multiple responses, by default, the SurveyMonkey collectors allow one response per respondent. The "multiple responses" option was turned off and a respondent could only take the survey once. Moreover, while designing the questionnaire, I made sure that the questions were presented in a logical manner (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996; Norman, Friedman, Norman, and Stevenson, 2001) while also using the "add logic" option that SurveyMonkey provides for piping and linking questions that relate to each other. In addition, SurveyMonkey allowed saving of responses before completion (Smith, 1997), collecting open-ended responses (Bachmann and Elfrink, 1996; Kiesler and Sproull, 1986; Loke and Gilbert, 1995; Yun and Trumbo, 2000), while also preventing survey alteration and providing automatic feedback with the completion of the survey questionnaire (Smith, 1997).

In respect to the responses, they were automatically being transferred to the system's database after the completion of the questionnaire (Kehoe and Pitkow, 1996; McCoy and Marks, 2001; Smith, 1997). The questionnaire provided response control (Preece et al., 2002; Stanton, 1998) and respondents were able to go back and change their responses anytime, even after the completion. Overall, the questionnaire did not require any familiarity with SurveyMonkey in order to be completed (Sheehan and Hoy, 1999). Its response was quick (Couper, Traugott, and Lamias, 2001) and its layout and presentation were straight-forward (see APPENDIX 1).

At this point it is important to make clear that the questionnaire was mainly designed to help this research meet the research objectives set in Section 1.3., to gauge the participants' responses to the video content characteristics discussed in the literature review, and to examine the degree to which these video content characteristics impact their decision to create online stories about brand videos. In other words, the questionnaire was designed in order to provide an answer to whether individual video content characteristics simulate/affect brand video shareability in general and virality in particular.

3.3.1. Breakdown of Online Survey Questions (Section One)

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. Section one examined some demographic information including age, gender and formal education. In addition, section one was designed to examine variables including the respondent's usage level of online social networks in general, usage level of online social networks for sharing online videos, usage of email for sending or receiving online videos, level of attention to different video content characteristics and the impact of video content characteristics to the user's decision to create an online story (share, like or comments) about a brand video in social networks.

Overall, the variables gathered from the first section of the questionnaire were essential in order to recognise (a) the respondent's level of usage of online social networks for sharing brand videos and (b) the degree to which different video content characteristics impact their decision to create online stories about brand videos in general. Section one included the following questions:

1) Your age is:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-50
- 51-65
- 66+

2) Your gender is:

- Female
- Male

3) Your formal education is:

- Secondary School
- College

- University Student/Graduate
- Postgraduate

4) Which of the following Online Social Networks are you a member of? (You may choose more than one answers)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Youtube
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- Other (please specify)

5) How frequently do you share online videos on the social networks that you are a member of?

- Never
- Almost never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

6) How much attention do you normally pay to the following when watching an online brand video? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means “no attention”, 2 means “minor attention”, 3 means “moderate attention”, 4 means “strong attention” and 5 means “very strong attention”.

- Visuals (animation, actors, video recording etc.)
- Audio (music, speech, sound effects etc.)
- Plot (story)

7) Do you usually share brand videos in social networks? (the term brand videos describes videos that are released online by brands for promotional purposes).

- Yes
- No

8) In what social networks do you usually share brand videos? (You can choose more than one social networks)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Youtube
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- Other (please specify)

9) Please indicate the degree to which the following usually impact your decision to share/like/comment a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means “no impact”, 2 means “minor impact”, 3 means “moderate impact”, 4 means “strong impact” and 5 means “very strong impact”.

- Visuals
- Audio
- Plot

10) Please indicate the degree to which the following usually impact your decision to share/like/comment a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means “no impact”, 2 means “minor impact”, 3 means “moderate impact”, 4 means “strong impact” and 5 means “very strong impact”.

- Animation
- Actors/Characters
- Video Effects
- Video Recording (Footage)

11) Please indicate the degree to which the following audio characteristics usually impact your decision to share/like/comment a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5

where 1 means “no impact”, 2 means “minor impact”, 3 means “moderate impact”, 4 means “strong impact” and 5 means “very strong impact”.

- Music
- Speech
- Sound Effects

As portrayed above, questions 1, 2 and 3 (Questions 4, 5 and 6 of Appendix 1) were focused on demographic information. This information could help separate the findings of this research into different demographic categories. In other words, by collecting the above demographic information this research would be able to determine whether age, sex and formal education impact brand video sharing decisions, brand video sharing patterns or attraction and attention to certain brand video content characteristics during the decision of sharing. Moreover, question 4 (Question 7 of Appendix 1) asked respondents to provide a list including the social networks that they are members of. Similarly to the previous questions, this question could help determine whether the use of specific social networks is somehow connected to brand video sharing decisions and patterns. Moving forward, question 5 (Question 8 of Appendix 1) asks respondents to determine how frequently they share online videos on the social networks mentioned in question 4. In addition to gathering information about the frequency of video sharing of each respondent, by combining the answers of this question with the answers collected from question 4, this research could also somehow determine the respondent's intensity/level of usage of online social networks in general.

Furthermore, question 6 (Question 9 of Appendix 1) asks about the attention that individual respondents normally pay to video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) when watching online brand videos. For this question, a five-point "likert" scale (technique for measurement of attitudes explained in literature review) was used where 1 meant “no attention”, 2 meant “minor attention”, 3 meant “moderate attention”, 4 meant “strong attention” and 5 meant “very strong attention”. As explained above, by combining the answers of this question with the answers of questions 1, 2 and 3, this research could end up with different findings and different attraction levels to certain

video content characteristics according to the respondents' age, gender or educational background.

Similarly to question 5, question 7 (Question 10 of Appendix 1) aims to gather data related to whether or not respondents share videos on the social networks mentioned in question 4. This time though the question focuses specifically on brand videos which is also the main focus of this research. To make data even more solid on the other hand, question 8 (Question 11 of Appendix 1) asks respondents to mention the social networks that they use to share brand videos. The "question piping" and "logic" techniques were used at this point so that respondents could only reach this question if they answered "yes" on question 7.

Finally, questions 9, 10 and 11 (Questions 12,13 and 14 of Appendix 1) are directed only to respondents who answered that they do share brand videos in social networks. By using a five-point "likert" scale again, these questions separate plot, visual (animation, actors, video effects, video recording) and audio (music, speech, sound effects) in order to get deeper data on the degree to which each one of these content characteristics impacts the respondents decision to create a story (share/like/comment) about a brand video online. For these questions, 1 meant "no impact", 2 meant "minor impact", 3 meant "moderate impact", 4 meant "strong impact" and 5 meant "very strong impact".

3.3.2. Breakdown of Online Survey Questions (Section Two)

The second section of the questionnaire was asking respondents to watch the four videos that this research examined ("First Kiss", "The Epic Split", "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love"). After watching the videos, respondents had to answer questions on whether they came across the videos before and on whether they have ever created a story (shared, liked or commented) about those videos in social networks. Moreover, the second section of the questionnaire was examining the impact that video content characteristics had on the respondents' decision to create an online story about these specific videos in the social networks that they are using. The findings of this section could strengthen the findings of the whole research since they would complement the data

collected through the netnography research method and during analysing the comments and posts that Social Media users were making about the selected videos. At this point it is important to mention that the videos were embedded within the actual online questionnaire. In this way, responders could watch the video easily and without leaving the online questionnaire's space. Additionally, it is important to mention again that the videos used for this research were selected on the basis of four main criteria: making different use of video content characteristics (visuals, sound and plot), being global, being viral and being examples of a recent viral marketing campaign (conducted during the past 3 years). For each one of the videos selected, the respondents had to answer the following five questions (see APPENDIX 1 for the full questionnaire):

1) Have you ever watched the following video?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

2) Have you ever shared/commented/liked this video before?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

3) After watching this video how likely is it for you to share/like/comment it? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

4) If you didn't/wouldn't share/like/comment the video please name the main factors that influenced your decision not to share/like/comment it. (You can choose more than one answers).

- It's not my style
- I didn't like the plot
- I didn't like the audio

- I didn't like the visuals
- I don't like the brand
- Other (please specify)

5) If you shared/liked/commented the video or if you are likely to share/like/comment it after having watched it, please indicate the impact that the following had on your decision to share/like/comment. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means “no impact”, 2 means “minor impact”, 3 means “moderate impact”, 4 means “strong impact” and 5 means “very strong impact”.

- Actors/Characters
- Video Recording
- Music
- Speech
- Plot

The first question (Questions 15, 20, 25 and 30 of Appendix 1) of the second section of the online questionnaire aimed on investigating whether participants were already familiar with the videos selected to be analysed. The answer to this question was actually going to determine the path that respondents were going to follow within the second section of questionnaire. This was again achieved by using the question pippin technique.

The path to question 2 (Questions 16, 21, 26 and 31 of Appendix 1) was only available for respondents who answered "Yes" to question 1. At this point, the questionnaire aims at getting answers to whether respondents created a story (shared, commented or liked) about these specific videos in the past. Question 3 (Questions 17, 22, 27 and 32 of Appendix 1) on the other hand was only visible to respondents who answered "No" or "Maybe, I can't remember" to question 1 or "Maybe, I can't remember" to question 2. In other words, the path to this question was only available to respondents who were not familiar with any of the four videos presented within the questionnaire and to respondents who were not sure if they have created a story about the brand videos in

the past. For this reason, question 3 asks respondents to provide answers to whether it is likely for them to share, like or comment the video after watching it. A five-point "likert" scale was used for this question where 1 meant "extremely unlikely", 2 meant "unlikely", 3 meant "neutral", 4 meant "likely" and 5 meant "extremely likely".

The next question (Questions 4 of the above list or Questions 18, 23, 28 and 33 of Appendix 1) asks respondents who didn't/wouldn't share, like or comment any of the videos presented within the questionnaire to name the main factors that influenced their decision not to share/like/comment it. In this way, by determining the reasons that could drive someone to the decision not to share comment or like a brand video in social networks, this research could gather essential data concerning the impact that those principles have on their decision to share, comment or like it as well. Particularly, if someone states that he/she wouldn't share a brand video because of its audio for example, at the same time that person provides the information that audio actually impacts his/her decision to create a story about that specific video in social networks. Moving a step further, in case many respondents answer that they wouldn't share a brand video mainly because of its audio, means that its audio could actually have a negative impact on the brand video's potential of going viral.

Finally, question 5 (Question 19, 24, 29 and 34 of Appendix 1) aimed at respondents who answered that they already shared, liked or commented any of the videos presented or at respondents who stated that they it is likely for them to share, like or comment them after watching them for the first time within the questionnaire. For this question, a five-point "likert" scale was used and respondents had to indicate the impact that individual video content characteristics had on their decision to create an online story (share, comment or like) about that specific video. For this question, point 1 meant "no impact", 2 meant "minor impact", 3 meant "moderate impact", 4 meant "strong impact" and 5 meant "very strong impact".

3.4. Pilot

As mentioned within the Literature Review chapter of this thesis, when piloting, it is recommended using a multistage testing process that combines an array of different testing techniques and a four-stage process (Dillman, 2000; Oppenheim, 1992; Preece et al., 2002). In Stage 1, a review by conversant analysts ensure question efficiency, completeness, relevancy, scale, and format appropriateness. Heuristic review is a useful technique. In Stage 2, “typical/potential” participants take the survey using a “think-aloud” protocol while designers/developers observe and follow-up with retrospective interviews. Question interpretation consistency, survey language, logical question sequencing, and survey “look and feel” are evaluated. In Stage 3, a small study emulates all the procedures proposed by the main study. In Stage 4, one last check is done to catch typos and errors unintentionally introduced during the last revision process.

3.4.1. Pilot Stage 1

For the first stage of piloting, the online questionnaire was reviewed by the supervisors of this research so that feedback could be collected on question efficiency, completeness, relevancy, scale, and format appropriateness. This phase revealed some minor errors that mainly concerned question wording/phrasing, question arrangement and the size of the questionnaire. After collecting feedback from the supervising team, the questionnaire was re-arranged and questions that were not clear were rephrased in order to improve comprehensiveness. Additionally, by mindfully re-examining and reviewing each question individually, some questions were removed in order to shorten the questionnaire. This procedure ensured that the online questionnaire became more pleasant and approachable for the respondents.

3.4.2. Pilot Stage 2

During the second stage of the piloting process, 20 participants were invited to take the survey using the "think-aloud" protocol as explained within the literature review chapter of this thesis. Moreover, observation was taking place while participants were

taking the survey in order to further evaluate question interpretation consistency, survey language, logical question sequencing, and survey “look and feel”. After survey completion, participants also went through short interviews in order to provide more feedback about the overall survey experience. This stage of piloting revealed some minor errors as well. These errors mainly concerned survey language and logical question sequencing. Some of the terms used within the survey were not clear to participants (the terms "brand video" and "footage" for example). For this reason, after completing the second stage of piloting the survey had to go through a reorganization. The sequence of the questions was re-examined and explanations for unclear terms were provided where needed. Most importantly though, throughout the interviews that took place during this stage of piloting, participants expressed the interest to talk more and to provide more information specifically on how audio impacts their decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. Particularly, when they had to answer whether audio impacts their decision to share, like or comment a specific brand video in social networks, participants started thinking and discussing whether their opinion to share that video or not was going to change if the audio was different. This occurrence contrived the idea and need of developing a new online survey that would work as an online experiment. This new questionnaire, could empower/strengthen the findings of this study in general, and the findings of the first questionnaire in particular. The initial idea was to get one of the brand videos examined throughout this research, change its audio and inspect whether participants were still willing to share it.

Throughout the short interviews that took place during the second stage of piloting, participants were mainly discussing about music fit and music popularity/likeness. In other words, they were wondering whether their decision to create an online story or not about a brand video in social networks was impacted by the popularity of the video's soundtrack and by the fittingness of the soundtrack with that specific video's visuals and plot. Therefore, it was decided that the second questionnaire had to specifically examine how these two variables (music fit and popularity of soundtrack) impact a social media user's decision to create a story about a brand video in social networks.

In order to examine this, the "Puppy Love" brand video by Budweiser was chosen to be edited. The reason why this specific video was chosen to be edited is because it originally included a small number of sound effects and no speech. In this way, the soundtrack could be easily replaced without losing much information. Since interview participants were mainly discussing music fit and music popularity, it was decided to check these two variables by developing three new versions of the video and examining whether they could be as sharable as the original brand video. At this point, it is important to make clear that as mentioned at the beginning of the methodology chapter, the original video's soundtrack was "Let Her Go" by Passenger released in 2012, and that from the very beginning, the song achieved international success, topping the charts in many countries around the world, and has sold over 1 million digital copies in the UK, and over 4 million in the US as of July 2014. On Youtube, the song currently counts 951,454,109 views, 3,443,812 likes and 96,233 dislikes. In other words, the original "Puppy Love" video included a soundtrack that was already popular by the time that the brand video was released (2014).

In order to test whether the soundtrack's popularity impacts the social media user's decision to share/like/comment the brand video in social networks, songs with different popularity levels were used in each one of the three new versions of the "Puppy Love" brand video. The songs used were:

- a) Gwyneth Paltrow - Coming Home (3,454,223 Youtube views, 11,383 Youtube likes, 311 Youtube dislikes).
- b) Bruno Mars - Treasure (268,175,335 Youtube views, 1,171,187 Youtube likes, 43,014 Youtube dislikes).
- c) Kognitif - My Freedom Has No Price (76,410 Youtube views, 891 Youtube likes, 6 Youtube dislikes).

Subsequently, in order to investigate whether the "music fit" variable impacts the social media user's decision to share/like/comment the brand video in social networks, participants had to provide their views on the "fittingness" of each soundtrack as well.

After asking participants for their views on the fittingness/suitability of each soundtrack to the video's visuals and plot, participants had to go through a five-point "likert" scale in order to provide information on how likely it is for them to share/like/comment each one of the videos in social networks. For this question, option 1 meant "extremely unlikely", 2 meant "unlikely", 3 meant "neutral", 4 meant "likely" and 5 meant "extremely likely".

Throughout the second online questionnaire, this research gathered information on whether and how brand video soundtracks impact the social media user's decision to share/like/comment the brand video in social networks. More specifically, by analysing the data gathered from the second online questionnaire, this research examined whether music fit and a soundtrack's popularity impacts a brand video's virality in social networks.

At this point, it is essential to point out that the second online questionnaire (see APPENDIX 2 for the full questionnaire) also went through stages one and two of piloting. Conveniently, piloting stages one and two revealed no errors for this questionnaire.

3.4.3. Pilot Stages 3 and 4

For stage three, a small study that emulated all the procedures proposed by the main study was carried out. For the purpose of this stage of piloting, the final online questionnaires were sent to 20 participants. These participants had similar characteristics to the population/sample that the final questionnaires aimed to reach. More specifically, the 20 participants selected for the third stage of piloting were all Internet and Social Media users with active profiles in social networks including Facebook, Youtube, Google+ or Twitter.

After receiving and answering the online questionnaires, the 20 participants were asked to send the online questionnaires to online friends and ask them to try and answer them as well. This was done in order to test whether the snowball sampling effect could take place in this study. Astonishingly, the third stage of piloting ended up with 67 individual questionnaire responses (31 individual responses of the first questionnaire and 36 individual responses of the second questionnaire). Moreover, this stage revealed that

the choice of respondents was appropriate and that the questionnaires were user-friendly and were not causing respondent fatigue or discomfort (only 6 out of the 73 respondents withdrew the questionnaires before finishing). Additionally, question piping seemed to be working as expected and respondents did not miss any questions. There was a polite variation in responses about the impact that each one of the video content characteristics has on the respondent's decision to share/like/comment a brand video online which showed that the findings of the final study could be really interesting. Lastly, the average time for completing the first questionnaire was 14.2 minutes while the average time for completing the second questionnaire was 6.4 minutes.

In order to complete the final stage of piloting (stage 4), the questionnaires went through one last check in order to catch typos and errors unintentionally introduced during the last revision process.

3.5. Participant Selection and Sampling

In order to find participants for the first questionnaire of this research, a mixture of non-probability sampling techniques was used. Since participants had to answer the questionnaire online, it was really difficult to reach random people and convince them to spend time and participate. For this reason, at the beginning, convenience sampling was used and the first questionnaire was sent by the research team (researcher and supervisors) to friends, online friends, work colleagues and undergraduate students of UCLan Cyprus since these participants were the easiest to reach and to convince to spend some time to respond. These participants were then asked to send the questionnaire to friends and online friends in order to help this research collect more responses by using the snowball sampling method.

The fact that respondents of this questionnaire also include undergraduate students is something that can empower the final findings of this research. This is because, as Peterson and Merunka (2013) suggest, one of the most contentious issues in marketing, consumer behaviour research, and social science research generally, is the use of convenience samples of undergraduate students as subjects in behavioural

investigations. Undergraduate students increasingly seem to be the subjects of choice in social psychology and consumer behaviour research. Additionally, Peterson (2001) reports that undergraduate students constituted 86% of the research subjects in empirical studies appearing in Volume 26 of *Journal of Consumer Research*, whereas Simonson et al. (2001) report that 75% of the research subjects in *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Journal of Marketing Research* articles were undergraduate students.

Since the decision for the development of the second online questionnaire was taken after running the pilot study and since the PhD Research has time constraints, responses for this questionnaire had to be collected in a very short period of time. For this reason, it was decided to use a service that SurveyMonkey offers where researchers can collect responses by paying an amount of money according to the target audience criteria that they select.

According to SurveyMonkey (2016), they recruit contribute members from a diverse population of 45+ million people who take SurveyMonkey surveys every month. For example, after completing a survey, respondents are redirected to a page that may feature an advertisement for SurveyMonkey contribute. SurveyMonkey contribute panelists come from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. As concerns the sampling procedure, SurveyMonkey selects a random group from the SurveyMonkey contribute member base who match the criteria selected by the researcher and sends emails where members/potential respondents are invited to complete the survey. The specific audience criteria selected for the second questionnaire of this research was for the respondents to be internet users who use social networks. These criteria were selected since they match the criteria of the population that this research studies. Additionally, given that each member of the potential audience (SurveyMonkey contribute members who are based in UK, US or Australia and use social networks) had an equal chance of becoming part of the second questionnaire's sample, the sample method used for the second questionnaire could rest under the umbrella of random probability sampling.

3.6. Online Survey Administration

As explained above, the two surveys were mainly administrated online and respondents were reached by using a mixture of probability and non-probability sampling techniques such as convenience, snowball and random sampling. Moreover, in order to get responses from students of UCLan Cyprus, the researcher administered the survey in classes where the instructor's permission had been given.

Both the online surveys started with an information letter and a consent form that participants had to read and accept in order to continue. In general, the information letter and the consent form provided descriptions of the surveys, information about the researcher (including contact details), the university and the purpose of study. Moreover, they informed the participants that they were free to withdraw at any time, that there is no financial compensation for their participation and that the research results were going to be published in a PhD thesis, in academic conferences and in academic journals. Participants were also informed that there would be no explicit or implicit reference to any of them and that the online survey submissions were going to be securely stored and locked.

3.7. Data Preparation

As mentioned earlier, the data that this study exploited through the "netnography" research method include comments and posts of Social Media users on Google+ (Google's Social Network) and Youtube that refer to the video content characteristics of the following four viral brand videos: Wren's "First Kiss", Volvo's "Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split", John Lewis's Christmas Advert of 2014 "Monty The Penguin", and Budweiser's "Puppy Love". Overall, the 1000 most recent comments that each one of these four videos received were collected manually in order to be analysed (4000 comments in total).

The 4000 comments were then examined in order to select and prepare for analysis only the comments that were referring to the video content characteristics that

this research is studying (comments referring to visuals, audio or plot). This process ended up with selecting 1,658 comments in total. In other words, data were cleaned by deleting 2342 comments that were just generic hence not valuable for this research (comments that did not clearly refer to video content characteristics), although they still "create online stories" and discussions about the videos and consequently impact the overall virality of the videos. The following are examples of such comments: *"wow, nice", "great advertisement", "the best", "this ad never gets old", "was that a commercial?", "OMG", "I am drunk", "this is my favorite commercial", "watching this in 2016", "by far the best Bud commercial", "love this one..... could watch it over and over many times", "that reminds me of something", "my teacher showed this in class", "best one yet", "love it", "now that ad is great", "super", "not nice", "hahahahah", "the BEST commercial EVER", "not my taste but nice", "great vid", "well done Volvo", "that shouldn't be a beer commercial", "this is sooo fake", "I love every video", "I could keep watching this all day long :o", "awww...very nice video!", "Budweiser did it again", "I guess John Lewis loves christmas", "genios..!!".*

On the other hand, examples of data that were valuable for this research include comments that clearly referred to video content characteristics such as the following: *"what is the music used here?", "nice soundtrack", "I love the music", "With this song!! I love it!!", "the song is Enya- only time", "Im here just because of the song lol", "Whats the music", "Enya <3", "What is this song?", "I love the art behind this video", "oh it's black and white you know this is going to be such art", "what a view!", "Love it Van Damme", "I want that penguin", "that pet is so cute", "I know that guy, he is an actor", "Van Damme – the best", "this is my puppy", "I want that dog", "best animated penguin ever", "lol that grandma is so cool", "loving the sunrise", "this is so cute", "this story will make you smile", "actors or just strangers?", "the power of the first kiss", "the cutest story I've ever seen", "loving the plot", "this story made me cry", "they are old but years don't matter", "I find this soooo sweet", "story <3", "this is touching and very remembering", "what a split!! Is this for real?".*

Overall, the 1000 most recent comments that Wren's "First Kiss" video received included 381 (valuable) comments that were clearly referring to the video's visuals, audio

or plot. Furthermore, among the 1000 most recent comments that Volvo's "Volvo Trucks: The Epic Split" video received, 526 comments were clearly referring to the video's visuals, audio or plot. As concerns John Lewis's "Monty The Penguin", among the 1000 most recent comments that the video received, 312 comments were clearly referring to the video's visuals, audio or plot. Finally, the 1000 most recent comments that Budweiser's "Puppy Love" video received included 439 comments that were clearly referring to the video's visuals, audio or plot.

The next step was to prepare the data collected through the first and second online questionnaires for analysis. In order to achieve this, the data collected through the first questionnaire were imported into SPSS. The first online questionnaire ended up with 157 responses overall. After reviewing the data for completeness, 30 responses were deleted since they were incomplete. This deletion reduced the sample size of the first questionnaire to 127 respondents. Next, the data collected from the second questionnaire were also imported into SPSS for analysis and tabulation. After collecting data from 315 respondents for analysis, the data provided by each participant within the second questionnaire were reviewed for completeness as well. 39 respondents were excluded as they failed to complete more than half of the second online survey and 53 respondents were excluded as they did not provide answers to important questions such as the probability/likeliness of sharing, liking or commenting any of the four videos examined. These deletions reduced the sample size of the second questionnaire to 223 respondents.

3.8. Statistical Analysis

Firstly, for this research, normality of the data was assessed through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is a nonparametric test that is commonly used, among others, to assess whether a sample of values follows a theoretical statistical distribution (Chakravarti et. al, 1967).

In the case of this study, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to assess whether the distribution of the Likert scale responses for the video content characteristics follows the Normal Distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic gives a quantification of the

distance between the empirical distribution function of the sample and the cumulative distribution function of the theoretical distribution (e.g. Normal Distribution) (Chakravarti et. al, 1967). The null hypothesis of the K-S test is that the sample is drawn from the theoretical distribution. Rejection of the null hypothesis leads to the conclusion that the sample we are investigating does not follow the reference distribution. Since the impact rating (Likert scale 1 to 5) does not follow the normal distribution ($p < 0.05$) all analysis was conducted using non-parametric tests.

3.8.1. Parametric and Non-Parametric Tests

Parametric tests are the statistical tests that assume that the sample data come from a population that follows the Normal distribution (i.e. having a fixed set of parameters like Mean and Variance) (Frost, 2015). The most popular parametric tests are the family of the t-tests and the Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) that are used when exploring differences in two groups and three or more groups respectively. Additionally, there are equivalent tests (Paired t-test and Repeated Measures (RM) ANOVA) that can handle repeated measurements for the sample.

Conversely, non-parametric tests are tests that do not require any distributional assumptions of the sample (e.g. Normality of the data) (Frost, 2015). According to the research performed throughout this study, non-parametric methods are widely used for analysing populations that take on a ranked order (such as hotel reviews receiving one to five stars). The utilisation of non-parametric methods is necessary when data have a ranking but no clear numerical interpretation (such as when assessing preferences). However, non-parametric tests are considered to be less powerful than the parametric ones (Hair et. al, 2007) meaning that the chance of error of the non-parametric tests is higher than that of the parametric tests. On the other hand, incorrect use of parametric tests can bias inferential statistics (Hair et. al, 2007). Table 7 presents the different parametric tests with their equivalent non-parametric tests.

Table 7: Parametric and equivalent non-parametric tests

PARAMETRIC TESTS	NON PARAMETRIC (equivalent)
Between Groups	
Independent Sample t-test	Man – Whitney U test
ANOVA	Kruskal – Wallis test
Repeated Measures	
Paired samples t-test (2 measurements)	Wilcoxon test
RM ANOVA (3 or more measurements)	Friedman’s test

At this point, it is also important to mention that for this study, the difference in the impact level across all video content characteristics (repeated measurements for the impact of different video content characteristics) was explored through a Friedman’s test. The same test was conducted for each video separately. Moreover, paired contracts between the video content characteristics and their impact level was explored through the non-parametric Wilcoxon test.

3.8.2. Chi Square Analysis

When testing association between two categorical variables, it is best to tabulate the responses using two-way tables (also known as contingency tables) and analysing association with the use of the chi-square test (Yale University, 1997). The chi-square test allows researchers to determine whether variables are independent of each other or whether there is a significant association (or pattern of dependence) between them (Stattrek, 2016).

As it is covered within the following section of this thesis ("Data Analysis and Results"), in order to examine the statistical significance of the data collected through netnography, a Chi-Square test (X^2) was conducted. In this way, audio, visuals and plot were cross-tabulated in order to compare the impact that these video content characteristics had on the decision of Youtube users to comment the four videos examined and consequently create an online story about them in social networks and increase their virality. Additionally, in order to examine whether the different video

content characteristics had the same impact across all videos, a Chi-Square test was conducted as well. A separate Chi-Square analysis was performed for the four common characteristics (Actors, Video Recording, Plot and Music). Finally, in the case of this study, the chi-square test provides a method for testing whether the observed proportion of impact (Strong or Very strong impact) of a single video content characteristic is different across the four videos in examination. The null hypothesis is that the proportion of Strong or Very Strong impact (positive impact) is the same (equal) across all the brand videos examined.

3.8.3. Binary Logistic Regression

Logistic regression is an approach for predicting (or explaining) a dichotomous variable. The dichotomous variable is coded as a “Yes” and “No”. The logistic regression explains and quantifies the relationship between the dichotomous dependent variable and one or more predictor (independent) variables by estimating the odds ratio (O.R.) for each predictor variable (Statistics Solutions, 2016). Odds ratio declare the increased likelihood of the “Yes” when the predictor variables change.

For the data collected throughout the second online questionnaire of this study, a binary logistic regression analysis was conducted to explore the association of popularity of the background music with the online story creation likelihood of a particular brand video (likelihood of sharing/commenting/liking the four different versions of the "Puppy Love" brand video). As mentioned within the literature review chapter, although some studies found that many video advertisements include popular music, and although other studies concentrated on the effects of music fit in advertising, no studies were found that examined whether music popularity and music fit affect the chances of a brand video to go viral. These two hypotheses were tested by running a binary logistic regression analysis on some of the data collected throughout the second questionnaire (see "Data Analysis and Results" chapter). The proportion of "Extremely Likely" or "Likely" to create an online story about the different versions of the "Puppy Love" brand video in social networks was the dependent variable. The two predictor (independent) variables was MUSIC FIT (whether the music fits the brand video or not), and MUSIC POPULARITY

(whether the background music was "more popular" or "less popular". In the case of this study for example, an O.R. of 2.3 for the predictor of MUSIC FIT, means that when music fits the brand video then the likelihood of creating a story (share, like or comment) about the video in social networks ("Yes") is 2.3 times higher than when the music does not fit the brand video. As it is explained within the "Data Analysis and Results" chapter of this thesis, after running a binary logistic regression analysis, a Fisher's test was also performed in order to find out whether the association of music fit with a positive answer on creating an online story about a brand video is significant.

At this point, it is essential to make clear that all statistical analyses were conducted in SPSS ver.21. Although most of the data are clearly presented within the "Data Analysis and Results" chapter of this thesis, the SPSS outputs can be found in the APPENDIX (see APPENDIX 3). The following table (Table 8) summarizes all the different statistical analyses and tests that were performed during this study and provides explanations on why each one of them was performed or on which hypothesis each one of them was testing. As mentioned earlier, more information on the results of these statistical analyses and tests can be found within the next chapter of this thesis.

Table 8: Statistical Analyses & Tests Performed during this study.

Analysis/Test	Purpose/Hypothesis
Kolmogorov - Sminrov Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess whether the distribution of Likert-Scale responses for video content characteristics follows the normal distribution (H1, H2, H3).
Chi - Square Tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To compare the impact that video content characteristics have on the decision to comment a video (H1, H2, H3). • To examine whether the different video content characteristics had the same impact across all videos (H1, H2, H3). • To determine whether variables are independent of each other or whether there is a significant association between them (H1, H2, H3).
Binary Logistic Regression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore the association of music popularity with online story creation likelihood of a particular brand video (H2).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore the association of music fit with online story creation likelihood of a particular brand video (H2).
Fisher's Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess whether the association of music fit with a positive answer on creating an online story about a brand video in social networks is significant (H2).
Friedman's Test of Repeated Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Friedman's test for each brand video in order to assess whether each video content characteristic has the same impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks (to assess for example whether the video content characteristics of the "First Kiss" had the same impact or not) (H1, H2, H3). Then plot was removed and Friedman's was performed again to assess whether plot was making the difference (H3).
Wilcoxon's Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To test the effect of plot against the other video content characteristics of each brand video separately (H3).

CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter provides clear explanations of the data collected through netnography, questionnaire one and questionnaire two. Moreover, this chapter clarifies how the statistical tests and procedures explained within the previous chapter were used for data analysis and provides a clear presentation of the data collected and results. As mentioned earlier, although most of the data are clearly presented within this chapter, the SPSS outputs can be found in the APPENDIX (see APPENDIX 3).

4.1. Analysis of Netnographic Data

After cleaning the data collected through the netnography method, the 1658 comments selected (381+526+312+439) were separated into four main categories based on their content: a) comments referring to audio (493), b) comments referring to visuals (562), c) comments referring to plot (603) and d) comments referring to any of the above and accompanied with an instant share of the commented video on Google+ (256). In

order to calculate the degree of statistical significance of the above data, and since the data were categorical, chi-square tests were performed for each video content characteristic separately. In this way, this research would be able to clearly determine how audio, visuals and plot impacted the social media users' decision to comment and consequently create an online story about the videos examined and improve their virality.

Table 9 illustrates the number of comments that each one of the videos received for its individual video content characteristics (audio, visuals and plot) in addition to the overall number of comments that all the videos received for each one of the specified video content characteristics.

Table 9: Comments regarding individual video content characteristics

Viral Video	Comments on Audio	Comments on Visuals	Comments on Plot	OVERALL
FIRST KISS	52	116	213	381
EPIC SPLIT	198	261	67	526
MONTY THE PENGUINE	94	79	139	312
PUPPY LOVE	149	106	184	439
OVERALL	493	562	603	1658

As concerns the “First Kiss” video, among the 1000 most recent comments there were 52 users (5.2%) commenting about its audio, 116 users (11.6%) commenting about its visuals/actors and 213 users (21.3%) commenting about the video’s plot. In other words, 381 out of the 1000 (38.1%) most recent comments of this video referred to its individual video content characteristics. Moreover, in relation to the “Epic Split” video, among the 1000 most recent comments there were 198 users (19.8%) commenting about its audio, 261 users (26.1%) commenting about its visuals/actors and 67 users (6.7%) commenting about the video’s plot. In total, 526 out of the 1000 (52.6%) most recent comments of this video referred to its individual video content characteristics. As concerns the “Monty The Penguin” video, among the 1000 most recent comments there were 94 users (9.4%) commenting about its audio, 79 users (7.9%) commenting about its visuals/actors and 139 users (13.9%) commenting about the video’s plot. In total, 312 out

of the 1000 (31.2%) most recent comments of this video were referring to its individual video content characteristics. Finally, as concerns the "Puppy Love" video, among the 1000 most recent comments there were 149 users (14.9%) commenting about its audio, 106 users (10.6%) commenting about its visuals and 184 users (18.4%) commenting about its plot. In total, 439 out of the 1000 (43.9%) most recent comments that this video received were referring to its individual video content characteristics. Overall, 1658 out of the 4000 (41.45%) comments analysed were comments referring to audio, visuals or plot. What is also remarkable is the fact that 256 out of these 1658 (15.44%) comments were accompanied with an instant share of the video on Google+.

The results collected through the netnography method suggest that indeed video content characteristics play an important role on the Social Media users' level of engagement with brand videos and on the users' decision to create stories about the brand videos in Social Media. This becomes clear when considering that 41.45% of the online stories created through comments under the brand videos examined were concerning the videos' visuals, sound or plot. In other words, the 41.45% of the virality that the videos gained through Youtube comments was gained because of the video content characteristics. According to the above data, although there is not much difference between the numbers, overall, plot (603 comments) seems to be the strongest and most important factor that makes social media users comment a brand video in Youtube. However, the impact of plot seems to be changing from brand video to brand video and this is where other factors come in. For example, the impact of plot seems to be less when a popular guest appearance becomes part of a brand video's visuals. This becomes clear when calculating the number of comments that the "Epic Split" brand video received about its visuals and Jean Claude Van Damme (261). The number of comments that this video received about its visuals was almost four times bigger than the number of comments that the brand video received about its plot (67).

What is also remarkable in the "Epic Split" example is the fact that the number of comments that the brand video received about its audio (198) was also bigger than the number of comments that the brand video received about its plot. Additionally, the fact

that this video received the largest amount of comments concerning individual video content characteristics (526) is also noteworthy. As concerns the rest of the brand videos and as mentioned above, plot seems to be the strongest and most important factor with 213 comments on the "First Kiss", 139 comments on the "Monty The Penguin " and 184 on the "Puppy Love" brand video. Table 10 illustrates the cross-tabulation of the data collected about the plot of each brand video in addition to the results of the chi-square test that was performed for this specific video content characteristic. During data analysis, comments related to plot were marked with "1" and comments related to anything else were marked with "0".

Table 10: Plot * Video Cross-tabulation

			Video				Total
			Epic Split	First Kiss	Monty The Penguin	Puppy Love	
Plot	0	Count	933	787	861	816	3397
		% within Video	93,3%	78,7%	86,1%	81,6%	84,9%
	1	Count	67	213	139	184	603
		% within Video	6,7%	21,3%	13,9%	18,4%	15,1%
Total		Count	1000	1000	1000	1000	4000
		% within Video	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	94,769 ^a	3	,000

Likelihood Ratio	103,538	3	,000
N of Valid Cases	4000		
a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 150,75.			

As concerns the visuals, with 562 comments overall, it also seems that they too played an important role on the social media users' decision to comment the brand videos and hence increase their virality by creating online stories about them in Youtube and Google+. Firstly, as mentioned earlier, the appearance of Jean Claude Van Damme within the "Epic Split" brand video generated a large amount of comments. What is also remarkable however, is the fact that the video which included 3D animation (Monty The Penguin) generated less comments about its visuals (79) than the brand videos that were based on live video footage. For the rest of the brand videos, visuals received 116 comments on the "First Kiss", 261 comments on the "Epic Split" and 106 on the "Puppy Love" brand video. Table 11 illustrates the cross-tabulation of the data collected about the visuals of each brand video in addition to the results of the chi-square test that was performed for this specific video content characteristic. In this case, comments related to visuals were marked with "1" and comments related to anything else were marked with "0".

Table 11: Visuals * Video Cross-tabulation

			Video				Total
			Epic Split	First Kiss	Monty The Penguin	Puppy Love	
Visuals	0	Count	739	884	921	894	3438
		% within Video	73,9%	88,4%	92,1%	89,4%	86,0%
	1	Count	261	116	79	106	562

	%	26,1%	11,6%	7,9%	10,6%	14,1%
	within Video					
Total	Count	1000	1000	1000	1000	4000
	%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
	within Video					

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	166,388 ^a	3	,000
Likelihood Ratio	152,223	3	,000
N of Valid Cases	4000		

a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 140,50.

Finally, the audio seems to be generating online stories and brand video virality as well. On the "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love" brand videos, the audio generated more comments than visuals did. On the "Epic Split", 198 out of the 526 (37.64%) comments that the brand video received about its individual video content characteristics concerned its audio. Similarly, the audio of the "Monty The Penguin" received 94 comments out of the 312 (30.13%) and the audio of the "Puppy Love" received 149 comments out of the 439 (33.94%). Two facts that are significant here, is 1) the fact that only the 13.65% of the comments that the "First Kiss" received about its individual video content characteristics were about its audio (52 out of the 381 comments) and 2) the fact that although the "Puppy Love" video included the most popular song (Passenger - Let Her Go with 951,454,109 views on Youtube), its audio overall generated a smaller percentage of comments than the audio of the "Epic Split" brand video. These two points, in addition to the results of the pilot study of this research, gave birth to the idea of creating the

second questionnaire in order to explore the audio factor further (see Questionnaire 2 Data). Table 12 illustrates the cross-tabulation of the data collected about the audio of each brand video in addition to the results of the chi-square test that was performed for this specific video content characteristic. In this case, comments related to audio were marked with "1" and comments related to anything else were marked with "0".

Table 12: Audio * Video Cross-tabulation

		Video				Total
		Epic Split	First Kiss	Monty The Penguin	Puppy Love	
Audio 0	Count	802	948	906	851	3507
	% within Video	80,2%	94,8%	90,6%	85,1%	87,7%
1	Count	198	52	94	149	493
	% within Video	19,8%	5,2%	9,4%	14,9%	12,3%
Total	Count	1000	1000	1000	1000	4000
	% within Video	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	112,741 ^a	3	,000
Likelihood Ratio	117,513	3	,000
N of Valid Cases	4000		

a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 123,25.

4.2. Questionnaire 1, Section 1 Data Analysis

The first section of the first online questionnaire examined some demographic information including age, gender and formal education. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the first section examined variables including the respondent's usage level of online social networks in general, usage level of online social networks for sharing online videos, usage of email for sending or receiving online videos, level of attention to different video content characteristics and the impact of individual video content characteristics on the user's decision to create a story (share/comment/like) about a brand video in social networks.

At this point, it is worth repeating that in order to collect responses for this questionnaire, a mixture of non-probability sampling techniques was used. At the beginning, convenience sampling was used and the online questionnaire was sent by the research team (researcher and supervisors) to friends, online friends, work colleagues and undergraduate students of UCLan Cyprus since these participants were the easiest to reach and be convinced to spend their time to respond. These participants were then asked to send the questionnaire to friends and online friends. In this way, the snowball sampling method was used as well.

As concerns the demographic data collected through the first online questionnaire, all the 127 respondents were active members of social media and networks. 60 (47.24%) out of the 127 respondents were women and 67 (52.76%) were men. 66 (51.97%) of the respondents were between the age of 18-25, 49 (38.58%) were between the age of 26-35, and 12 (9.45%) respondents were between the age of 36-50. In relation to their formal education, 4 (3.15%) respondents were secondary school students, 4 (3.15%) were college students, 79 (62.20%) were University students or graduates and 40 (31.50%) respondents were postgraduates students or people who completed a postgraduate degree. The intention here was to observe whether the demographic information of the respondents was affecting their answers. However, this hypothesis was rejected since there was no clear similarity between the answers of respondents with similar demographic

information. Table 13 illustrates the demographic characteristics of the respondents of the first online questionnaire.

Table 13: Demographic Characteristics of Questionnaire 1 Participants

Demographic	Category	Number of respondents (Percentage)
Gender	Male	67 (52.76%)
	Female	60 (47.24%)
Age	18-25 yrs	66 (51.97%)
	26-35 yrs	49 (38.58%)
	36-50 yrs	12 (9.45%)
Formal Education	Secondary School	4 (3.15%)
	College Students/Graduates	4 (3.15%)
	University Students/Graduates	79 (62.20%)
	Postgraduate	40 (31.50%)
	Students/Graduates	
Social Networking Status	Active	127 (100%)
	Inactive	0 (0%)

The next question (question 4 or Question 7 of Appendix 1) of the first section of this online questionnaire was asking participants about the online social networks that they are a member of. Participants could choose more than one answer to this question. 126 (99.21%) out of the 127 respondents answered that they are members of Facebook, 60 (47.24%) respondents answered that they are members of Twitter, 102 (80.31%) answered that they are members of Youtube, 60 (47.24%) answered that they are members of LinkedIn, and 66 (52.97%) answered that they are members of Google+. 28 (22.05%) respondents mentioned that they are members of other social networks as well including Instagram, Snapchat, Printerest, Tumblr, Reddit and Soundcloud. Table 14 illustrates the usage of different social networks according to the data gathered from the participants of this questionnaire. According to the data gathered, Facebook and Youtube seem to be the most popular social networks.

Table 14: Questionnaire 1 participants' usage of different social networks

Social Network	Usage
Facebook	126/127 (99.21%)
Twitter	60/127 (47.24%)
Youtube	102/127 (80.31%)
LinkedIn	60/127 (47.24%)
Google+	66/127 (51.97%)
Other (Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, Tumblr, Soundcloud)	28/127 (22.05%)

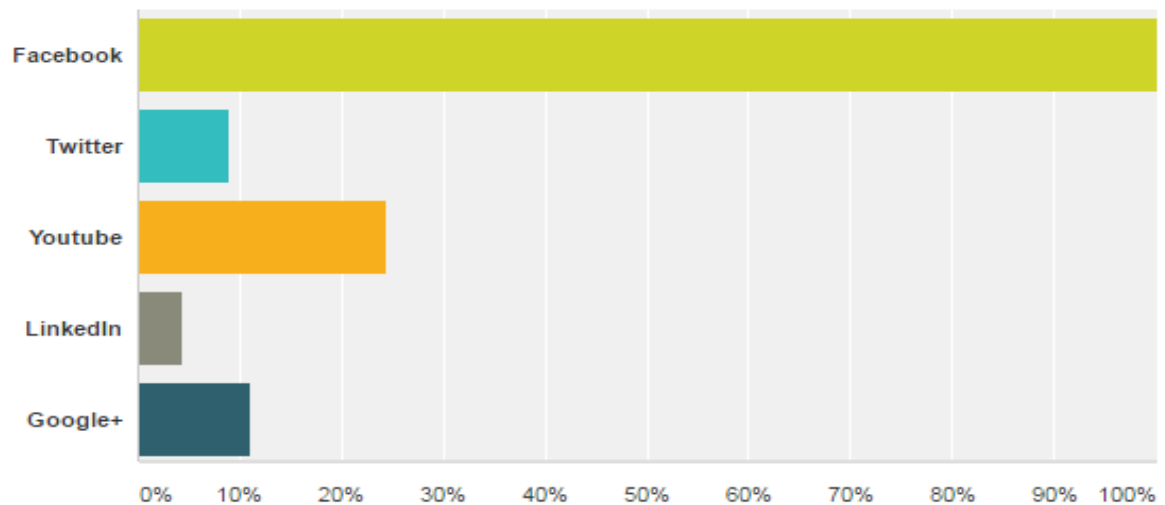
Participants were then asked to provide information on how frequently they share online videos in social networks. 27 (21.26%) respondents answered "Never", 38 (29.92%) respondents answered "Almost Never", 41 (32.28%) answered "Occasionally", 14 (11.02%) answered "Often" and 7 (5.51%) respondents answered "Very Often". The data collected from this question (question 5 or Question 8 of Appendix 1) were combined with the data collected from question 7 (Question 10 of Appendix 1) where participants were asked whether they share brand videos in social networks. On that question, 44 (34.65%) participants answered positively while the rest 83 (65.35%) participants answered that they do not. Table 15 presents the combined data collected through questions 5 and 7 (Questions 8 and 10 of Appendix 1). As a substitute, 44 (44%) out of the 100 participants who answered that they might somehow share online videos in social networks (participants who answered "Almost Never" + participants who answered "Occasionally" + participants who answered "Often" + participants who answered "Very Often") also answered that they might share brand videos in some occasions as well.

Table 15: Sharing Videos VS Sharing Brand Videos

	Never	Almost Never	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
Sharing Videos	27 (21.26%)	38 (29.92%)	41 (32.28%)	14 (11.02%)	7 (5.51%)
Sharing Brand Videos	83 (65.35%)	44 (34.65%)			

As concerns the social networks that these 44 participants normally use in order to create online stories (share/like or comment) about brand videos, question 8 (Question 11 of Appendix 1) revealed that all of them prefer using "Facebook" (100%). On this question, 10 (22.73%) out of the 44 participants also picked "Youtube" as an answer, 4 (9.09%) also picked "Google+", 4 (9.09%) of them also picked "Twitter" and 2 (4.55%) participants also picked "LinkedIn". Figure 4 summarises the data collected through question 8.

Figure 4: Usage of social networks for sharing/commenting/liking brand videos



Furthermore, through a five point likert scale, question 6 (Question 9 of Appendix 1) aimed at calculating the level of attention that participants pay to individual video content characteristics (visuals, audio, plot) when watching an online brand video. On this question, 1 meant "no attention", 2 meant "minor attention", 3 meant "moderate attention", 4 meant "strong attention" and 5 meant "very strong attention". As concerns the visuals (animation, actors, video recording and footage etc.), 5 (3.94%) out of the 127 respondents answered that they pay "no attention", 3 (2.36%) answered that they pay "minor attention", 27 (21.26%) answered that they pay "moderate attention", 54 (42.52%) answered that they pay "strong attention" and 38 (29.92%) answered that they pay "very strong attention". In respect to the audio (music, speech, sound effects etc.) 2 (1.57%) out of the 127 respondents answered that they pay "no attention", 7 (5.51%) answered that they pay "minor attention", 27 (21.26%) answered that they pay "moderate attention", 43 (33.86%) answered that they pay "strong attention" and 48 (37.80%) answered that they

pay "very strong attention". Finally, regarding the plot (storyline), 7 (5.51%) out of the 127 respondents answered that they pay "no attention", 7 (5.51%) answered that they pay "minor attention", 15 (11.81%) answered that they pay "moderate attention", 47 (37.01%) answered that they pay "strong attention" and 51 (40.16%) answered that they pay "very strong attention". To summarise, the answers provided by the participants in question 6 show that the level of attention that they pay to the individual video content characteristics when watching online brand videos is almost equal with slightly more attention to audio and plot over the brand video's visuals. The data collected through this question are summarised in Table 16.

Table 16: Attention to individual video content characteristics when watching an online brand video

	No Attention	Minor Attention	Moderate Attention	Strong Attention	Very Strong Attention	Total
Visuals	5 (3.94%)	3 (2.36%)	27 (21.26%)	54 (42.52%)	38 (29.92%)	127
Audio	2 (1.57%)	7 (5.51%)	27 (21.26%)	43 (33.86%)	48 (37.80%)	127
Plot	7 (5.51%)	7 (5.51%)	15 (11.81%)	47 (37.01%)	51 (40.16%)	127

Question 9 (Question 12 of Appendix 1) asked participants to provide information about the overall impact that these individual video content characteristics have on their decision to create a story about a brand video in social networks. On this five point likert scale, 1 meant "no impact", 2 meant "minor impact", 3 meant "moderate impact", 4 meant "strong impact" and 5 meant "very strong impact". In respect to the visuals (animation, actors, video recording and footage etc.), 0 (0%) out of the 44 respondents who share brand videos answered that they have "no impact" on their decision to create a story about a brand video in social networks, 3 (6.82%) answered that they have a "minor impact", 8 (18.18%) answered that they have a "moderate impact", 16 (36.36%) answered that they have a "strong impact" and 17 (38.64%) answered that visuals have a "very strong impact". In relation to the audio (music, speech, sound effects etc.), 0 (0%) out of the 44 respondents answered that it has "no impact", 7 (15.91%) answered that it has a "minor impact", 7 (15.91%) answered that it has a "moderate impact", 14 (31.82%)

answered that it has a "strong impact" and 16 (36.36%) answered that audio has a "very strong impact" on their decision. Finally, As concerns the plot (storyline), 2 (4.55%) out of the 44 respondents answered that it has "no impact", 1 (2.27%) answered that it has a "minor impact", 6 (13.64%) answered that it has a "moderate impact", 11 (25%) answered that it has a "strong impact" and 24 (54.55%) out of the 44 respondents who usually share brand videos answered that it has a "very strong impact". Similarly to the findings of question 6, in summary, the data gathered through this question show that the impact that individual video content characteristics have on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks is almost equal.

In order to further examine the above, the impact that different forms of visuals (animation, actors/characters, video effects, video recording/footage) and audio (music, speech, sound effects) have on a social media user's decision to share/like/comment a brand video in social networks was examined separately throughout questions 10 and 11 (Questions 13 and 14 of Appendix 1).

As concerns the animation, 2 (4.55%) out of the 44 respondents answered that it has "no impact" on their decision, 1 (2.27%) respondent answered that it has a "minor impact", 15 (34.09%) answered that it has a "moderate impact", 15 (34.09%) answered that it has a "strong impact" and 11 (25%) respondents answered that it has a "very strong impact". In relation to the actors/characters of a brand video, 0 (0%) respondents answered that they have "no impact", 4 (9.09%) respondents answered that they have a "minor impact", 15 (34.09%) respondents answered that they have a "moderate impact", 12 (27.27%) respondents answered that they have a "strong impact" and 13 (29.55%) respondents answered that they have a "very strong impact". Moreover, when asked about a brand video's video effects, 0 (0%) respondents answered that they have "no impact", 3 (6.82%) respondents answered that they have a "minor impact", 13 (29.55%) answered that they have a "moderate impact", 18 (40.91%) answered that they have a "strong impact" and 10 (22.73%) out of the 44 respondents answered that they have a "very strong impact". In respect to the footage, 0 (0%) respondents answered that it has "no impact" on their decision to create an online story about the brand video in social

networks, ", 4 (9.09%) respondents answered that it has a "minor impact", 10 (22.73%) respondents answered that it has a "moderate impact", 15 (34.09%) respondents answered that it has a "strong impact" and 15 (34.09%) respondents answered that it has a "very strong impact".

In relation to the audio, 0 (0%) respondents answered that a brand video's background music has "no impact" on their decision to create a story about the brand video in social networks, 3 (6.82%) respondents answered that background music has a "minor impact", 8 (18.18%) out of the 44 respondents answered that it has a "moderate impact", 15 (34.09%) respondents answered that it has a "strong impact" and 18 (40.91%) respondents answered that it has a "very strong impact". On the other hand, when it comes to speech, 3 (6.82%) out of the 44 respondents answered that it has "no impact" to their decision, 0 (0%) respondents answered that it has a "minor impact", 12 (27.27%) respondents answered that it has a "moderate impact", 20 (45.45%) answered that it has a "strong impact" and 9 (20.45%) answered that it has a "very strong impact". Finally, in respect to sound effects, 3 (6.82%) out of the 44 respondents answered that they have "no impact", 7 (15.91%) respondents answered that they have a "minor impact", 12 (27.27%) respondents answered that they have a "moderate impact", 10 (22.73%) respondents answered that they have a "strong impact" and 12 (27.27%) respondents answered that they have a "very strong impact".

Overall, after analysing the data collected through questions 9, 10 and 11, it seems that "plot" is the first most powerful video content characteristic that impacts a social media user's decision to create a story about a brand video in social networks. This is because 35 out of the 44 respondents (79.55%) who answered that they somehow create online stories about brand videos also answered that plot has a strong or very strong impact to their decision to do so. According to the data, the second most powerful video content characteristic is "music", while the third and fourth most powerful video content characteristics that have a strong or very strong impact to a social media user's decision to share/like/comment a brand video in social networks are "video recording/footage" and

the brand video's "actors/characters". The data collected through questions 9, 10 and 11 are summarised in Table 17.

Table 17: Impact of individual video content characteristics to the decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks

	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Visuals	0 (0%)	3 (6.82%)	8 (18.18%)	16 (36.36%)	17 (38.64%)	4.07
(Animation)	2 (4.55%)	1 (2.27%)	15 (34.09%)	15 (34.09%)	11 (25%)	3.73
(Actors/Char)	0 (0%)	4 (9.09%)	15 (34.09%)	12 (27.27%)	13 (29.55%)	3.77
(Video Effects)	0 (0%)	3 (6.82%)	13 (29.55%)	18 (40.91%)	10 (22.73%)	3.80
(Video Recording/Footage)	0 (0%)	4 (9.09%)	10 (22.73%)	15 (34.09%)	15 (34.09%)	3.93
Audio	0 (0%)	7 (15.91%)	7 (15.91%)	14 (31.82%)	16 (36.36%)	3.89
(Music)	0 (0%)	3 (6.82%)	8 (18.18%)	15 (34.09%)	18 (40.91%)	4.09
(Speech)	3 (6.82%)	0 (0%)	12 (27.27%)	20 (45.45%)	9 (20.45%)	3.73
(Sound Effects)	3 (6.82%)	7 (15.91%)	12 (27.27%)	10 (22.73%)	12 (27.27%)	3.48
Plot	2 (4.55%)	1 (2.27%)	6 (13.64%)	11 (25%)	24 (54.55%)	4.23

4.3. Questionnaire 1, Section 2 Data Analysis

As mentioned within the "breakdown of the online survey questions" chapter of this thesis, the second section of the first online questionnaire asked respondents to watch the four videos that this research examined through the method of netnography ("First Kiss", "The Epic Split", "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love"). After watching the videos, respondents had to answer questions on whether they came across the videos before and on whether they have ever created an online story about those videos in social networks. Moreover, the second section of this questionnaire examined the impact that video content characteristics had on the respondents' decision to create an online story (share, like or comment) about these specific videos in the social networks that they are using.

4.3.1. Questionnaire 1 Data About the "First Kiss"

The first question (Question 15 of Appendix 1) of the second section of this online questionnaire was asking respondents to watch the "First Kiss" brand video and to provide information on whether they have watched it in the past. Participants had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 127 respondents, 63 (49.61%) answered that they have watched the "First Kiss" brand video in the past while 59 (46.46%) of them answered that they have not. Moreover, 5 (3.94%) respondents answered that they can't remember whether they have watched it or not.

The 63 respondents who answered that they were familiar with the "First Kiss" brand video were then sent to answer the second question of the second section of this online questionnaire. The second question (Question 16 of Appendix 1) was asking the participants who answered that they were familiar with the brand video to provide information on whether they have ever created an online story (shared/liked/commented) about that video in the past. Again, respondents had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 63 participants that were sent to question 2 through question 1, 20 (31.75%) participants answered that they have also created an online story about the "First Kiss" video in the

past. 38 (60.32%) participants answered that they did not create an online story about this specific video in the past while 5 (7.94%) participants answered that they could not remember whether they have ever created a story about this brand video or not.

On the other hand, respondents who answered "no" or "maybe, I can't remember" on question 1 and respondents who answered "maybe, I can't remember" on question 2, were all sent to answer question number 3 (Question 17 of Appendix 1). In other words, 69 out of the 127 participants were sent from questions 1 and 2 to answer question 3. Since these 69 participants were somehow unfamiliar with the "First Kiss" brand video or they were participants who could not remember whether they have created an online story about it or not, Question 3 (Question 17 of Appendix 1) was asking them to provide information on how likely it is for them to create an online story about it after watching it throughout the questionnaire. A five point likert scale was used for this question and participants had to choose between "extremely unlikely", "unlikely", "neutral", "likely" and "extremely likely". Out of the 69 respondents sent to question 3 through questions 1 and 2, 27 (39.13%) participants answered that it is "extremely unlikely" for them to share/like/comment the "First Kiss" brand video after watching it. 9 (13.04%) participants answered "unlikely", 18 (26.09%) participants were "neutral", 9 (13.04%) participants answered "likely" and 6 (8.70%) participants answered "extremely likely". In other words, 36 (52.17%) out of the 69 participants who reached question 3 were somehow negative in creating an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video after watching it, while 15 (21.74%) out of the 69 participants were somehow positive. The rest 18 (26.09%) participants were "neutral". Overall, questions 1,2 and 3 revealed that 35 (27.56%) out of the 127 respondents who watched the "First Kiss" brand video also created (or they are likely to create) an online story about it in social networks and consequently improved (or will improve) its virality.

The path to questions 4 (Question 18 of Appendix 1) was only available to the 92 participants who were neutral or who answered that they did not/ would not share, like or comment the "First Kiss" brand video in social networks (18 neutral + 38 who did not + 36 who would not). This question asked the 92 participants to name the main factors that

influenced their decision not to share, like or comment. Participants had the chance to choose one or more between the following answers: a) It's not my style, b) I didn't like the plot, c) I didn't like the audio, d) I didn't like the visuals, e) I don't like the brand and f) Other where participants had to specify any other reasons. As mentioned earlier, by determining the reasons that could drive a social media user to the decision not to share, comment or like a brand video in social networks, this research could gather essential data concerning the impact that those principles have on their decision to share, comment or like it as well. Out of the 92 responses, 2 (2.17%) respondents answered "It's not my style", 33 (35.87%) respondents answered "I didn't like the plot", 8 (8.69%) respondents answered "I didn't like the audio", 15 (16.30%) respondents answered "I didn't like the visuals", 0 (0%) respondents answered "I don't like the brand" and 52 (56.52%) respondents answered "Other" whilst specifying the following factors:

"I cherish the privacy of my thoughts", "I just did not want to share it, it was not so important to share it with others", "nothing against the video, I usually don't share any video", "no interest in sharing videos", "I don't often share things that are not of my direct interest", "I don't usually engage with viral videos in any way. I remember people were impressed with this film but angry that it was an ad. I didn't remember what the product was", "Not a specific reason", "I did like all of the above. I just didn't find it necessary to like it, share it or comment on it", "it is too long.. I didn't see it till the end", "I don't share videos", "Didn't interest me", "didn't find it that interesting or worth sharing", "I liked it very much but didn't feel the need to share! Not everything you see needs to be shared!", "I found it boring", "I liked the video but I tend not to share/like/comment on videos on social media", "I don't share or comment to videos like that", "I didn't think it was worth posting", "No specific reason", "Interesting video but not something I would share with friends/family", "It was whatever. Too long and didn't really capture my attention throughout", "Total nonsense", "I don't care about sharing these kind of stuff on social media", "I don't share everything", "My Faith", "It was not that interesting", "I'm too lazy", "I don't want to share anything", "I don't usually share things on social networks", "nice, but not nice enough to share", "I understand the video and it makes me think, but it wouldn't grab my attention as to find it noteworthy to share with others, or at least those I

know", "I don't like sharing stuff on social networks", "I don't tend to share videos on my wall. If I share something its usually more targeted to specific friends", "Don't necessarily want to associate myself with the content, or draw unnecessary attention on social media", "I do not find it so interesting", "I liked it, I wouldn't share it", "the video was ok but no for sharing", "I didn't find it interesting to share at that current moment", "I thought it was obnoxious and boring", "because of my sexual preferences", "I just didn't have the time", "I generally prefer not to share videos", "I didn't want to share it", "I just didn't feel liking it", "I do not like sappy videos, there is nothing that catches my interest or attention, even though the plot and music is good. It just simply not my cup of tea", "I'm too lazy to like/comment", "I feel neutral about it", "not interested", "it's ok", "The concept/message of the video is of no value for me, so I see no point in sharing it", "I don't use social media so much", "not the kind of videos I tend to share, despite the fact that I liked it", "it is not something important for me, I don't have a reason to share it".

Overall, by analysing the data collected through question 4 (Question 18 of Appendix 1), it seems that in addition to the influence that video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) had on the participants' decision not to create an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video, other popular factors that influenced their decision were referring to the lack of interest for this specific video and the fact that some respondents do not tend to create online stories about brand videos in social networks in general. Other interesting deterrents included the length of the specific brand video and the fact that some social media users avoid associating themselves with the content of the video. At this point it is important to repeat that respondents had the chance to choose more than one answer to question 4. Table 18 illustrates the main factors that influenced the 92 participants' decision not to create an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video according to the data collected through question 4 (Question 18 of Appendix 1).

Table 18: Factors that impacted participants' decision not to create an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video

Factors	Responses
It's not my style	2 (2.17%)
I didn't like the plot	33 (35.87%)
I didn't like the audio (music, speech)	8 (8.69%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, video effects, video recording/footage)	15 (16.30%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, video's length, and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	52 (56.52%)

Finally, as described earlier within this thesis, the path to question 5 (Question 19 of Appendix 1) of the second section of the first questionnaire was only available to the 35 respondents who answered that they already shared, liked or commented the "First Kiss" video or stated that it is likely for them to share, like or comment it after watching it for the first time within the questionnaire. For this question, a five-point "likert" scale was used and respondents had to indicate the impact that this video's individual video content characteristics (actors, video effects, video recording, music, speech and plot) had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks. For this question, point 1 meant "no impact", 2 meant "minor impact", 3 meant "moderate impact", 4 meant "strong impact" and 5 meant "very strong impact".

As concerns the actors/characters of the "First Kiss" brand video, 3 (8.57%) out of the 35 respondents answered that they had not impact on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks. 3 (8.57%) respondents answered that they had "minor impact", 7 (20%) respondents answered that they had a "moderate impact", 14 (40%) respondents answered that they had a "strong impact" and 8 (22.86%) respondents answered that actors/characters had a "very strong impact" to their decision. In relation to the brand video's video effects, 1 (2.86%) respondent answer that they had "no impact", 7 (20%) respondents answered that they had a "minor impact", 11 (31.43%) respondents answered that they had a "moderate impact", 10 (28.57%) respondents

answered that they had a "strong impacts" and 6 (17.14%) respondents answered that video effects had a "very strong impact" on their decision to create an online story about the "First Kiss" in social networks. In respect to the video recording, 0 (0%) participants answered that it had "no impact", 5 (14.29%) participants answered that it had a "minor impact", 8 (22.86%) participants answered that it had a "moderate impact", 14 (40%) answered that it had a "strong impact" and 8 (22.86%) respondents answered that it had a "very strong impact".

Furthermore, when asked about the impact that background music had on their decision to create an online story about the "First Kiss" in social networks, 0 (0%) out of the 35 respondents answered "no impact", 5 (14.29%) respondents answered "minor impact", 7 (20%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 13 (37.14%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 10 (28.57%) respondents answered "very strong impact". As concerns the speech on the other hand, 1 (2.86%) respondent answered that it had "no impact" to his/her decision, 5 (14.29%) respondents answered "minor impact", 8 (22.86%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 13 (37.14%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 8 (22.86%) out of the 35 respondents answered "very strong impact".

Last but not least, when the 35 respondents were asked about the impact that this brand video's plot had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks, 0 (0%) of them answered "no impact", 1 (2.86%) of them answered "minor impact", 2 (5.71%) of them answered "moderate impact", 12 (34.29%) of them answered "strong impact" and 20 (57.14%) respondents answered "very strong impact". Table 19 summarizes the data collected through question 5 (Question 19 of Appendix 1).

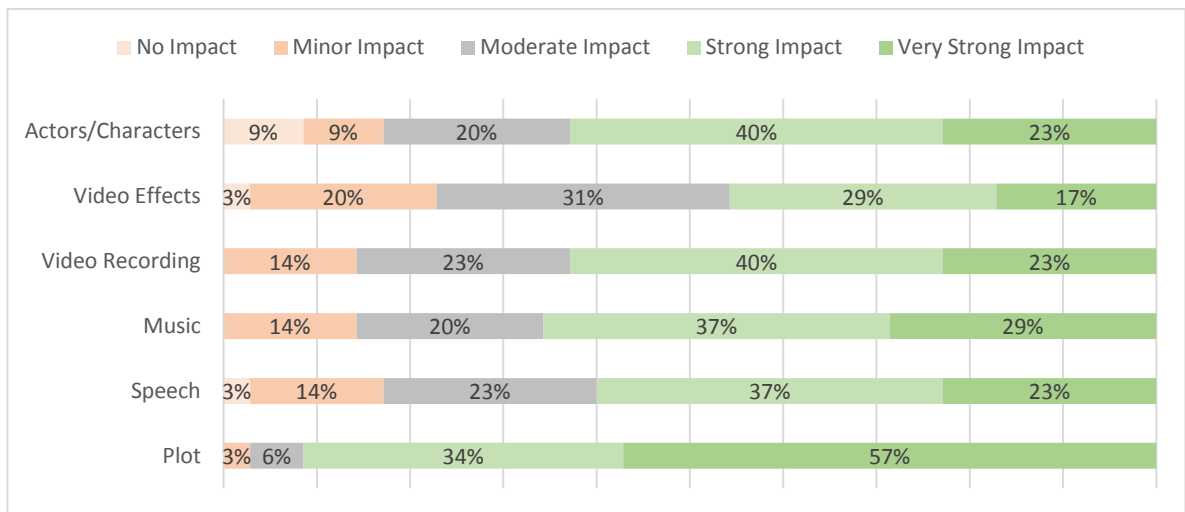
Table 19: Impact of individual video content characteristics on the decision to create an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video.

	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	3 (8.57%)	3 (8.57%)	7 (20%)	14 (40%)	8 (22.86%)	3.60
Video Eff.	1 (2.86%)	7 (20%)	11 (31.43%)	10 (28.57%)	6 (17.14%)	3.37

Video Recording	0 (0%)	5 (14.29%)	8 (22.86%)	14 (40%)	8 (22.86%)	3.71
Music	0 (0%)	5 (14.29%)	7 (20%)	13 (37.14%)	10 (28.57%)	3.80
Speech	1 (2.86%)	5 (14.29%)	8 (22.86%)	13 (37.14%)	8 (22.86%)	3.63
Plot	0 (0%)	1 (2.86%)	2 (5.71%)	12 (34.29%)	20 (57.14%)	4.46

Figure 5 depicts the distribution of the level of impact that each characteristic had on the respondents' decision to create a story (share, like or comment) about the "First Kiss" brand video in social networks. It is observed that the first five characteristics (Actors, Video effects, Video recording, Music and Speech) had a moderate impact on approximately 1 in 5 persons. The difference that appears concerns the Plot where a Strong or Very Strong impact is observed for the 91% of the sample.

Figure 5: Mean impact of each video content characteristic on the decision of creating an online story about the "First Kiss" brand video



The Friedman's test of repeated measures, revealed that there is a statistically significant effect of the characteristic type in the mean impact towards sharing/liking/commenting the "First Kiss" video ($X^2(5) = 26.789$, $p < 0.001$) meaning that the impact on creating a story about the "First Kiss" video was not the same across all video content characteristics. A separate analysis between actors, video effects, video recording, music and speech revealed no significant difference between these five characteristics ($X^2(4) = 3.91$, $p = 0.418$). In addition, separate Wilcoxon tests (5) of the effect

of plot against the remaining video content characteristics shows that plot significantly (statistically) outperforms all other characteristics in terms of the mean impact to the decision of a social media user's decision to create a story about a brand video in social networks (Table 20).

Table 20: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests. Difference between the "First Kiss" Plot and each other characteristic separately.

Plot vs..	Mean Difference	SD of difference	Wilcoxon Z value	p value
Actors/Characters	0,86	1,37	-3,098	0,002
Video Effects	1,09	1,14	-4,106	<0,001
Video Recording	0,74	1,24	-3,057	0,002
Music	0,66	1,21	-2,835	0,005
Speech	0,83	1,07	-3,679	<0,001

4.3.2. Questionnaire 1 Data About "The Epic Split"

After answering the above questions about the "First Kiss" brand video, participants had to answer the exact same questions but this time about "The Epic Split" brand video that was released by Volvo Trucks.

Again, the first question (Question 20 of Appendix 1) of the second section of this online questionnaire asked respondents to watch "The Epic Split" brand video and to provide information on whether they have watched it in the past. Participants had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 127 respondents, 73 (57.48%) answered that they have watched "The Epic Split" brand video in the past while 52 (40.94%) of them answered that they have not. Moreover, 2 (1.57%) respondents answered that they could not remember whether they have watched the brand video or not.

The 73 respondents who answered that they were familiar with "The Epic Split" brand video were then sent to answer the second question of the second section of this online questionnaire. The second question (Question 21 of Appendix 1) asked the

participants who answered that they were familiar with the brand video to provide information on whether they have ever created an online story (shared/liked/commented) about that video in the past. Again, respondents had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 73 participants that were sent to question 2 through question 1, 35 (47.95%) participants answered that they have also created an online story about "The Epic Split" video in the past. 34 (46.57%) participants answered that they did not create an online story about this specific video in the past while 4 (5.48%) participants answered that they could not remember whether they have ever created a story about this brand video or not.

On the contrary, respondents who answered "no" or "maybe, I can't remember" on question 1 and respondents who answered "maybe, I can't remember" on question 2, were all sent to answer question number 3 (Question 22 of Appendix 1). Overall, 58 out of the 127 participants were sent from questions 1 and 2 to answer question 3. Question 3 asked these 58 participants to provide information on how likely it is for them to create an online story about it after watching it throughout the questionnaire. A five point likert scale was used for this question and participants had to choose between "extremely unlikely", "unlikely", "neutral", "likely" and "extremely likely". Out of the 58 respondents sent to question 3 through questions 1 and 2, 18 (31.03%) participants answered that it is "extremely unlikely" for them to share/like/comment "The Epic Split" brand video after watching it. 9 (15.52%) participants answered "unlikely", 12 (20.69%) participants were "neutral", 15 (25.86%) participants answered "likely" and 4 (6.90%) participants answered "extremely likely". In other words, 27 (46.55%) out of the 58 participants who reached question 3 were somehow negative in creating an online story about "The Epic Split" brand video after watching it, while 19 (32.76%) out of the 58 participants were somehow positive. The rest 12 (20.69%) participants were "neutral". Overall, questions 1,2 and 3 revealed that 54 (42.52%) out of the 127 respondents who watched "The Epic Split" brand video also created (or they are likely to create) an online story about it in social networks and consequently improved (or will improve) its virality.

Then again, the path to question 4 (Question 23 of Appendix 1) was only available to the 73 participants who were neutral or answered that they did not or would not share, like or comment "The Epic Split" brand video in social networks (12 neutral + 34 who did not + 27 who would not). This question asked the 73 participants to name the main factors that influenced their decision not to share, like or comment. Participants had the chance to choose one or more between the following answers: a) It's not my style, b) I didn't like the plot, c) I didn't like the audio, d) I didn't like the visuals, e) I don't like the brand and f) Other where participants had to specify any other reasons. Out of the 73 responses, 5 (6.85%) respondents answered "It's not my style", 26 (35.62%) respondents answered "I didn't like the plot", 7 (9.59%) respondents answered "I didn't like the audio", 6 (8.22%) respondents answered "I didn't like the visuals", 0 (0%) respondents answered "I don't like the brand" and 39 (53.42%) respondents answered "Other" whilst specifying the following factors:

"I cherish the privacy of my thoughts", "I found it cringey despite the famous actor in it , I also would not share it because it directly promotes a multibillion corporation and it would be against my interests to give the said company free promotion by sharing it on my social media", "trucks are not my area of interest!", "I don't post video in general", "no interest in sharing videos", "Again I'm not in the habit of making any obvious engagement with advertising", "I like the video but it's not the style of work that represents me.", "Not interested in the product advertised", "I don't share easily something", "Am not interested on the product", "Because at the time. this video was everywhere. No need to share it again", "I didn't think it was that interesting to share", "I am not interested in such videos", "not interested", "I don't share videos in my social media accounts", "I do not usually comment or like or share in social networks", "because I don't think its original to share this specific video", "I didn't know who he was before", "Not interested in what it promotes", "Not worth sharing in my opinion", "I don't care about sharing these kind of stuff in social media", "None specific", "I don't share", "not interested in this kind of things", "I'm too lazy", "I don't want to share anything", "No real reason other than it wasn't that interesting so as to share and to be fair everyone had seen it by the time I did", "I don't like sharing videos on social networks", "It's not something I would share on my

wall", "not sharing anything cause in order to share something I have to be really impressed", "not interested in sharing it", "I didn't have the time", "I don't use social media that much", "I find it unrealistic", "funny! chuck Norris was funnier ;)", "Same reason as in previous video", "I wouldn't share it, although I like it", "Visuals/audio/plot were interesting for this video", "it's very nice video and commercial too, but I prefer share videos that means something for me. Also I am not a Volvo fun !!".

Similarly to the "First Kiss" brand video, by analysing the data collected through question 4, it seems that in addition to the influence that video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) had to the participants' decision not to create an online story about the "The Epic Split", other popular factors that influenced their decision were referring again to the lack of interest for this specific video and its content, plus the fact that some respondents do not tend to create online stories about videos in social networks in general. Table 21 illustrates the main factors that influenced the 73 participants' decision not to create an online story about "The Epic Split" brand video according to the data collected through question 4.

Table 21: Factors that impacted participants' decision not to create an online story about "The Epic Split" brand video

Factors	Responses
It's not my style	5 (6.85%)
I didn't like the plot	26 (35.62%)
I didn't like the audio (music, speech)	7 (9.59%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, video recording/footage)	6 (8.22%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	39 (53.42%)

The path to question 5 (Question 24 of Appendix 1) was only available to the 54 respondents who answered that they already shared, liked or commented "The Epic Split" brand video or stated that it is likely for them to share, like or comment it after watching it for the first time within the questionnaire. As also pointed out while analysing the data collected for the "First Kiss" video, for this question, a five-point "likert" scale was used

and respondents had to indicate the impact that "The Epic Split's" individual video content characteristics (actors, video effects, video recording, music, speech and plot) had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks. Through this five-point "likert" scale, point 1 meant "no impact", 2 meant "minor impact", 3 meant "moderate impact", 4 meant "strong impact" and 5 meant "very strong impact".

In respect to the actors/characters of "The Epic Split" brand video, 1 (1.85%) out of the 54 respondents answered that they had no impact on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks. 0 (0%) respondents answered that they had "minor impact", 11 (20.37%) respondents answered that they had a "moderate impact", 15 (27.78%) respondents answered that they had a "strong impact" and 27 (50%) respondents answered that actors/characters had a "very strong impact" to their decision. In relation to the brand video's video recording, 1 (1.85%) respondent answered that it had "no impact", 2 (3.70%) respondents answered that it had a "minor impact", 5 (9.26%) respondents answered that it had a "moderate impact", 17 (31.48%) respondents answered that it had a "strong impact" and 29 (53.70%) respondents answered that video recording/footage had a "very strong impact" on their decision to create an online story about the "The Epic Split" in social networks.

Furthermore, when asked about the impact that background music had on their decision to create an online story about "The Epic Split" in social networks, 2 (3.70%) out of the 54 respondents answered "no impact", 4 (7.41%) respondents answered "minor impact", 10 (18.52%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 14 (25.93%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 24 (44.44%) respondents answered "very strong impact". As concerns the speech on the other hand, 2 (3.70%) respondents answered that it had "no impact" on their decision, 8 (14.81%) respondents answered "minor impact", 13 (24.07%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 17 (31.48%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 14 (25.93%) out of the 54 respondents answered "very strong impact".

Last but not least, when the 54 respondents were asked about the impact that this brand video's plot had on their decision to create an online story about it in social

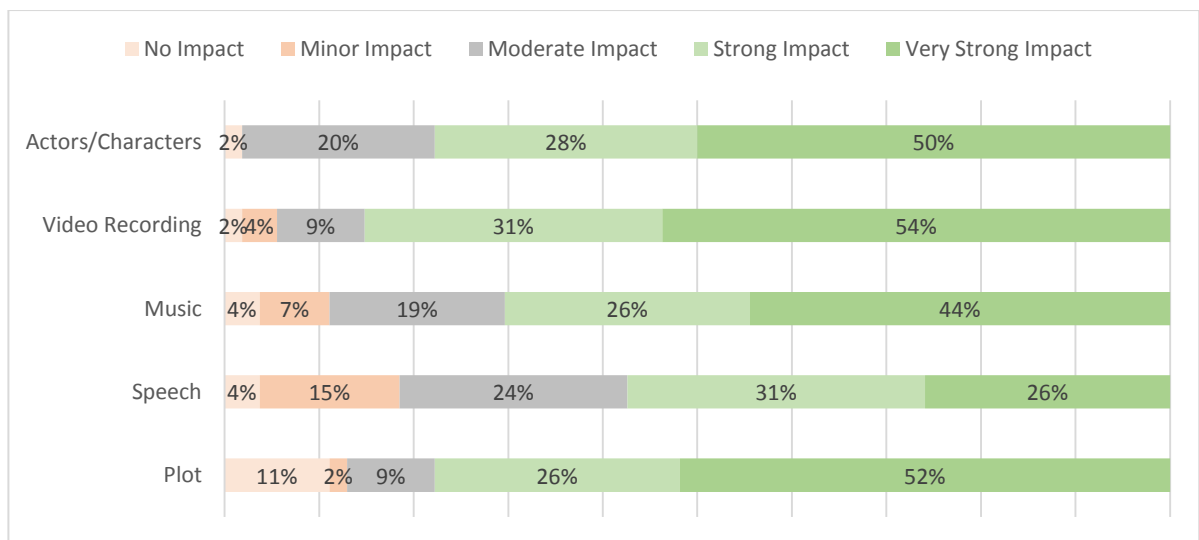
networks, 6 (11.11%) of them answered "no impact", 1 (1.85%) of them answered "minor impact", 5 (9.26%) of them answered "moderate impact", 14 (25.93%) of them answered "strong impact" and 28 (51.85%) respondents answered "very strong impact". Table 22 summarizes the data collected through question 5 for "The Epic Split" brand video.

Table 22: Impact of individual video content characteristics on the decision to create an online story about "The Epic Split" brand video.

	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	1 (1.85%)	0 (0%)	11 (20.37%)	15 (27.78%)	27 (50%)	4.24
Video Recording	1 (1.85%)	2 (3.70%)	5 (9.26%)	17 (31.48%)	29 (53.70%)	4.31
Music	2 (3.70%)	4 (7.41%)	10 (18.52%)	14 (25.93%)	24 (44.44%)	4.00
Speech	2 (3.70%)	8 (14.81%)	13 (24.07%)	17 (31.48%)	14 (25.93%)	3.61
Plot	6 (11.11%)	1 (1.85%)	5 (9.26%)	14 (25.93%)	28 (51.85%)	4.06

Figure 6 depicts the distribution of the level of impact that each video content characteristic had on the respondents' decision to create a story (share, like or comment) about the "Epic Split" brand video in social networks.

Figure 6: Mean impact of each video content characteristic on the decision of creating an online story about the "Epic Split" brand video



The Friedman's test of repeated measures, revealed that there is a statistically significant effect of the characteristic type in the mean impact towards sharing/liking/commenting the "The Epic Split" brand video ($X^2(4) = 21.204$, $p < 0.001$) meaning that the impact on creating a story about the video, was not the same across all characteristics. The lower average impact this time seems to be coming from speech. A separate analysis between the remaining four video content characteristics (actors, video recording, music and plot) revealed no significant difference between their impact ($X^2(3) = 3.45$, $p = 0.328$). Separate Wilcoxon tests (4) of the effect of speech against the remaining video content characteristics shows that speech has a significantly (statistically) lower impact compared to every other characteristic (Table 23).

Table 23: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests. Difference between the speech of "Epic Split" and each other characteristic separately.

Speech vs..	Mean Difference	SD of difference	Wilcoxon Z value	p value
Actors/Characters	-0,63	1,25	-3,229	0,001
Video Recording	-0,70	1,30	-3,419	0,001
Music	-0,39	1,09	-2,409	0,016
Plot	-0,44	1,50	-2,139	0,032

4.3.3. Questionnaire 1 Data About "Monty The Penguin"

The next step was to ask the participants of this questionnaire to answer the exact same questions but this time about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video that was released by the John Lewis company.

On question 1 (Question 25 of Appendix 1), where participants had to provide information on whether they have watched "Monty The Penguin" in the past, 21 (16.54%) out of the 127 respondents answered "Yes", 99 (77.95%) respondents answered "No" and 7 (5.51%) respondents answered "Maybe, I can't remember".

Similarly to the previous videos, the 21 respondents who answered that they were familiar with "Monty The Penguin" brand video were then sent to answer question 2. At

this point participants who answered that they were familiar with the brand video were asked to provide information on whether they have ever created an online story (shared/liked/commented) about it in the past. Again, respondents had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 21 participants that were sent to question 2 (Question 26 of Appendix 1) through question 1, 9 (42.86%) participants answered that they have also created an online story about "Monty The Penguin" in the past. 8 (38.10%) participants answered that they did not create an online story about this specific video in the past while 4 (19.05%) out of the 21 participants answered that they could not remember whether they have ever created a story about it or not.

Next, respondents who answered "no" or "maybe, I can't remember" on question 1 and respondents who answered "maybe, I can't remember" on question 2, were all sent to answer question number 3 (Question 27 of Appendix 1). Overall, for "Monty The Penguin", 110 out of the 127 participants were sent from questions 1 and 2 to answer question 3. Question 3 asked these 110 participants to provide information on how likely it is for them to create an online story about this brand video after watching it throughout the questionnaire. As mentioned earlier, a five point likert scale was used for this question and participants had to choose between "extremely unlikely", "unlikely", "neutral", "likely" and "extremely likely". Out of the 110 respondents sent to question 3 through questions 1 and 2, 24 (21.81%) participants answered that it is "extremely unlikely" for them to share/like/comment "Monty The Penguin" after watching it. 22 (20%) participants answered "unlikely", 27 (24.55%) participants were "neutral", 26 (23.64%) participants answered "likely" and 11 (10%) participants answered "extremely likely". In other words, 46 (41.82%) out of the 110 participants who reached question 3 were somehow negative in creating an online story about "Monty The Penguin" after watching it, while 37 (33.64%) out of the 110 participants were somehow positive. The rest 27 (24.55%) participants were "neutral". Overall, questions 1,2 and 3 revealed that 46 (36.22%) out of the 127 respondents who watched "Monty The Penguin" also created (or they are likely to create) an online story about it in social networks and consequently improved (or will improve) its virality.

Following, the path to question 4 (Question 28 of Appendix 1) was only available to the 81 participants who were neutral or answered that they did not or would not share, like or comment "Monty The Penguin" in social networks (27 neutral + 46 who did not + 8 who would not). On this question, the 81 participants were asked to name the main factors that influenced their decision not to share, like or comment. Again, participants had the chance to choose one or more of the following answers: a) It's not my style, b) I didn't like the plot, c) I didn't like the audio, d) I didn't like the visuals, e) I don't like the brand and f) Other where participants had to specify any other reasons. Out of the 81 responses, 2 (2.47%) respondents answered "It's not my style", 32 (39.51%) respondents answered "I didn't like the plot", 18 (22.22%) respondents answered "I didn't like the audio", 9 (11.11%) respondents answered "I didn't like the visuals", 0 (0%) respondents answered "I don't like the brand" and 38 (46.91%) respondents answered "Other" whilst specifying the following factors:

"It doesn't convey any of my current thoughts, ideas and so on...", "no interest in sharing videos", "It's not directly related to my activities/ likes/ hobbies etc", "Not in the mood in that particular time", "I actually liked this one, the penguins are cool. But I hate feeling used and there no way I'm going to share an ad for a business.", "I don't usually share such videos", "Did not get the chance", "Wrong message!", "I just wouldn't", "I don't like brand videos", "too long", "I usually don't share videos in my social media", "I don't share like or comment videos", "it's too long", "I liked it", "cheesy", "I just don't like sharing brand videos", "I generally don't share videos", "I don't share stuff like this in social media", "I don't usually share this kind of videos", "I'm too lazy", "I don't want to share anything", "I don't share/comment/like things online", "too emotional-playing to share", "I don't like sharing videos on social networks", "it was good but....ok", "I like it but it doesn't suit my social profile", "Even though I liked the video, I don't like it when something meaningful and touching is used to promote something shallow like a store", "Again, it leaves me with a neutral sense", "too twee", "I don't want to share it", "I don't use social media that much", "Didn't have any impact on me", "I don't usually share videos like this", "even if I like penguins, meh.", "I just wouldn't", "I like it", "the theme of the ad is not relevant to my interests".

Similarly to the previous brand videos studied, by analysing the data collected through question 4, it seems that in addition to the influence that video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) had to the participants' decision not to create an online story about the "Monty The Penguin", other popular factors that influenced their decision were referring again to the lack of interest for this specific video and its content, to the video's length, and to the fact that some respondents avoid creating online stories about videos/brand videos in social networks in general. Table 24 illustrates the main factors that influenced the 81 participants' decision not to create an online story about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video according to the data collected through question 4 (Question 28 of Appendix 1).

Table 24: Factors that impacted participants' decision not to create an online story about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video

Factors	Responses
It's not my style	2 (2.47%)
I didn't like the plot	32 (39.51%)
I didn't like the audio (music, sound effects)	18 (22.22%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, animation, video recording/footage)	9 (11.11%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, video's length, and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	38 (46.91%)

For "Monty The Penguin", 46 respondents answered that they have already shared/liked/commented or stated that it is likely for them to share, like or comment it after watching it for the first time within the questionnaire. These 46 respondents followed the path to question 5 (Question 29 of Appendix 1) where they had to use a five-point "likert" scale to indicate the impact that the brand video's individual video content characteristics (actors/characters, animation, video recording, music, sound effects and plot) had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks.

As concerns the actors/characters presented within "Monty The Penguin", 1 (2.17%) out of the 46 respondents answered that they had "no impact" on his/her decision to create an online story about the brand video in social networks. 8 (17.39%)

respondents answered that they had "minor impact", 6 (13.04%) respondents answered that they had a "moderate impact", 11 (23.91%) respondents answered that they had a "strong impact" and 20 (43.48%) respondents answered that actors/characters had a "very strong impact" to their decision. In respect to the animation included within "Monty The Penguin", 1 (2.17%) respondent answered that it had "no impact", 1 (2.17%) respondent answered that it had a "minor impact", 7 (15.22%) respondents answered that it had a "moderate impact", 15 (32.61%) respondents answered that it had a "strong impact" and 22 (47.83%) out of the 46 respondents answered that animation had a "very strong impact" on their decision to create an online story about the brand video in social networks. In relation to "Monty The Penguin's" video recording/footage, 1 (2.17%) respondent answered that it had "no impact", 1 (2.17%) respondent answered that it had a "minor impact", 11 (23.91%) respondents answered that it had a "moderate impact", 18 (39.13%) respondents answered that it had a "strong impact" and 15 (32.61%) out of the 46 respondents answered that video recording/footage had a "very strong impact" on their decision.

Moreover, when asked about the impact that background music had on their decision to create an online story about "Monty The Penguin" in social networks, 1 (2.17%) out of the 46 respondents answered "no impact", 3 (6.52%) respondents answered "minor impact", 6 (13.04%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 16 (34.78%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 20 (43.48%) respondents answered "very strong impact". As concerns the sound effects on the other hand, 2 (4.35%) respondents answered that they had "no impact" to their decision, 4 (8.70%) respondents answered "minor impact", 7 (15.22%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 14 (30.43%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 19 (41.30%) out of the 46 respondents answered "very strong impact".

Finally, when the 46 respondents were asked about the impact that this brand video's plot had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks, 1 (2.17%) of them answered "no impact", 0 (0%) of them answered "minor impact", 3 (6.52%) of them answered "moderate impact", 6 (13.04%) of them answered "strong

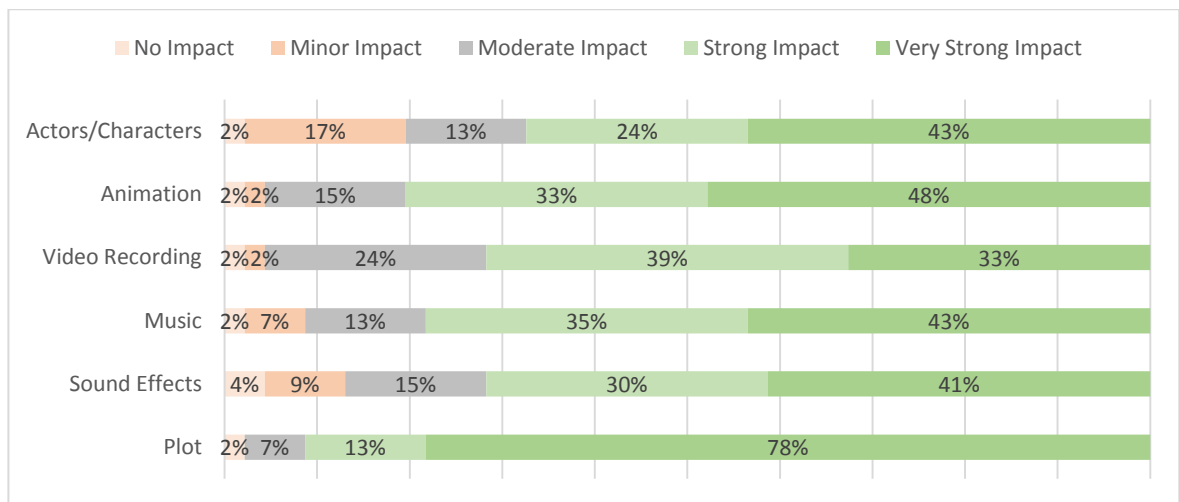
impact" and 36 (78.26%) respondents answered "very strong impact". Table 25 summarises the data collected through question 5 (Question 29 of Appendix 1) for the "Monty The Penguin" brand video.

Table 25: Impact of individual video content characteristics on the decision to create an online story about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video.

	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	1 (2.17%)	8 (17.39%)	6 (13.04%)	11 (23.91%)	20 (43.48%)	3.89
Animation	1 (2.17%)	1 (2.17%)	7 (15.22%)	15 (32.62%)	22 (47.83%)	4.22
Video Recording	1 (2.17%)	1 (2.17%)	11 (23.91%)	18 (39.13%)	15 (32.62%)	3.98
Music	1 (2.17%)	3 (6.52%)	6 (13.04%)	16 (34.78%)	20 (43.48%)	4.11
Sound Effects	2 (4.35%)	4 (8.70%)	7 (15.22%)	14 (30.43%)	19 (41.30%)	3.96
Plot	1 (2.17%)	0 (0%)	3 (6.52%)	6 (13.04%)	36 (78.26%)	4.65

Figure 7 depicts the distribution of the level of impact that each video content characteristic had on the respondents' decision to create a story (share, like or comment) about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video in social networks.

Figure 7: Mean impact of each video content characteristic on the decision of creating an online story about the "Monty The Penguin" brand video



The Friedman's test of repeated measures, revealed that there is a statistically significant effect of the characteristic type in the mean impact towards sharing/liking/commenting the "Monty The Penguin" brand video ($\chi^2(5) = 33.662$, $p < 0.001$) meaning that the impact on creating an online story about this brand video in social networks was not the same across all characteristics. The higher average impact seems to be coming from plot. A separate analysis between the remaining five video content characteristics (actors, animation, video recording, music and sound effects) revealed no significant difference between them ($\chi^2(4) = 5.706$, $p = 0.222$).

Separate Wilcoxon tests (5) of the effect of plot against the remaining characteristics shows that the Plot characteristic has a significantly (statistically) higher impact compared to every other video content characteristic (Table 26).

Table 26: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests. Difference between the plot of "Epic Split" and each other characteristic separately.

Plot vs..	Mean Difference	SD of difference	Wilcoxon Z value	p value
Actors/Characters	0,76087	1,15825	-3,83	<0,001
Animation	0,43478	0,83406	-3,024	0,002
Video Recording	0,67391	0,7617	-4,422	<0,001
Sound Effects	0,54348	0,95932	-3,405	0,001
Speech	0,69565	1,17132	-3,476	0,001

4.3.4. Questionnaire 1 Data About "Puppy Love"

The last brand video that this questionnaire examined was "Puppy Love" by Budweiser. At this point, after watching this brand video, participants of questionnaire 1 were asked to re-answer the questions of the second section.

On question 1 (Question 30 of Appendix 1) of the second section of the first questionnaire, where the 127 participants had to provide information on whether they have watched "Puppy Love" in the past, 36 (28.35%) out of the 127 respondents answered "Yes", 83 (65.35%) respondents answered "No" and 8 (6.30%) respondents answered

"Maybe, I can't remember". The 36 respondents who answered that they were familiar with the brand video were then sent to answer question 2 (Question 31 of Appendix 1) where they had to provide information on whether they have ever created an online story (shared/liked/commented) about it in the past. Again, respondents had to choose between the following answers: a) Yes, b) No, c) Maybe, I can't remember. Out of the 36 participants that were sent to question 2 through question 1 this time, 15 (41.67%) participants answered that they have also created an online story about "Puppy Love" in the past. 17 (47.22%) participants answered that they did not create an online story about this specific video in the past while 4 (11.11%) out of the 36 participants answered that they could not remember whether they have ever created a story about it or not.

On the other hand, respondents who answered "no" or "maybe, I can't remember" on question 1 and respondents who answered "maybe, I can't remember" on question 2 followed the path to question number 3 (Question 32 of Appendix 1). Overall, for "Puppy Love", 95 out of the 127 participants were sent from questions 1 and 2 to answer question 3 and to complete the five point "likert" scale in order to provide information on how likely it is for them to create an online story about this brand video after watching it throughout the questionnaire. Out of the 95 respondents, 17 (17.89%) respondents answered that it is "extremely unlikely" for them to share/like/comment the "Puppy Love" brand video after watching it. 18 (18.95%) respondents answered "unlikely", 18 (18.95%) respondents were "neutral", 24 (25.26%) participants answered "likely" and 18 (18.95%) participants answered "extremely likely". In other words, 35 (36.84%) out of the 95 participants who reached question 3 were somehow negative in creating an online story about "Puppy Love" after watching it, while 42 (44.21%) out of the 95 participants were somehow positive. As mentioned above, the rest 18 (18.95%) participants were "neutral". Overall, questions 1,2 and 3 revealed that 57 (44.88%) out of the 127 respondents who watched "Puppy Love" also created (or they are likely to create) an online story about it in social networks and consequently improved (or will improve) its virality.

Likewise, the path to question 4 (Question 33 of Appendix 1) was only available to the 70 participants who were neutral or answered that they did not or would not share,

like or comment the "Puppy Love" brand video in social networks (18 neutral + 17 who did not + 35 who would not). On this question, when the 70 participants were asked to name the main factors that influenced their decision not to share, like or comment the "Puppy Love" brand video, 3 (4.29%) respondents chose "It's not my style", 26 (37.14%) respondents chose "I didn't like the plot", 10 (14.29%) respondents chose "I didn't like the audio", 9 (12.86%) respondents chose "I didn't like the visuals", 3 (4.29%) respondents chose "I don't like the brand" and 32 (45.71%) respondents chose "Other" whilst specifying the following factors:

"it isn't relevant to me", "I found it as a pathetic attempt to get into people emotions and feelings by portraying a growing animal and loving owners and a sad story between them alongside sad music all together having a single purpose as to draw nostalgia from you", "no interest in sharing videos", " Although a great concept and touching- not directly relevant", "Simply because it is advertising", "Cause I don't usually share adverts", "Did not like the correlation of the product with visuals", "great plot, audio and visuals however I wouldn't share it because it's not funny", "I usually don't share videos in my social media accounts", "I don't share video content", "it's a beautiful commercial but it didn't really make sense to me", "lame", "I don't have a specific reason", "I probably would share if it was just for the plot, but I won't since it's a brand video", "No specific reason. I just don't share videos", "Cute but irrelevant to brand promotion", "I don't like sharing these kind of stuff in social media", "I don't usually share this kind of videos", "I am too lazy", "I don't want to share anything", "The complete irrelevance to the product. Mushy video but meh not much to say about the actual beer", "I don't like sharing videos on social networks", "The plot on its own is nice but I don't like that it is then related to Budweiser. I have nothing against the beer. I actually like it", "I don't like being active online when it comes to branding/commercial videos", "I don't want to share this video", "I don't use social media that much", "there is no any reason", "I am lazy", "I do not share or like or comment anything", "I love puppies, I like the video but I don't see the point to comment/share or like it", "I like it, I don't like share like and comment", "I would share it maybe to a specific audience, not on my wall".

The data collected for "Puppy Love" through question 4, revealed that in addition to the influence that video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) had to the participants' decision not to create an online story about the brand video, other popular factors that influenced their decision were referring again to the lack of interest for this specific video and its content and to the fact that some respondents avoid creating online stories about brand videos in social networks in general. Interestingly, the data provided by the participants for "Puppy Love" revealed another important factor that strongly influences a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. This factor is the relevance of the brand video's plot with the actual brand and the products or services that the brand video is trying to promote. Table 27 illustrates the main factors that influenced the 70 participants' decision not to create an online story about "Puppy Love" according to the data collected through question 4 of the second section of the first questionnaire. At this point it is important to repeat that participants could choose more than one answers on question 4 (Question 33 of Appendix 1).

Table 27: Factors that impacted participants' decision not to create an online story about the "Puppy Love" brand video

Factors	Responses
It's not my style	3 (4.29%)
I didn't like the plot	26 (37.14%)
I didn't like the audio (music, sound effects)	10 (14.29%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, animation, video recording/footage)	9 (12.86%)
I don't like the brand	3 (4.29%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, irrelevance of video's plot with the brand and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	32 (45.71%)

For the "Puppy Love" brand video, 57 respondents answered that they already shared/liked/commented or stated that it is likely for them to share, like or comment it after watching it for the first time within the questionnaire. These 57 respondents followed the path to question 5 (Question 34 of Appendix 1) where they had to go through a five-point "likert" scale and indicate the impact that the brand video's individual

video content characteristics (actors/characters, animation, video recording, music, sound effects and plot) had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks.

As concerns the actors/characters presented within "Puppy Love", 0 (0%) out of the 57 respondents answered that they had "no impact" on their decision to create an online story about the brand video in social networks. 3 (5.26%) respondents answered that they had "minor impact", 12 (21.05%) respondents answered that they had a "moderate impact", 10 (17.54%) respondents answered that they had a "strong impact" and 32 (56.14%) respondents answered that actors/characters had a "very strong impact" to their decision. In relation to "Puppy Love's" video recording/footage, 1 (1.75%) out of the 57 respondents who shared/liked/commented or stated that it is likely for them to share/like/comment the brand video answered that it had "no impact" on their decision", 3 (5.26%) respondents answered that it had a "minor impact", 8 (14.04%) respondents answered that it had a "moderate impact", 22 (38.60%) respondents answered that it had a "strong impact" and 23 (40.35%) out of the 57 respondents answered that video recording/footage had a "very strong impact" on their decision.

Furthermore, when asked about the impact that background music had on their decision to create an online story about "Puppy Love" in social networks, 1 (1.75%) out of the 57 respondents answered "no impact", 0 (0%) respondents answered "minor impact", 11 (19.30%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 16 (28.07%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 29 (50.88%) respondents answered "very strong impact". As concerns the sound effects on the other hand, 2 (3.51%) respondents answered that they had "no impact" on their decision, 4 (7.02%) respondents answered "minor impact", 17 (29.82%) respondents answered "moderate impact", 13 (22.81%) respondents answered "strong impact" and 21 (36.84%) out of the 57 respondents answered "very strong impact".

Finally, when the 57 respondents were asked about the impact that this brand video's plot had on their decision to create an online story about it in social networks, 1 (1.75%) of them answered "no impact", 0 (0%) of them answered "minor impact", 5 (8.77%) of them answered "moderate impact", 11 (19.30%) of them answered "strong

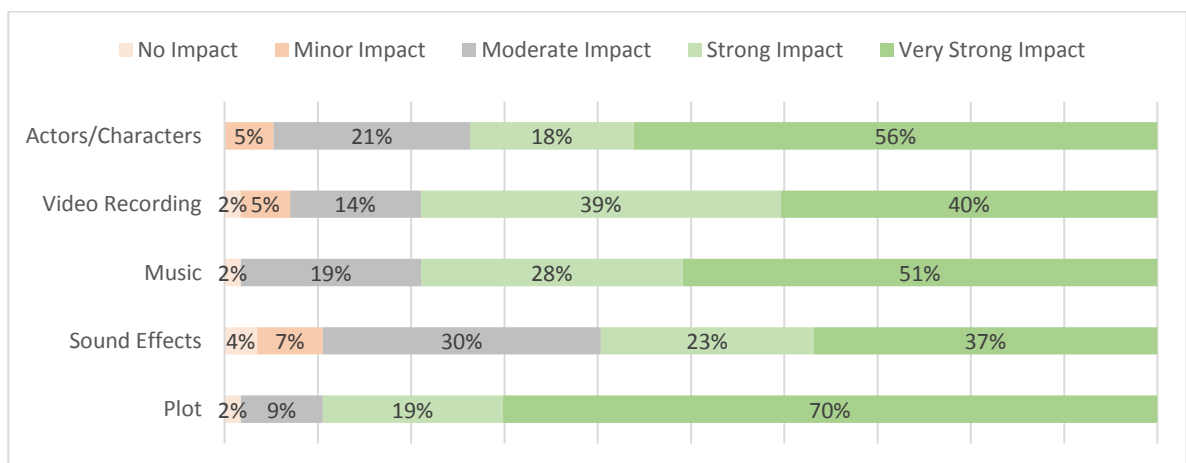
impact" and 40 (70.18%) respondents answered "very strong impact". Table 28 summarizes the data collected through question 5 (Question 34 of Appendix 1) for the "Puppy Love" brand video and for the impact that its individual video content characteristics had on the respondents' decision to create a story about the brand video in social networks.

Table 28: Impact of individual video content characteristics on the decision to create an online story about the "Puppy Love" brand video.

	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	0 (0%)	3 (5.26%)	12 (21.05%)	10 (17.54%)	32 (56.14%)	4.25
Video Recording	1 (1.75%)	3 (5.26%)	8 (14.04%)	22 (38.60%)	23 (40.35%)	4.11
Music	1 (1.75%)	0 (0%)	11 (19.30%)	16 (28.07%)	29 (50.88%)	4.26
Sound Effects	2 (3.51%)	4 (7.02%)	17 (29.82%)	13 (22.81%)	21 (36.84%)	3.82
Plot	1 (1.75%)	0 (0%)	5 (8.77%)	11 (19.30%)	40 (70.18%)	4.56

Figure 8 depicts the distribution of the level of impact that each video content characteristic had on the respondents' decision to create a story (share, like or comment) about the "Puppy Love" brand video in social networks.

Figure 8: Mean impact of each video content characteristic on the decision of creating an online story about the "Puppy Love" brand video



The Friedman's test of repeated measures, revealed that there is a statistically significant effect of the characteristic type in the mean impact towards sharing/liking/commenting "The Puppy Love" brand video ($X^2(4) = 25.471$, $p < 0.001$) meaning that the impact on creating an online story about this brand video was not the same across all characteristics.

Again, the highest average impact seems to be coming from plot and the least impact seems to be coming from the sound effects. To verify this "lowest" and "highest" impact, several paired tests (Wilcoxon) were performed. The separate Wilcoxon tests (4) of the effect of plot against the remaining characteristics showed that the plot video characteristic has a significantly (statistically) higher impact compared to every other characteristic (Table 29).

Table 29: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests. Difference between the plot of "Puppy Love" and each other characteristic separately.

Plot vs..	Mean Difference	SD of difference	Wilcoxon Z value	p value
Actors/Characters	0,32	0,76	-2,933	0,003
Video Recording	0,46	1,14	-2,891	0,004
Music	0,30	1,12	-1,97	0,049
Sound Effects	0,74	1,08	-4,177	<0,001

Moreover, separate Wilcoxon tests (3) of the effect of sound effects compared to the rest of the video content characteristics, showed that the sound effect video characteristic has a significantly (statistically) lower impact compared to (almost) every other characteristic (Table 30). The impact of video recording on the other hand seems to be not significantly different from the sound effects ($p = 0.065$).

Table 30: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests. Difference between the sound effects of "Puppy Love" and each other characteristic separately.

Sound Effects vs...	Mean Difference	SD of difference	Wilcoxon Z value	p value
Actors/Characters	-0,42	1,21	-2,477	0,013

Video Recording	-0,28	1,28	-1,845	0,065
Music	-0,44	0,98	-3,134	0,002

4.3.4. Questionnaire 1 Data Across All Videos

By comparing the overall data collected for all the four videos examined through the second section of the first questionnaire, in most cases, plot seems to be the most powerful video content characteristic As concerns its impact to a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. More specifically, "Monty The Penguin's" plot ended up with the highest average weight (4.65), followed by "Puppy Love's" plot (4.56) and "First Kiss's" plot (4.46). In contrast, "Epic Split's" plot (4.06) was not as powerful as the visuals of this brand video.

"Epic Split's" actors/characters ended up with an average weight of 4.24 while the video recording/footage of this brand video received the highest average weight (4.31) of all the four video recordings presented within the four brand videos examined. "Epic Split's" video recording/footage was followed by "Puppy Love's" video recording (4.11), "Monty The Penguin's" video recording (3.98), and "First Kiss's" video recording (3.71). Although the actors/characters presented within the "Epic Split" brand video received a really high average weight, "Puppy Love's" actors/characters received a slightly higher average weight (4.25). "First Kiss's" actors/characters overall received an average weight of 3.60 while "Monty The Penguin's" actors/characters received an average weight of 3.89. At this point it is essential to have in mind that "Monty The Penguin" also included animation within its visuals which received an average weight of 4.22.

As concerns the audio, the data received through the second section of the first questionnaire also suggest that it has a strong impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. This argument becomes stronger particularly when talking about music. "Puppy Love's" background music/soundtrack received the highest average weight (4.26) of all the four soundtracks included within the four brand videos examined followed by "Monty The Penguin's" soundtrack (4.11), "Epic Split's" soundtrack (4.00) and "First Kiss's" soundtrack (3.80). The

rest of the audio characteristics (speech and sound effects) used within the four brand videos examined were not as powerful as music in respect to their impact to a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. The speech included within the "First Kiss" receive an average weight of 3.63 while the speech included within the "Epic Split" received an average weight of 3.61. Furthermore, the sound effects included within "Monty The Penguin" received an average weight of 3.96 while the sound effects included within "Puppy Love" received an average weight of 3.82. Table 31 summarizes the data collected through question 5 for all the four brand videos examined and for the impact that their individual video content characteristics had on the respondents' decision to create online stories about them in social networks.

Table 31: Impact of individual video content characteristics on the decision to create an online story about the four brand videos examined.

FIRST KISS by WREN						
	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	3 (8.57%)	3 (8.57%)	7 (20%)	14 (40%)	8 (22.86%)	3.60
Video Effects	1 (2.86%)	7 (20%)	11 (31.43%)	10 (28.57%)	6 (17.14%)	3.37
Video Recording	0 (0%)	5 (14.29%)	8 (22.86%)	14 (40%)	8 (22.86%)	3.71
Music	0 (0%)	5 (14.29%)	7 (20%)	13 (37.14%)	10 (28.57%)	3.80
Speech	1 (2.86%)	5 (14.29%)	8 (22.86%)	13 (37.14%)	8 (22.86%)	3.63
Plot	0 (0%)	1 (2.86%)	2 (5.71%)	12 (34.29%)	20 (57.14%)	4.46
EPIC SPLIT by VOLVO TRUCKS						
	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Characters	1 (1.85%)	0 (0%)	11 (20.37%)	15 (27.78%)	27 (50%)	4.24
Video Recording	1 (1.85%)	2 (3.70%)	5 (9.26%)	17 (31.48%)	29 (53.70%)	4.31

Music	2 (3.70%)	4 (7.41%)	10 (18.52%)	14 (25.93%)	24 (44.44%)	4.00
Speech	2 (3.70%)	8 (14.81%)	13 (24.07%)	17 (31.48%)	14 (25.93%)	3.61
Plot	6 (11.11%)	1 (1.85%)	5 (9.26%)	14 (25.93%)	28 (51.85%)	4.06
Monty The Penguin by JOHN LEWIS						
	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Char acters	1 (2.17%)	8 (17.39%)	6 (13.04%)	11 (23.91%)	20 (43.48%)	3.89
Animation	1 (2.17%)	1 (2.17%)	7 (15.22%)	15 (32.62%)	22 (47.83%)	4.22
Video Recording	1 (2.17%)	1 (2.17%)	11 (23.91%)	18 (39.13%)	15 (32.62%)	3.98
Music	1 (2.17%)	3 (6.52%)	6 (13.04%)	16 (34.78%)	20 (43.48%)	4.11
Sound Effects	2 (4.35%)	4 (8.70%)	7 (15.22%)	14 (30.43%)	19 (41.30%)	3.96
Plot	1 (2.17%)	0 (0%)	3 (6.52%)	6 (13.04%)	36 (78.26%)	4.65
PUPPY LOVE by BUDWEISER						
	No Impact	Minor Impact	Moderate Impact	Strong Impact	Very Strong Impact	Weighted Average
Actors/Char acters	0 (0%)	3 (5.26%)	12 (21.05%)	10 (17.54%)	32 (56.14%)	4.25
Video Recording	1 (1.75%)	3 (5.26%)	8 (14.04%)	22 (38.60%)	23 (40.35%)	4.11
Music	1 (1.75%)	0 (0%)	11 (19.30%)	16 (28.07%)	29 (50.88%)	4.26
Sound Effects	2 (3.51%)	4 (7.02%)	17 (29.82%)	13 (22.81%)	21 (36.84%)	3.82
Plot	1 (1.75%)	0 (0%)	5 (8.77%)	11 (19.30%)	40 (70.18%)	4.56

As mentioned earlier within this thesis, apart from the impact that individual video content characteristics had on the participants' decision to create an online story about the brand videos examined in social networks, what is also essential is to determine and analyse the reasons that drove participants to the decision not to create an online story

about the brand videos. In this way, this research gathers more data concerning the impact that those principles or video content characteristics had on their decision.

The overall data collected through question 4 (Questions 18, 23, 28 and 33 of Appendix 1) of the second section of the first questionnaire reveal once again that a brand video's plot is the most powerful principle as concerns this impact. However, question 4 revealed that apart from video content characteristics, there are also other important principles that influence a social media user's decision not to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. The most popular principles revealed across the four videos examined were: a) the lack of interest, b) the video's length, c) the low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos and d) the incompatibility of the brand video's plot with the actual brand and the products or services that the brand video is trying to promote. Table 32 summarizes the data collected through question 4 for all the four brand videos examined.

Table 32: Factors that impacted participants' decision not to create an online story about the four brand videos examined

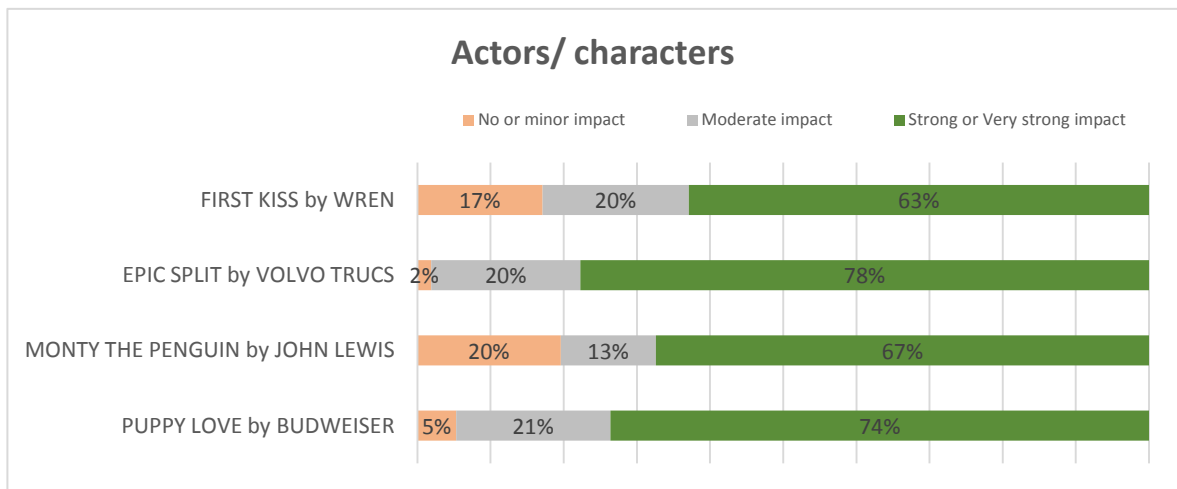
FIRST KISS by WREN	
Factors	Responses
It's not my style	2 (2.17%)
I didn't like the plot	33 (35.87%)
I didn't like the audio (music, speech)	8 (8.69%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, video effects, video recording/footage)	15 (16.30%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, video's length, and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	52 (56.52%)
EPIC SPLIT by VOLVO TRUCKS	
Factors	Responses
It's not my style	5 (6.85%)
I didn't like the plot	26 (35.62%)
I didn't like the audio (music, speech)	7 (9.59%)

I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, video recording/footage)	6 (8.22%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	39 (53.42%)
Monty The Penguin by JOHN LEWIS	
Factors	Responses
It's not my style	2 (2.47%)
I didn't like the plot	32 (39.51%)
I didn't like the audio (music, sound effects)	18 (22.22%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, animation, video recording/footage)	9 (11.11%)
I don't like the brand	0 (0%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, video's length, and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	38 (46.91%)
PUPPY LOVE by BUDWEISER	
Factors	Responses
It's not my style	3 (4.29%)
I didn't like the plot	26 (37.14%)
I didn't like the audio (music, sound effects)	10 (14.29%)
I didn't like the visuals (actors/characters, animation, video recording/footage)	9 (12.86%)
I don't like the brand	3 (4.29%)
Other (including lack of interest to the specific brand video, irrelevance of video's plot with the brand and low tendency of creating online stories about brand videos in general)	32 (45.71%)

Overall, the four brand videos had four video content characteristics in common. These video content characteristics were: actors/characters, video recording, music and plot. The impact of each one of these four video content characteristics was explored across the four videos through cross tabulation and Chi-Square (X^2) analysis, in order to examine any differences in the impact of a given characteristic on the four videos. Impact of the characteristics was recorded into "No or Minor impact" (rating 1 and 2), "Moderate impact" (rating 3) and "Strong or Very Strong impact" (rating 4 and 5). The results are as follows:

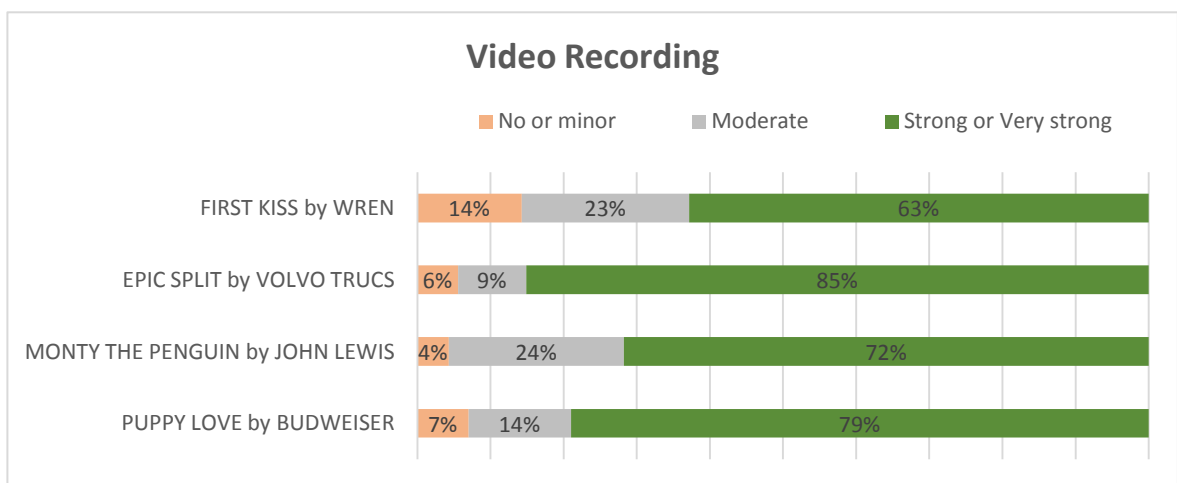
- The impact of the actors/characters video characteristic differs across the four videos ($X^2(6) = 12.847$, $p = 0.046$). It is observed that actors/characters (although they have a high impact on all four videos) have lower impact on "First Kiss" and "Monty The Penguin" where nearly 1 out of 5 persons claimed that this video content characteristic had "No or Minor impact" on their decision to create an online story about these two brand videos in social networks (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Impact of Actors/Characters across the four brand videos



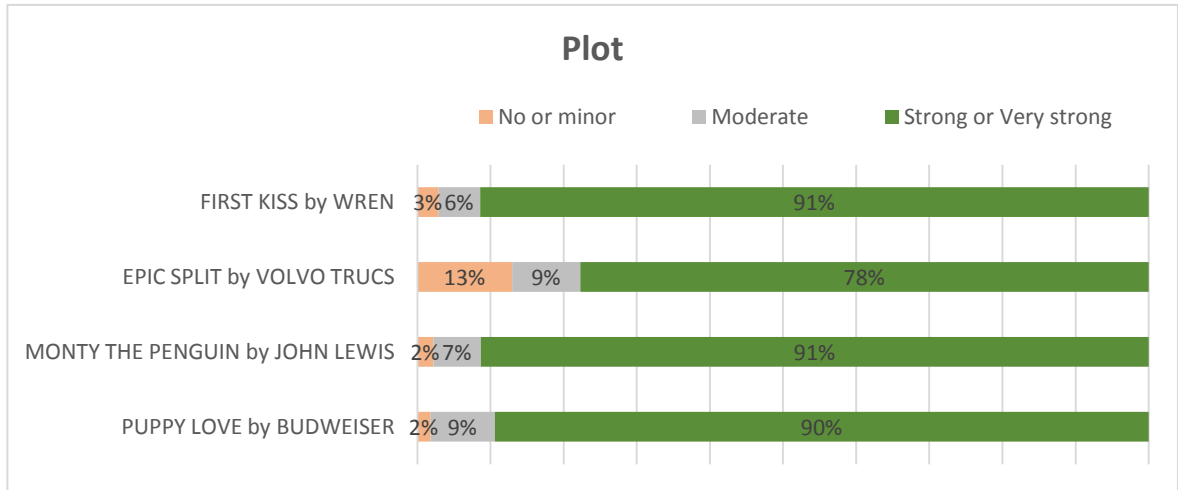
- Video recording has no statistically different impact between the four videos ($X^2(6) = 8.962$, $p = 0.176$) (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Impact of Video Recording across the four brand videos



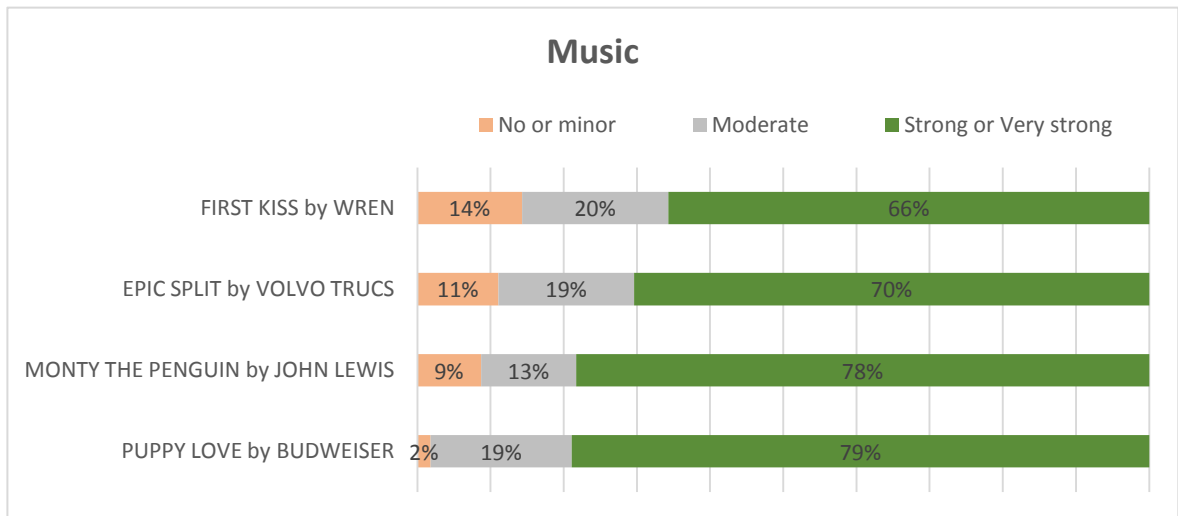
- Plot has no statistically different impact between the four videos ($X^2(6) = 9.977$, $p = 0.126$) (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Impact of Plot across the four brand videos



- Music has no statistically different impact between the four videos ($\chi^2(6) = 6.449$, $p = 0.375$) (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Impact of Music across the four brand videos



Moreover, a comparison of impact was performed across the three audio characteristics presented within the brand video examined (music, speech and sound effects). First the comparison was performed for each brand video separately. All the four videos contain music, while the "First Kiss" along with "The Epic Split" also contain speech. On the other hand, "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love" in addition to music also contain sound effects. In two out of the four comparisons performed, music significantly outperforms the competing audio characteristics. Specifically:

1. In the "First Kiss" brand video, although the mean impact on creating an online story because of music (3.8 ± 1.02) is higher than that of the Speech (3.6 ± 1.1), the difference is not statistically significant (Wilcoxon $Z = -0.579$, $p=0.551$).
2. In "The Epic Split" brand video, the mean impact on creating an online story because of music (4 ± 1.13) is statistically higher than that of the speech (3.6 ± 1.1), (Wilcoxon $Z = -2.409$, $p=0.016$).
3. In the "Monty The Penguin" brand video, although the mean impact on creating an online story because of music (4.1 ± 1.01) is higher than that of the speech (3.9 ± 1.1), the difference is not statistically significant (Wilcoxon $Z = -1.153$, $p=0.249$).
4. In the "Puppy Love" brand video, the mean impact on creating a story because of music (4.3 ± 0.9) is statistically higher than that of the speech (3.8 ± 1.1), (Wilcoxon $Z = -3.134$, $p=0.002$).

Overall, by using the mean impact across all ratings it is observed:

- I. Music with an average impact of 4.07 ± 1.02 in 192 ratings (192 individuals), statistically significantly outperforms the speech characteristic (Mean impact 3.61 ± 1.11 with 89 ratings) (Wilcoxon $Z=-3.34$ $p=0.001$).
- II. Music does not significantly outperform sound effects (Mean impact 3.88 ± 1.13 in 103 ratings) (Wilcoxon $Z=-1.274$ $p=0.203$).
- III. Speech and sound effects do not have a statistically significant difference in their mean impact (Wilcoxon $Z=-1.782$ $p=0.075$).

4.4. Questionnaire 2 Data Analysis

As mentioned earlier, the second online questionnaire examined how music fit and the popularity of a brand video's soundtrack impact a social media user's decision to create an online story (share/like/comment) about a brand video in social networks. In order to examine these two variables (music fit and popularity of soundtrack), participants were asked to watch four different versions of the "Puppy Love" brand video and complete a five-point "likert" scale where they had to provide information on how likely it

is for them to share/like/comment each one of the videos in social networks. Additionally, participants had to provide their views on the "fittingness" of each soundtrack. At this point, it is worth pointing out again that the reason why this specific video was chosen to be edited is because it originally included a small number of sound effects and no speech. In this way, the soundtrack could be easily replaced without losing much information. In addition, it is worth pointing out that the only difference between the four "Puppy Love" versions was the soundtrack used and that each soundtrack had a different popularity level on Youtube (number of views, likes and dislikes). The second questionnaire included the following four different versions of the "Puppy Love" brand video:

- a) Puppy Love 1: A version containing the original soundtrack of the "Puppy Love" brand video, Passenger's "Let Her Go" which currently counts 951,454,109 Youtube views, 3,443,812 Youtube likes and 96,233 Youtube dislikes.
- b) Puppy Love 2: A version containing Gwyneth Paltrow's "Coming Home" which currently counts 3,454,223 Youtube views, 11,383 Youtube likes and 311 Youtube dislikes.
- c) Puppy Love 3: A version containing Bruno Mars's "Treasure" which currently counts 268,175,335 Youtube views, 1,171,187 Youtube likes and 43,014 Youtube dislikes.
- d) Puppy Love 4: A version containing Kognitif's "My Freedom Has No Price" which currently counts 76,410 Youtube views, 891 Youtube likes and 6 Youtube dislikes.

After cleaning the data collected from 315 participants, the sample size of the second online questionnaire was reduced to 223 complete and valuable questionnaire responses.

In respect to the demographic data collected through this questionnaire/experiment, all the respondents were UK residents and active members of online social networks. 135 of these respondents were women (60.54%) and 88 were men (39.46%). 62 respondents were between the age of 18-25 (27.80%), 91 respondents were between 26-35 (40.81%), 65 respondents were between 36-50 (29.15%), 3 respondents were between the age of 51-65 (1.35%) and 2 respondents were older than 66 years old

(0.90%). Similarly to Questionnaire 1, the intention here was to observe whether the demographic information of the respondents was affecting their answers. However, this hypothesis was rejected since there was no clear similarity between the answers of respondents with similar demographic information. Table 33 illustrates the demographic characteristics of the respondents of the second online questionnaire.

Table 33: Demographic Characteristics of Questionnaire 2 Participants

Demographic	Category	Number of respondents (Percentage)
Gender	Male	88 (39.46%)
	Female	135 (60.54%)
Age	18-25 yrs	62 (27.80%)
	26-35 yrs	91 (40.81%)
	36-50 yrs	65 (29.15%)
	51-65 yrs	3 (1.35%)
	66 yrs +	2 (0.90%)
Region	UK	223 (100%)
	Other	0 (0%)
Social Networking Status	Active	223 (100%)
	Inactive	0 (0%)

The first four questions of the second online questionnaire investigated the "music fit" variable. Participants were asked to watch the four versions of Budweiser's "Puppy Love" brand video and provide answers on whether the four different soundtracks fit the video's plot and visuals. As concerns the soundtrack used on "Puppy Love 1" (Passenger's "Let Her Go"), 179 (80.27%) participants answered that the soundtrack fits the video's plot and visuals while 44 (19.73%) of them answered that it doesn't. In respect to "Puppy Love 2", 96 (43.05%) respondents answered that the soundtrack (Paltrow's "Coming Home") fits the video's plot and visuals while 127 (56.95%) respondents answered that it doesn't. Furthermore, in relation to "Puppy Love 3", 56 (25.11%) of the participants answered that the soundtrack (Bruno Mars's "Treasure") fits the video's plot and visuals while 167 (74.89%) of them answered that it does not. Finally, when investigating "Puppy Love 4",

30 (13.45%) respondents answered that the soundtrack (Kognitif's "My Freedom Has No Price") fits the video's plot and visuals while 193 (86.55%) respondents answered that it doesn't. Table 34 illustrates the overall data collected throughout the first four questions of this questionnaire. What is remarkable is that the "music fit" variable seems to be almost equally decreasing from video to video.

Table 34: Music Fit on the "Puppy Love" versions

"Puppy Love" Version	Soundtrack Used	Music Fit Score
Puppy Love 1	Passenger's "Let Her Go"	179/223 (80.27%)
Puppy Love 2	Paltrow's "Coming Home"	96/223 (43.05%)
Puppy Love 3	Bruno Mars's "Treasure"	56/223 (25.11%)
Puppy Love 4	Kognitif's "My Freedom Has No Price"	30/223 (13.45%)

For the last stage of this questionnaire, participants had to go through a five-point "likert" scale in order to provide information on how likely it is for them to share/like/comment each one of the videos in social networks. For this question, option 1 meant "extremely unlikely", 2 meant "unlikely", 3 meant "neutral", 4 meant "likely" and 5 meant "extremely likely". On this question, 42 out of the 223 participants (18.83%) answered that it is extremely likely for them to share/like/comment "Puppy Love 1" n social networks. Additionally, for "Puppy Love 1", 67 out of the 223 participants (30.04%) answered "likely", 28 participants (12.56%) answered "unlikely", 43 participants (19.28%) answered "extremely unlikely" and 43 participants (19.28%) were "neutral". For "Puppy Love 2", 14 out of the 223 participants (6.28%) answered "extremely likely", 47 out of the 223 participants (21.08%) answered "likely", 46 participants (20.63%) answered "unlikely", 68 participants (30.49%) answered "extremely unlikely" and 48 participants (21.52%) were "neutral". When asked about "Puppy Love 3", 11 out of the 223 participants (4.93%) answered "extremely likely", 13 out of the 223 participants (5.83%) answered "likely", 68 participants (30.49%) answered "unlikely", 88 participants (39.46%) answered "extremely unlikely" and 43 participants (19.28%) were "neutral". Finally, As concerns "Puppy Love 4", 8 out of the 223 participants (3.59%) answered "extremely likely", 7 out of the 223 participants (3.14%) answered "likely", 63 participants (28.25%) answered "unlikely", 116

participants (52.02%) answered "extremely unlikely" and 29 participants (13.00%) were "neutral". Table 35 illustrates the overall data collected throughout this question.

Table 35: Likelihood of sharing/commenting/liking the "Puppy Love" versions

	Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Extremely Likely
Puppy Love 1	43 (19.28%)	28 (12.56%)	43 (19.28%)	67 (30.04%)	42 (18.83%)
Puppy Love 2	68 (30.49%)	46 (20.63%)	48 (21.52%)	47 (21.08%)	14 (6.28%)
Puppy Love 3	88 (39.46%)	68 (30.49%)	43(19.28%)	13 (5.83%)	11 (4.93%)
Puppy Love 4	116 (52.02%)	63 (28.25%)	29 (13.00%)	7 (3.14%)	8 (3.59%)

At first glance, by comparing the data of Table 31 with the data collected about "music fit" throughout the first four questions (Table 30), it seems that there might be a connection between "music fit" and the possibility of sharing/commenting/liking a brand video in social networks. More specifically, it seems that as the "music fit score" decreases, the possibility of sharing/commenting/liking a brand video in social networks decreases as well. This becomes clearer by separating the responses of this question to positive (extremely likely + likely) and negative (extremely unlikely + unlikely). On the other hand, it seems that the "soundtrack's popularity" variable might not impact the social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video as much as the "music fit" variable might do. This also becomes clearer when considering that although "Puppy Love 3" included a really popular soundtrack (Bruno Mars's "Treasure"), most respondents were not willing to share it (24 positive and 156 negative responses). In contrast, respondents seemed to be somewhat more willing to create an online story about "Puppy Love 2" (61 positive and 114 negative responses) although this version included a much less popular soundtrack (Paltrow's "Coming Home"). Overall, "Puppy Love 1" ended up with 109 positive and 71 negative responses, "Puppy Love 2" ended up with 61 positive and 114 negative responses, "Puppy Love 3" ended up with 24 positive and 156 negative responses and "Puppy Love 4" received 15 positive and 179 negative responses.

In order to have a clear view of the above occurrences, the responses were further categorised according to the answers provided for each version of the "Puppy Love" brand video separately. For the "Puppy Love 1" video, 179 respondents answered that music fits. 41 (22.91%) out of these 179 respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 64 (35.75%) answered "likely", 31 (17.32%) were "neutral", 15 (8.38%) answered "unlikely" and 28 (15.64%) answered "extremely unlikely". From the rest 44 respondents who answered that music does not fit the visuals and plot of "Puppy Love 1", 1 (2.27%) respondent answered that it was "extremely likely" for him to create a story about the video in social networks, 3 (6.82%) respondents answered "likely", 12 (27.27%) respondents were "neutral", 13 (29.55%) respondents answered "unlikely" and 15 (34.09%) respondents answered "extremely unlikely". Overall, for "Puppy Love 1" there were 105 positive (extremely likely share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 43 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who believe that music fits. On the other hand, this video received 4 positive (extremely likely to share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 28 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who felt that music does not fit the video's plot and visuals.

For the "Puppy Love 2" video, 96 respondents answered that music fits. 12 (12.5%) out of these 96 respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 28 (29.17%) answered "likely", 26 (27.08%) were "neutral", 11 (11.46%) answered "unlikely" and 19 (19.79%) answered "extremely unlikely". From the rest 127 respondents who answered that music does not fit the visuals and plot of "Puppy Love 2", 2 (1.58%) respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 19 (14.96%) respondents answered "likely", 22 (17.32%) respondents were "neutral", 35 (27.56%) respondents answered "unlikely" and 49 (38.58%) respondents answered "extremely unlikely". Overall, for "Puppy Love 2" there were 40 positive (extremely likely share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 30 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who believe that music fits.

On the other hand, this video received 21 positive (extremely likely to share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 84 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who felt that music does not fit the video's plot and visuals.

As concerns the "Puppy Love 3" video, 56 respondents answered that music fits. 7 (12.5%) out of these 56 respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 9 (16.07%) answered "likely", 17 (30.36%) were "neutral", 8 (14.28%) answered "unlikely" and 15 (26.79%) answered "extremely unlikely". From the rest 167 respondents who answered that music does not fit the visuals and plot of "Puppy Love 3", 4 (2.4%) respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 4 (2.4%) respondents answered "likely", 26 (15.56%) respondents were "neutral", 60 (35.93%) respondents answered "unlikely" and 73 (43.71%) respondents answered "extremely unlikely". Overall, for "Puppy Love 3" there were 16 positive (extremely likely share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 23 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who believe that music fits. On the other hand, this video received 8 positive (extremely likely to share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 133 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who felt that music does not fit the video's plot and visuals.

Finally, for the "Puppy Love 4" video, 30 respondents answered that music fits. 3 (10%) out of these 30 respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 6 (20%) answered "likely", 8 (26.67%) were "neutral", 5 (16.66%) answered "unlikely" and 8 (26.67%) answered "extremely unlikely". From the rest 193 respondents who answered that music does not fit the visuals and plot of "Puppy Love 4", 5 (2.59%) respondents answered that it was "extremely likely" for them to create a story about the video in social networks, 1 (0.52%) respondent answered "likely", 21 (10.88%) respondents were "neutral", 58 (30.05%) respondents answered "unlikely" and 108 (55.96%) respondents answered "extremely

unlikely". Overall, for "Puppy Love 4" there were 9 positive (extremely likely to share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 13 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who believe that music fits. On the other hand, this video received 6 positive (extremely likely to share/comment/like + likely to share/comment/like) and 166 negative (extremely unlikely to share/comment/like + unlikely to share/comment/like) responses from participants who felt that music does not fit the video's plot and visuals. Table 36 presents the overall responses for each version of the "Puppy Love" brand video according to music fit.

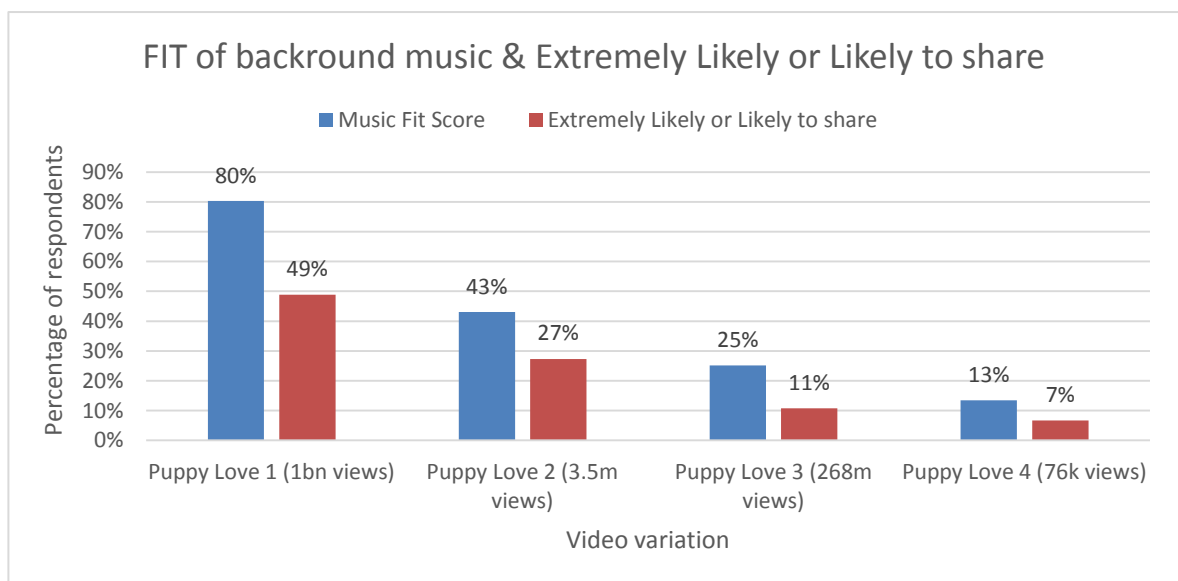
Table 36: Likelihood of sharing/commenting/liking the "Puppy Love" versions according to music fit

		Positive Response		N	Negative Response	
		EL	L		U	EU
Puppy Love 1	Music Fit	41 (22.91%)	64 (35.75%)	31 (17.32%)	15 (8.38%)	28 (15.64%)
	Music does Not Fit	1 (2.27%)	3 (6.82%)	12 (27.27%)	13 (29.55%)	15 (34.09%)
Puppy Love 2	Music Fit	12 (12.50%)	28 (29.17%)	26 (27.08%)	11 (11.46%)	19 (19.79%)
	Music does Not Fit	2 (1.58%)	19 (14.96%)	22 (17.32%)	35 (27.56%)	49 (38.58%)
Puppy Love 3	Music Fit	7 (12.50%)	9 (16.07%)	17 (30.36%)	8 (14.28%)	15 (26.79%)
	Music does Not Fit	4 (2.40%)	4 (2.40%)	26 (15.56%)	60 (35.93%)	73 (43.71%)
Puppy Love 4	Music Fit	3 (10%)	6 (20%)	8 (26.67%)	5 (16.66%)	8 (26.67%)
	Music does Not Fit	5 (2.59%)	1 (0.52%)	21 (10.88%)	58 (30.05%)	108 (55.96%)
*EL = Extremely Likely to share/comment/like, L = Likely to share/comment/like, N = Neutral, U = Unlikely to share/comment/like, EU = Extremely Unlikely to share/comment/like						

By studying the above data, it is observed that if the background music fits a brand video, then the likelihood of creating an online story about it in social networks is highly increased. Separate FISHER's exact tests analyses on each brand video, shows that the association of music fit with a positive answer on creating a story about the brand video in social networks is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$ for all four videos). This is the case for all 4 videos. More specifically, as shown in Table 32, As concerns Puppy Love 1, the probability of sharing the video is 6.45 times higher (58.7% vs 9.1%) when the music fits the video rather than not. Similarly, for the Puppy Love 2 the probability is 2.53 times higher (41.7% vs 16.5%), for the Puppy Love 3 it is 5.96 times higher (28.6% vs 4.8%) and for the Puppy Love 4 it is 9.68 times higher (30% vs 3.1%).

The above data lead to the conclusion that if more people believe that the background music fits the brand video then more people are likely or extremely likely to create a story about the brand video in social networks. This association is best visualised in Figure 13, where we observe that as the percentage of people who find that the music fits the video is decreased, then the percentage of the people who are extremely likely or likely to create an online about the brand video in social networks is linearly decreased as well.

Figure 13: Percentage of respondents who answered that music fits the video and percentage of respondents who are extremely likely or likely to create a story (by brand video variation)



4.4.1. Association of Music Popularity and Likelihood of Creating a Story

For analysis purposes, the background music used in Puppy Love 1 and Puppy Love 3 is categorized as "More Popular Music". The other two music backgrounds (used in Puppy Love 2 and Puppy Love 4) are categorized as "Less Popular Music". This categorization was done by considering the number of views that the original songs had on Youtube.

As mentioned within the literature review and methodology chapters, binary logistic regression was conducted with the proportion of "Extremely Likely" or "Likely" to create an online story about the brand videos in social networks as the dependent variable and with two predictor (independent) variables; "Music Fit" (whether the music fits the brand video or not), and "Music Popularity" (whether the music is "More Popular" or "Less Popular"). Table 37 illustrates the results of the binary logistic regression.

Table 37: Logistic regression of Extremely Likely or Likely to create an online story about the "Puppy Love" brand video in social networks based on music fit and music popularity.

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	p value	Odds ratio
STEP 1*						
FITS the video	1,932	0,272	50,565	1	<0,001	6,906
MORE POPULAR	0.234	0.185	1.604	1	0.205	1.264
STEP 2*						
MORE POPULAR *						
FITS the video	0,936	0,423	4,884	1	0,027	2,549

**STEP 1: Independent variables: MUSIC FITS, MORE POPULAR MUSIC, STEP 2: Added the interaction term*

The above model verifies that if the music fits the video then the likelihood of creating an online story about the brand video in social networks is increased (O.R. = 6.906 $p < 0.001$). The music being popular alone does not significantly increase the likelihood of creating an online story about the brand video (O.R. = 1.264 $p = 0.205$). Nevertheless, when the music is both popular and it fits the brand video then the

likelihood of creating an online story about it in social networks is increased even more (O.R. =2.549 p=0.027).

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

In general terms, the data collected and analysed throughout this study suggest that video content characteristics (visuals, audio and plot) can have an impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story (share, like or comment) about a brand video in social networks, and consequently improve its virality. This supports the three hypotheses of this study (H1, H2, H3). Moreover, this reinforces the view of Southgate et. al (2010) who support that creative details behind video advertising can be used to predict a video's virality.

Since the data analysis showed that different video content characteristics can have different levels of impact, this chapter will discuss the impact of each video content characteristic separately. Additionally, as a further contribution, this section links some of the findings of this study with findings of previous research as they were discussed within the literature review chapter.

5.1. The Role of Visuals in Brand Video Virality

As concerns the visuals, the data collected and analysed throughout this research show that actors, video recording, video effects and animation have different levels of impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story (share, like or comment) about a brand video in social networks. To begin with, the data collected throughout netnography (comments on Youtube videos) show that visuals played an important role to the social media users' decision to comment the brand videos and consequently increase their virality by creating online stories about them in Youtube and Google+.

The Chi-Square tests that were performed during the analysis of the comments showed that between the four brand videos examined, visuals were mostly mentioned under "The Epic Split" brand video. In other words, across the visuals presented within the four brand videos, the visuals of "The Epic Split" were the most powerful in terms of

their impact to a social media user's decision to comment a brand video and consequently create an online story about it in social networks. Interestingly, the number of comments that this video received about its visuals was almost four times bigger than the number of comments that the brand video received about its plot. At this point, it is important to repeat that the visuals of "The Epic Split" included live action video recording of the famous actor Jean Claude Van Damme on top of two Volvo trucks. The video footage was shot in a single take, at dawn on an airstrip in Spain.

According to the data collected through netnography, the visuals presented within the rest brand videos were not that powerful in terms of their impact on a social media user's decision to comment and consequently create online stories about them in social networks. The visuals presented within the "First Kiss" brand video included live video recording of less popular actors. This video recording was shot indoors and included nothing more than the actors and an empty grey wall as a background. In addition, video effects were added to the footage of the "First Kiss" and made the whole video black and white. As concerns the visuals presented within the "Puppy Love", this brand video included live video recording of the actor Don Jeanes. In addition to Don Jeanes who acted as a Clydesdale horse trainer, other characters presented within this brand video was the actress Melissa Keller, a juvenile dog (puppy) and a number of Clydesdale horses. The "Puppy Love" video footage included both indoors and outdoors shots recorded in a farm. Last but not least, the visuals of "Monty The Penguin" included both indoors and outdoors shots of a boy, his family and an animated penguin.

What is remarkable is the fact that "Monty The Penguin", which included 3D animation, generated less comments about its visuals than the rest brand videos that were merely based on live video footage/recording. Additionally, what is also interesting to notice at this instant is that although "The Epic Split" included similar visual characteristics to other brand videos examined (live footage and actors), its visuals had more impact on social media users' decision to comment it and consequently create a story about it in social networks.

The data collected through the first online questionnaire help this research empower the findings about visuals and their impact. Additionally, the findings of the first questionnaire are adding some extra value to the findings of the netnographic approach. This was done by exploring the impact that each one of the four common video content characteristics (actors/characters, video recording, music and plot) had on a social media user's decision to create an online story about the four brand videos in social networks. The analysis of the data collected through the first questionnaire revealed that there was a statistically significant difference of the impact of "actors/characters" across the four videos. This visual content characteristic had a significantly lower impact on the "First Kiss" and on "Monty The Penguin" where nearly one out of five social media users claimed that it had "No" or "Minor Impact" on their decision to create an online story about these brand videos in social networks. In contrast, the impact that the actors/characters presented within "The Epic Split" and "Puppy Love" had on this decision was significantly higher. Video recording on the other hand had no statistically different impact across the four videos and video effects had the lowest average weight across all the video content characteristics examined.

By considering and combining the findings of the netnographic approach and the findings of the first questionnaire, it is obvious that the appearance of a famous celebrity within a brand video (like Jean Claude Van Damme in "The Epic Split") has a positive impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about the brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. Furthermore, since the actors presented within the "First Kiss" and "#MontyhePenguin" had a significantly lower impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about these two brand videos in social networks, and since these actors were not as popular as Jean Claude Van Damme, it is evident that the appearance of less popular actors within a brand video has a significantly lower impact on the same decision. This means that most likely, the actors presented within "Puppy Love" (Don Jeanes and Melissa Keller) were not the main reason why this brand video's "actors/characters" had a higher level of impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about the brand video in social networks. In this way, somebody could argue that it is the appearance of the real animals (puppy and

Clydesdale horses) that impacted the social media users' decision to create an online story about "Puppy Love" in social networks. On the other hand, the fact that "Monty" (the animated penguin) did not manage to significantly impact the social media users' decision to create an online story about "Monty The Penguin" drives this research to the conclusion that although Callcott & Phillips (1996) found that commercials featuring animated characters were watched more often than other types of commercials, in 2016, animation in general and animated animals in particular do not impact a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks as much as live recording/footage and real animals do. This finding reinforces the findings of Godin (2005) and Chen et al. (2009) who suggest that great stories are true and that stories which are authentic convince the audience easier.

5.2. The Role of Audio in Brand Video Virality

Similarly to visuals, the data collected throughout this study show that music, speech and sound effects have different levels of impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story (share, like or comment) about a brand video in social networks. Netnography showed that 493 out of the 4000 comments analysed concerned audio. In other words, 493 out of the 4000 online stories that were created through comments for the brand videos examined, were created because of the audio included within the brand videos.

Once again, the Chi-Square tests that were performed during the analysis of the comments showed that between the four brand videos examined, audio was mostly mentioned under "The Epic Split" brand video. In other words, according to the data collected through netnography, across the visuals presented within the four brand videos, the audio of "The Epic Split" was the most powerful in terms of its impact to a social media user's decision to comment a brand video and consequently create an online story about it in social networks. At this point, it is important to repeat that the audio of "The Epic Split" included speech by the famous actor Jean Claude Van Damme (who is also the actor presented within the brand video) in addition to a background soundtrack. The soundtrack used was Enya's "Only Time" which was first released in November 2000 and

lies under the genre of "New Age music". In 2001 the song was featured in the soundtrack of the romantic drama film "Sweet November". The song was also used in commercials to promote "Friends", and on the TV show "Viva La Bam". When it was first released, the song was peaked at #10 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart and #1 on the adult contemporary chart. Moreover, the success of "The Epic Split" brand video caused "Only Time" to re-enter the Billboard Hot 100 at #43 and the UK Singles chart at #95. Currently, "Only Time" counts 55,572,784 views on Youtube.

According to the data collected through netnography, the audio included within the rest brand videos was not that powerful in terms of its impact to a social media user's decision to comment and consequently create online stories about the brand videos in social networks. For example, the audio included within the "First Kiss" brand video generated only 52 comments. What is remarkable here, is the fact that although this brand video included the same audio characteristics with "The Epic Split" (speech by the actors and background music), its audio was proved not to be as powerful. This means that it is not the combination of these audio characteristics (speech and background music) that makes a brand video generate more comments about its audio but the actual choice of speech and soundtracks. At this point it is important to repeat that the soundtrack of the "First Kiss" brand video is Soko's "We Might be Dead by Tomorrow" and lies under the genre of "Indie Pop". This song was officially released in 2012 and only debuted at #9 on the Billboard Hot 100 and #1 on the Streaming Songs list after the release of the "First Kiss" brand video in 2014. Another remarkable point that was revealed during analysing the data collected through netnography, is that although the "Puppy Love" brand video included the most popular soundtrack (Passenger - Let Her Go with 951,454,109 views on Youtube), its audio overall generated a smaller percentage of comments than the audio of "The Epic Split" brand video. Moreover, as concerns "Monty The Penguin", although this brand video included the same audio characteristics with the "Puppy Love" brand video (sound effects and background music), its audio was proved not to be as powerful. This means that it is not the combination of these audio characteristics (sound effects and background music) that makes a brand video generate more comments about its audio but the actual choice of sound effects and soundtracks.

Furthermore, according to the data collected throughout the first online questionnaire, it is observed that music statistically outperforms speech As concerns its impact to a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. However, the same data show that music does not significantly outperform sound effects. It is also observed that speech and sound effects do not have a statistically significant difference As concerns their mean impact.

Moreover, the data collected throughout the second questionnaire suggest that "music fit" has a strong impact on the decision of a social media user to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. In other words, if a soundtrack fits the overall style, plot and visuals of a brand video, then more social media users are willing to create an online story about the brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. This finding reinforces the research performed by Chou and Lien (2010), who found that the fittingness of music and lyrics to an advertisement's visuals and plot can improve the overall attitudes toward the advertisement. At the same time, this finding reinforces Allan's (2007) research who found that attitude toward a brand can become more positive if the meanings of the music and the rest of the advertisement fit well together.

On the other hand, the fact that social media users were not that willing to create an online story about "Puppy Love 3", suggests that music being popular alone does not significantly increases the likelihood of creating an online story about a brand video. For this reason, marketers and video producers should prefer using a soundtrack that fits the overall plot and visuals of a brand video rather than just using music that is popular. Alternatively, marketers and video producers should have in mind that using a popular soundtrack that also fits the brand video's style, plot and visuals could increase a social media user's likelihood of creating an online story about the brand video in social networks even more.

5.3. The Role of Plot in Brand Video Virality

The data collected and analysed throughout this study suggest that across the video content characteristics examined, plot is the most powerful in terms of its impact to a social media users decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. The method of netnography showed that 603 out of the 4000 comments analysed concerned the plot. In other words, 603 out of the 4000 online stories that were created through comments for the brand videos examined, were created because of this video content characteristic.

The Chi-Square tests that were performed during the analysis of the comments collected throughout the netnography method showed that between the four brand videos examined, plot was mostly mentioned under the "First Kiss" brand video. In other words, according to the data collected through netnography, across the different plots and storylines presented during the four brand videos, the plot of the "First Kiss" was the most powerful in terms of its impact to a social media user's decision to comment on a brand video and consequently create an online story about it in social networks. At this point, it is important to repeat that the plot of the "First Kiss" brand video presented 20 strangers that were asked to kiss in front of the camera for the first time while the camera was recording their reactions. In contrast, the Chi-Square tests performed showed that "The Epic Split's" plot was the less powerful in terms of its impact to a social media user's decision to comment a brand video and consequently create an online story about it in social networks. By having in mind that the plot of "The Epic Split" showed the famous actor Jean Claude Van Damme performing his famous "split stunt" while standing on the wing mirrors of two reversing trucks, somebody could end up with the inference that the reason why this brand video did not receive that many comments about its plot is because the actor (Jean Claude Van Damme) actually becomes the plot during this brand video. This is because as part of the plot, the actor performs a trick that he was already famous about. Particularly, that "split stunt" could be described as Jean Claude Van Damme's personal trait which obviously makes it part of Jean Claude Van Damme. In this way of thinking, when social media users were commenting about the famous actor, they were

also referring to his ability to perform the "split stunt" which was part of the brand video's plot. This conclusion could make more sense by considering the fact that "The Epic Split's" visuals received 2.25 times more comments than the visuals of the "First Kiss", 3.30 times more comments than the visuals of "Monty The Penguin" and 2.46 times more comments than the visuals of "Puppy Love".

As concerns the plot of "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love" brand videos, they both present a more emotional storyline which actually achieves generating a fair amount of comments (139 comments about "Monty The Penguin's" plot and 184 comments about "Puppy Love's plot). These findings empower previous studies that argue that emotional response can positively impact an online video's virality (Dobele et al., 2007), but at the same time they also empower studies that argue that emotional responses do not guarantee that a video will go viral and that there is more to the sharing puzzle (Nelson-Field et al., 2013). What is important to clarify at this point is that netnography was mainly examining the stories created through commenting the brand videos and that the comments examined were not necessarily positive. In other words, there were social media users who were negatively commenting the brand videos' video content characteristics but this does not mean that their comments were not improving the brand videos' virality.

Furthermore, the data collected throughout the first online questionnaire also provides some important information in relation to the impact of plot on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks. Firstly, the overall data analysed through the Wilcoxon tests showed that plot has statistically the highest average impact across all the video content characteristics examined. This means that when compared to other video content characteristics, plot is the most powerful in terms of its impact on a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. More specifically, although netnography showed that the plot of the "First Kiss" received more comments, according to the data collected throughout the first online questionnaire, "Monty The Penguin's" plot is the plot that ended up with the highest average weight. In contrast, the

data collected through netnography about "The Epic Split" agree with the data collected about the same video throughout the first online questionnaire since its plot ended up with the lowest average weight.

In addition to the above findings, questionnaire one also revealed that the irrelevance of a brand video's plot with the actual brand and the products or services that the brand video is trying to promote, can cause many social media users to avoid creating an online story about the brand video in social networks. This conclusion was mainly drawn after analysing the reasons that made some social media users not to create an online story about Budweiser's "Puppy Love".

5.4. Co-Creation in Brand Video Virality

In relation to the process of co-creating a marketing message, the "First Kiss" video by WREN is interesting because in the first instance the video itself has nothing to do with the product being advertised. Neither the plot or the sound and visuals directly convey a message that encourages people to buy clothes or makes any reference to what "WREN" sells. This means that the marketing message and the whole marketing function is to a large extent left to the social media users. At first, they contribute to the creation of the message by engaging in a process of interpreting the video by making reference to its content characteristics while sharing/commenting/liking it in Social Media. In this sense, the video content characteristics (visuals, sound, plot) actually become the marketing message in the "First Kiss" video. In addition, since there are no details about the company or its products in the video, it is not until later and after pointed out by other viewers/users that the audience realizes that this is an advertising campaign by a clothing company. The situation is similar with the "Monty The Penguin" and "Puppy Love" brand videos with the only difference that John Lewis and Budweiser placed information about their brands at the very end of the videos.

Therefore, the big challenge for marketing practitioners is: How can they "harness" the forces of co-creation of marketing messages in brand videos? What makes people co-create the marketing message and share, like or comment a brand video? What are the

motivators that make consumers create online stories about brand videos in social networks? To answer such questions, businesses need to address certain issues. The creators of branded videos for viral marketing campaigns in Social Media need to carefully consider the combination of cultural, emotional and cognitive contexts on which the content characteristics of their videos will draw on and the impact that these will have on the videos' virality. For instance, a certain combination of music with a narrative and visual images may contribute more to a video's virality than an alternative combination. A particular piece of music combined with a specific plot, for example, may provide to social media users the links for cultural references that will create an impression of a certain degree that would motivate these users to further create an online story about the video. The presence of a famous actor within a brand video, for example, may increase the consumer's likelihood of sharing that video in social networks. All these can be perceived as individual motivators for consumers to participate in online co-creation.

5.5. Case Study: KIA Soul EV Hamster Brand Video

At this point, it would be helpful to take a closer look at a brand video that did not manage to become as popular as the brand videos examined during this research. The "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video was introduced by KIA during the 2014 MTV Video Music Awards and it was part of a series of commercials that included: the "Kia Soul Hamster - Black Sheep Kia Hamsters Video", the "Kia Soul Hamsters Party Rock Anthem", the "LaFontaine Kia - Bringing Down the House" and more.

Similarly to the previous videos of the series, the "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video was featuring 3D animation of anthropomorphic hamsters but this time they were found inhabiting a high-tech, high-energy laboratory and unleashing their inner mad scientists to create an eco-friendly Soul. The brand videos ends when the hamster scientists accidentally create female anthropomorphic hamsters who come out of the newly created eco-friendly car and start dancing with them. The soundtrack used for this brand video was the song called "Animals" by Maroon 5. As part of the multi-platform "Fully Charged" campaign, KIA offered 200,000 free downloads of "Animals" before its

official release on iTunes. At this point it is important to mention that most of the songs used within this series of commercials by KIA were top hits.

Although "Animals" peaked at number three on the US Billboard Hot 100 after its official release, and although it currently counts 350,523,446 plays on Youtube, the "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video did not manage to generate so much online attention. The number of views that this brand video received on Youtube was much smaller with the most popular Youtube version currently counting only 113,472 views (Image 7). Additionally, there were social media users negatively commenting on the brand video's plot and visuals. Nevertheless, there were comments indicating that the soundtrack used does not fit the brand video.

Image 7: "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video (by Kia)

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56C4kSIGkI8> (Accessed in June 2016)



The case of "KIA Soul EV Hamster" brand video clearly empowers the finding of this research that suggests that animation in general and animated animals in particular do not impact a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks as much as live recording/footage and real animals do. In addition, the case of "KIA Soul EV Hamster" empowers the finding that suggests that the inclusion of popular songs as soundtracks of brand videos cannot guarantee that the brand videos will

go viral and the finding that suggests that when the background music fits a brand video's plot and visuals then the chances of the brand video to go viral increase. Finally, the above case study suggests once again that the irrelevance of a brand video's plot with the actual brand and the products or services that the brand video is trying to promote, can cause many social media users to avoid creating an online story about the brand video in social networks. These conclusions in addition to other conclusions that were drawn throughout this research are summarised within the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSIONS

The amount of research that has been conducted on viral brand videos reflects the media's newness. To this date, and as shown within the literature review of this study, there has been limited research in the field of viral brand videos and brand video virality. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how individual video content characteristics (visual graphics, audio, and plot) influence brand video virality. This fills a gap in existing research with regards to content characteristics that drive viral videos being highly shared in social media. Additionally, by showing that video content characteristics play an important role in brand video virality in general and on a Social Media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks in particular, this research strengthens previous research findings that conceptualize: 1) videos as "digital objects" amenable to wide manipulation and revision (Kallinikos and Mariategui, 2011), and 2) Social Media as "ecosystems" whereby users are actively involved in the creation, sharing and exchange of marketing messages (Hanna et al., 2011). Last but not least, the findings of this research provide a code for practice. In other words, by taking into consideration the findings of this research, practitioners can clearly get more chances in developing brand videos with higher potential of going viral.

Overall, by analysing social media user comments under brand videos that went viral and data collected throughout two online questionnaires, there is evidence to suggest that indeed, visuals, audio and plot can impact a social media users decision to

create an online story (share, like or comment) about a brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality. The main findings of this research include the following:

1. Visuals, audio and plot influence brand video virality.
2. Across all the individual video content characteristics (audio, visuals and plot), plot is the most powerful in terms of its impact to a social media users decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks and consequently improve its virality.
3. The irrelevance of a brand video's plot with the actual brand and the products or services that the brand video is trying to promote, can cause many social media users to avoid creating an online story about the brand video in social networks.
4. The inclusion of a famous actor within a brand video can significantly increase the chances of the brand video to go viral.
5. The inclusion of real animals within a brand video can significantly increase the chances of the brand video to go viral.
6. Animation in general and animated animals in particular do not impact a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks as much as live recording/footage and real animals do.
7. Music statistically outperforms speech as concerns its mean impact to a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks.
8. If the background music fits a brand video's plot and visuals then the chances of the brand video to go viral increase.
9. Using a soundtrack that is popular cannot guarantee that a brand video will go viral.
10. When the soundtrack used is both popular and it fits the brand video's plot and visuals then the social media users' likelihood of creating an online story about the brand video in social networks is increased.

What is also important to mention is that the above findings can act as individual motivators for consumers to create online stories about brand videos in social networks.

In this way, this research also contributes to previous studies that explored the motivators for consumers to participate in online co-creation (Romero et.al, 2014).

6.1. Research Limitations

Despite the above findings, there are several limitations to this study. First, practitioners and researchers must consider the results of this study carefully since they represent only a small sample of social media users. Additionally, the number of the brand videos and comments examined was small as well, and that was mainly because of the time constraints of this project. Furthermore, the fact that only one video was examined throughout the second questionnaire could also be considered as a possible limitation since some respondents perhaps did not like the content of the video and therefore perhaps they thought that the soundtracks were not appropriate. At the same time, practitioners and researchers must also consider that because of the time constraints of this project, the respondents of the second online questionnaire were random social media users who are members of SurveyMonkey and who come from three specific countries (United States, United Kingdom, and Australia).

Another limitation that exists mainly because of the time constraints of this project is the fact that some of the conclusions drawn could be considered as assumptive. These conclusions could be empowered with some extra research and analysis. Also, the nature of the sample, data collection methods, and research structure must be considered. The nature of the study was cross-sectional and represented a one-time data collection. For future research, a longitudinal study with observations would be useful to avoid such limitations.

6.2. Implications for Practice

In addition to filling the research gaps concerning the role of visuals, sound and plot in brand video virality and the content characteristics that drive viral brand videos being highly shared in social media, the findings discussed above lead to a number of practical implications. These practical implications are summarised throughout the next paragraphs.

Firstly, since the findings of this study suggest that animation and heavy visual special effects do not impact a social media user's decision to create an online story about a brand video in social networks as much as live recording/footage does, practitioners should consider avoiding spending much money on these visual content characteristics. Instead, they should consider spending more money on developing an interesting (to their audience) narrative with live footage/video recording and live actors/characters. They should consider spending more money on making the audience feel that they are part of the story that develops throughout the brand video. Wise use of visual effects could provide the ability to produce visual environments that are friendly to the viewer's eyes and on environments that do not go far from reality.

Moreover, budgets saved by the avoidance of using heavy special effects and animation could be used for the addition of famous celebrities/actors/characters/animals within the brand videos. In such cases, practitioners should carefully select a character who expresses their brand, products and services. Additionally, the selected character should fit with the brand video's plot and the message that the brand is trying to communicate with the video. A great example was the inclusion of Jean Claude Van Damme within "The Epic Split" brand video by Volvo Trucks. Jean Claude Van Damme and his famous split successfully expressed the marketing message that Volvo Trucks wanted to communicate (the stability and power of their trucks). What is also important to have in mind, is that viewers prefer brand videos that are relevant to the products or services that the brand offers. For example, the fact that Budweiser used a puppy in order to promote beer, made some social media users unwilling to share or like their video. However, this did not stop the brand video from going viral.

Other implications that the findings of this study offer concern the use of audio in brand videos. Practitioners should have in mind that using a soundtrack that is popular cannot guarantee that a brand video will go viral. In other words, it might be more advantageous to choose a soundtrack that fits the brand video's plot, visuals and style than including a random soundtrack just because it is popular. On the other hand, practitioners should have in mind that when the soundtrack is both popular and it fits the

brand video's plot, narrative and visuals, then the social media users' likelihood of creating an online story about the brand video in social networks is increased even more. In order to make sure that a soundtrack fits a brand video's narrative, practitioners have to carefully select music of specific genres and with specific lyrics that can communicate the brand video's overall emotions, style and key messages.

Overall, the conclusions drawn by this study can assist businesses and marketing practitioners in developing brand videos that are more likely to go viral and consequently, in communicating their marketing messages easier by making a "buzz" about their brands, products or services through video advertising. As De Bruyn & Lilien (2008) argue, the key objectives for businesses in viral marketing are to create awareness, trigger interest, and generate sales or product adoption. By taking into consideration the conclusions drawn by this thesis, businesses and practitioners can clearly get more chances in creating viral content and in meeting the above key objectives. On the other hand however, they need to have in mind that negative comments can also go viral really fast and that it is always very difficult to undo the damage done by unfavourable internet content that went viral (Paul, 2007).

6.3. Further Research

Future research on viral videos and brand video virality could concentrate more on the concept of message co-creation. In the case of this study, co-creation of the marketing message emerges from user comments, reviews and conversations about brand videos and their content characteristics. More specifically, by sharing/liking/commenting a brand video, social media users help create multiple cultural, emotional and cognitive contexts in which the marketing message is interpreted. These multiple interpretations help continuously co-create and re-create the marketing message and also act as motives for more users to engage in similar activities (viewing, liking, sharing or commenting). In other words, they help on creating a "buzz" and improve the overall virality of the brand video.

Additionally, future research could focus on understanding the mechanisms by which viral messages are co-created in a Social Media ecosystem and the different

technical, social, cultural and emotional ways in which online customers can be engaged. As discussed within this thesis, the Social Media ecosystem is evolving at a very fast pace. It changes continuously in ways that no one can accurately predict. Therefore, there is not one fixed recipe or road-map about how to create a successful viral video campaign. What works today might not work tomorrow. For this reason, the academic community needs to constantly keep up to date with social media trends and provide novel theorizations and understandings of the mechanisms that can help a brand video go viral. In so doing, researchers might need to look beyond simple quantitative internet metrics and analytics (i.e. number of clicks, comments, likes, views and shares) and more into qualitative information (i.e. the actual content of the comments) that may provide insights on how video virality works in a social media ecosystem. In other words, by concentrating more on the qualitative information that is included within comments under viral videos, future studies could provide more data and identify more themes regarding the reasons why videos are becoming viral.

Finally, future studies could concentrate to the fact that other forms of multimedia started going viral as well. Although in most cases they are not branded, "memes" for example started going viral just by combining images with text. "Gifs" also started going viral by comprising just sequences of raw images. In other words, autonomous visual elements prove that they can go viral without any sounds or clear narrative. A great example is the image of "The dress" that went viral in just a day (on the 26th of February of 2015), when viewers from all over the world were disagreeing over whether the item of clothing depicted was black and blue or white and gold.

An overall lesson from this study which encapsulates all the previous points, is that as consumers become more active and more creative in social media, both researchers and businesses should also become more creative on how they approach and study them. They should not simply see them as a medium that helps them reach a larger number of data or a broader customer base. Instead, they should study and understand them as an important part of their research.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 - First Questionnaire

First Questionnaire

"Brand Video Virality"

Welcome to My Survey

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Information Letter

My name is Christos Karpasitis and I am a research student at the University of Central Lancashire, Cyprus Campus. My research intends to benefit the Internet Marketing industry by specifying how individual video content characteristics (such as visuals, audio and plot) impact brand video virality. In other words, this research aims to assess how individual video content characteristics motivate social media users to share a brand video in social networks.

I kindly request you to participate in this research. As part of this study you will be asked to watch some brand videos and complete a questionnaire in regards to your views on individual video content characteristics and their impact on your decision to share a brand video online.

General Points

It is important to note that:

- It is not anticipated that there will be any negative effects of this research to participants. However, all participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason and without prejudice by simply closing this webpage. Upon closing this webpage all data you have provided will be removed from the study and securely disposed.**
- There is no financial compensation for participation in this research.**
- Research results will be published in my PhD thesis, academic conferences and academic journals; however, there will be no explicit or implicit reference to any participants.**

Confidentiality and Security

It is understood that all information provided will be treated as confidential and anonymity will be safeguarded by applying the following approaches:

- I will use pseudonyms when quoting or referring to individuals.
- I will not use the personal details or full names of any participant.
- Online questionnaire submissions will be securely stored and locked.

I will ensure that all collected information and data is securely archived throughout the life of the project. Additionally, in accordance with UCLan research policy, all research data will be securely stored for a period of five years after project completion and then destroyed.

Please find the consent form on the next page. If you would like to participate in this research, please complete it and press next.

I sincerely hope that you will support my research through your participation in this study. If you have any queries or concerns I am happy to discuss them with you. In addition you can also contact the Principal Investigator who is my supervisor and Director of Studies.

Best Regards,

Christos Karpasitis



Consent Form

Researcher

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* 1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter and have had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered fully.

Yes

* 2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time, for any reason, by simply closing this webpage.

Yes

* 3. Today's Date (DD/MM/YYYY)

Before answering this questionnaire make sure you understand the term Online Brand Videos. With the term Online Brand Videos, this research refers to advertising videos that companies create and share online to promote their services or products.

Please answer all the questions below.

* 4. Your age is:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-50
- 51-65
- 66+

* 5. Your gender is:

- Female
- Male

* 6. Your formal education is:

- Secondary School
- College
- University Student / University Graduate
- Postgraduate

* 7. Which of the following Online Social Networks are you a member of? (You may choose more than one answers)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Youtube
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- Other (please specify)

* 8. How frequently do you share online videos on the social networks that you are a member of?

- Never
- Almost Never
- Occasionally
- Often
- Very Often

* 9. How much attention do you normally pay to the following when watching an online brand video? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "no attention", 2 means "minor attention", 3 means "moderate attention", 4 means "strong attention" and 5 means "very strong attention".

	1	2	3	4	5
Visuals (animation, actors, video recording etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio (music, speech, sound effects etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot (story)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify any other characteristics that you pay attention to)

* 10. Do you usually share brand videos in social networks? (the term brand videos describes videos that are released online by brands for promotional purposes).

- Yes
- No



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Brand Video Virality

* 11. In what social networks do you usually share/comment/like brand videos? (You can choose more than one social networks)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Youtube
- LinkedIn
- Google+
- Other (please specify any other social networks)

* 12. Please indicate the degree to which the following usually impact your decision to share a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Visuals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Audio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify any other characteristics that impact your decision)

* 13. Please indicate the degree to which the following visual characteristics usually impact your decision to share a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Animation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Actors/Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Recording (Footage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

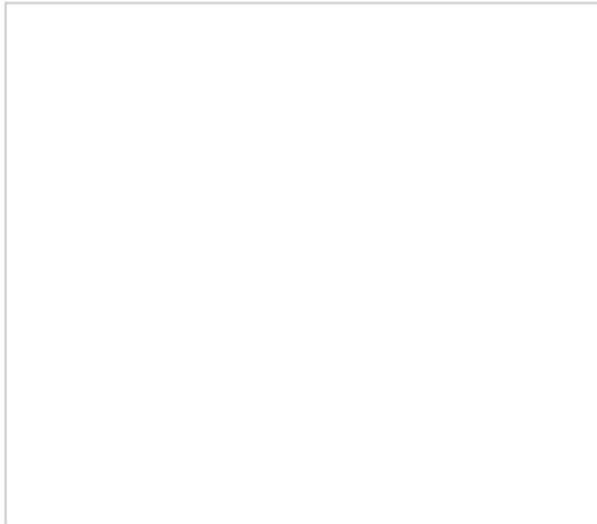
* 14. Please indicate the degree to which the following audio characteristics usually impact your decision to share a brand video online. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speech	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound Effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Brand Video Virality

THE FIRST KISS

* 15. Have you ever watched the following video?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

Brand Video Virality

Video One

* 16. Have you ever shared/commented/liked this video before?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

Brand Video Virality

Video One

* 17. After watching this video how likely is it for you to share/like/comment it? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Brand Video Virality

Video One

* 18. If you didn't/wouldn't share/like/comment the video please name the main factors that influenced your decision not to share/like/comment it. (You can choose more than one answers)

- I didn't like the plot
- I didn't like the audio
- I didn't like the visuals
- Other (please specify)

Brand Video Virality

Video One

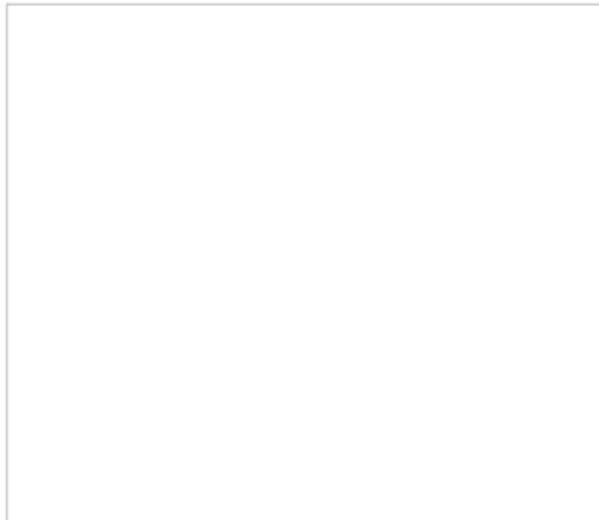
* 19. If you shared/liked/commented the video or if you are likely to share/like/comment it after having watched it, please indicate the impact that the following had on your decision to share/like/comment. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Actors/Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Recording (Footage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speech	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Brand Video Virality

EPIC SPLIT

* 20. Have you ever watched the following video?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

Brand Video Virality

* 21. Have you ever shared/commented/liked this video before?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

Brand Video Virality

* 22. After watching this video how likely is it for you to share/like/comment it? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Brand Video Virality

* 23. If you didn't/wouldn't share/like/comment the video please name the main factors that influenced your decision not to share/like/comment it. (You can choose more than one answers)

- I didn't like the plot
- I didn't like the audio
- I didn't like the visuals
- Other (please specify)



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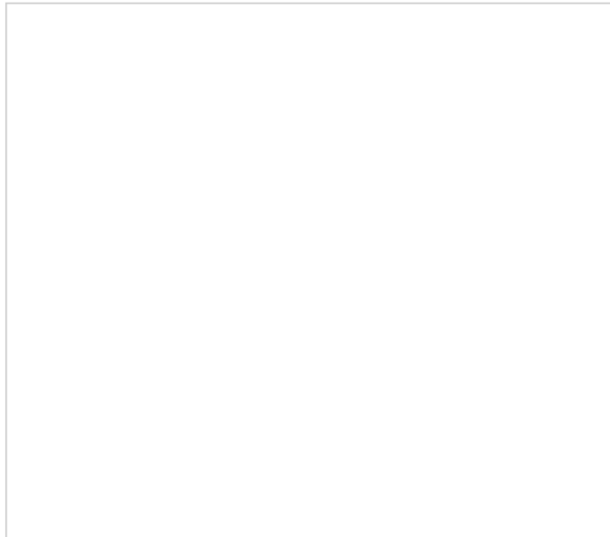
Brand Video Virality

* 24. If you shared/liked/commented the video or if you are likely to share/like/comment it after having watched it, please indicate the impact that the following had on your decision to share/like/comment. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Actors/Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Recording (Footage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Speech	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

JOHN LEWIS

* 25. Have you ever watched the following video?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

* 26. Have you ever shared/commented/liked this video before?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

* 27. After watching this video how likely is it for you to share/like/comment it? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 28. If you didn't/wouldn't share/like/comment the video please name the main factors that influenced your decision not to share/like/comment it. (You can choose more than one answers)

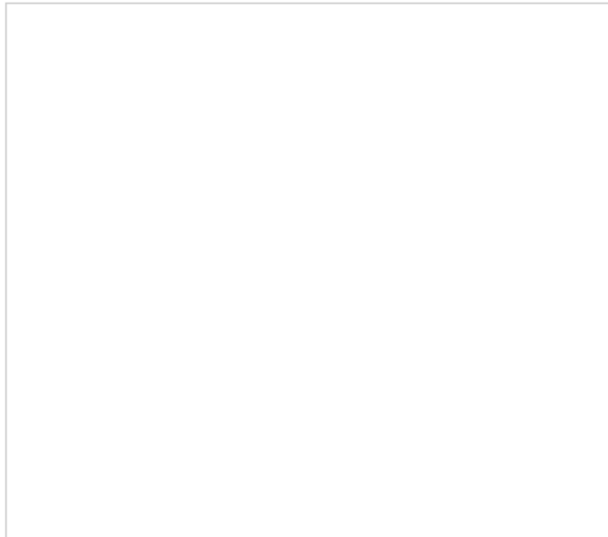
- I didn't like the plot
- I didn't like the audio
- I didn't like the visuals
- Other (please specify)

* 29. If you shared/liked/commented the video or if you are likely to share/like/comment it after having watched it, please indicate the impact that the following had on your decision to share/like/comment. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Actors/Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Animation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Recording (Footage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound Effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

BUDWEISER

* 30. Have you ever watched the following video?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

* 31. Have you ever shared/commented/liked this video before?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe, I can't remember

* 32. After watching this video how likely is it for you to share/like/comment it? Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 33. If you didn't/wouldn't share/like/comment the video please name the main factors that influenced your decision not to share/like/comment it. (You can choose more than one answers)

- I didn't like the plot
- I didn't like the audio
- I didn't like the visuals
- Other (please specify)

* 34. If you shared/liked/commented the video or if you are likely to share/like/comment it after having watched it, please indicate the impact that the following had on your decision to share/like/comment. Please rate on a scale of 1-5 where 1 means "no impact", 2 means "minor impact", 3 means "moderate impact", 4 means "strong impact" and 5 means "very strong impact".

	1	2	3	4	5
Actors/Characters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Video Recording (Footage)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sound Effects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX 2 - Second Questionnaire

Second Questionnaire

"Music in Brand Video Virality"



Music In Brand Video Virality

Welcome to My Survey

Researcher:

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Information Letter

My name is Christos Karpasitis and I am a research student at the University of Central Lancashire, Cyprus Campus. My research intends to benefit the Internet Marketing industry by specifying how individual video content characteristics (such as visuals, audio and plot) impact brand video virality. In other words, this research aims to assess how individual video content characteristics motivate social media users to share a brand video in social networks.

I kindly request you to participate in this research. As part of this study you will be asked to watch some brand videos and complete a questionnaire in regards to your views on individual video content characteristics and their impact on your decision to share a brand video online.

General Points

It is important to note that:

- **It is not anticipated that there will be any negative effects of this research to participants. However, all participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason and without prejudice by simply closing this webpage. Upon closing this webpage all data you have provided will be removed from the study and securely disposed.**
- **There is no financial compensation for participation in this research.**

· Research results will be published in my PhD thesis, academic conferences and academic journals; however, there will be no explicit or implicit reference to any participants.

Confidentiality and Security

It is understood that all information provided will be treated as confidential and anonymity will be safeguarded by applying the following approaches:

- I will use pseudonyms when quoting or referring to individuals.
- I will not use the personal details or full names of any participant.
- Online questionnaire submissions will be securely stored and locked.

I will ensure that all collected information and data is securely archived throughout the life of the project. Additionally, in accordance with UCLan research policy, all research data will be securely stored for a period of five years after project completion and then destroyed.

Please find the consent form on the next page. If you would like to participate in this research, please complete it and press next.

I sincerely hope that you will support my research through your participation in this study. If you have any queries or concerns I am happy to discuss them with you. In addition you can also contact the Principal Investigator who is my supervisor and Director of Studies.

Best Regards,

Christos Karpasitis

* 1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter and have had the opportunity to ask questions which have been answered fully.

Yes

* 2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I can withdraw at any time, for any reason, by simply closing this webpage.

Yes

Music In Brand Video Virality

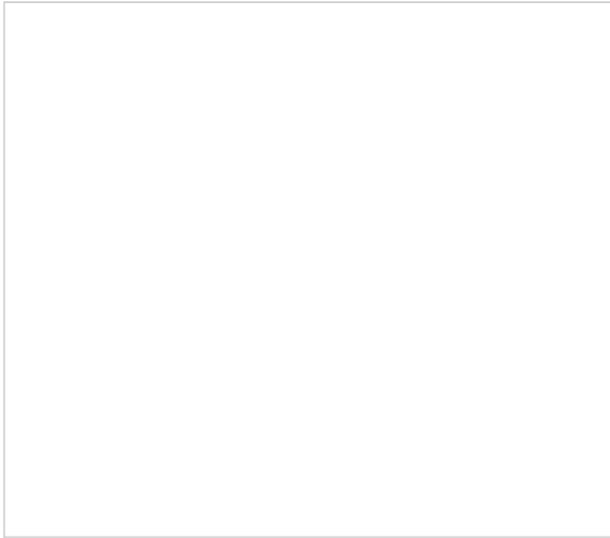
* 3. Your age is:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-50
- 51-65
- 66+

* 4. Your gender is:

- Female
- Male

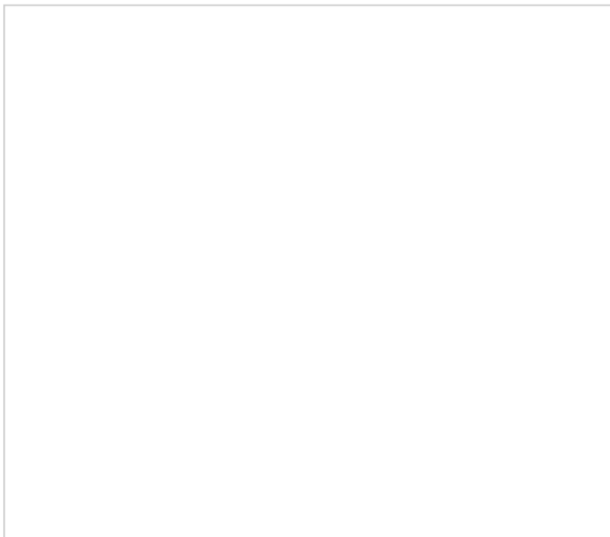
5. Do you think that the following soundtrack fits the video's plot?



Yes

No

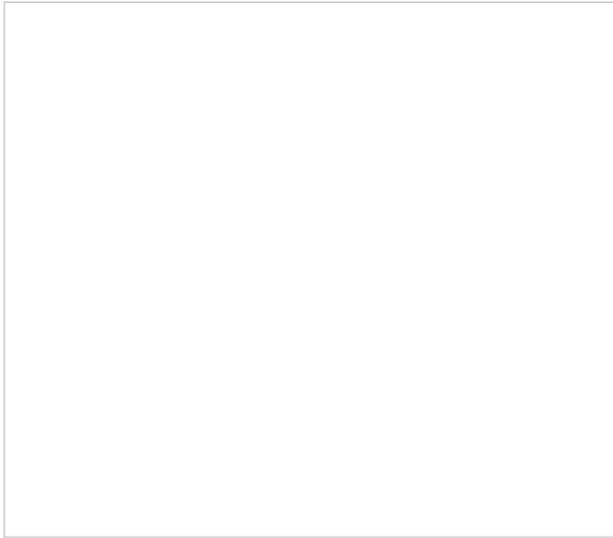
6. Do you think that the following soundtrack fits the video's plot?



Yes

No

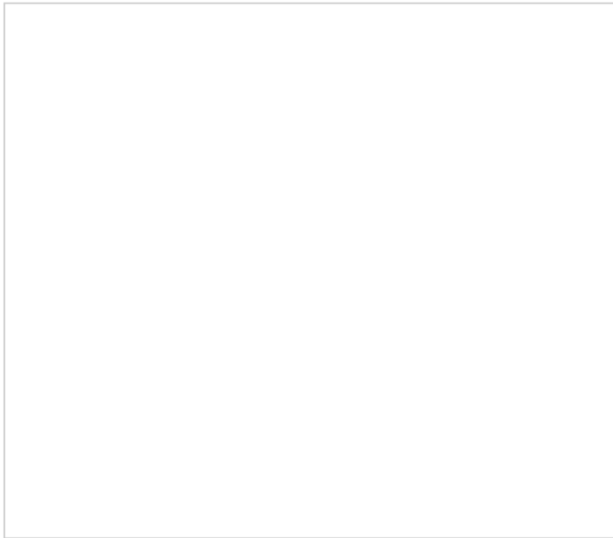
7. Do you think that the following soundtrack fits the video's plot?



Yes

No

8. Do you think that the following soundtrack fits the video's plot?



Yes

No

9. After watching the four videos how likely is it for you to share/like/comment them in social networks?
Please rate on a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "extremely unlikely", 2 means "unlikely", 3 means "neutral", 4 means "likely" and 5 means "extremely likely".

	Extremely Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Extremely Likely
Puppy Love 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Puppy Love 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Puppy Love 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Puppy Love 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX 3 - SPSS Outputs

SPSS Outputs

"SPSS Outputs of Questionnaire Data"

Normality of the data

SPSS output. Kolmogorov Smirnov test for the normality of ratings (1 to 5) of the impact of each characteristic on the decision to create an online story about the *FIRST KISS*.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		actors	videoe	videor	music	speech	plot
N		35	35	35	35	35	35
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3,6000	3,3714	3,7143	3,8000	3,6286	4,4571
	Std. Deviation	1,19312	1,08697	,98731	1,02326	1,08697	,74134
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,260	,177	,242	,235	,234	,339
	Positive	,140	,177	,158	,137	,138	,232
	Negative	-,260	-,176	-,242	-,235	-,234	-,339
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,537	1,045	1,434	1,388	1,383	2,008
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,018	,225	,033	,042	,044	,001

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

SPSS output. Kolmogorov Smirnov test for the normality of ratings (1 to 5) of the impact of each characteristic on the decision to create an online story about the *EPIC SPLIT*.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		actors	videor	music	speech	plot
N		54	54	54	54	54
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	4,2407	4,3148	4,0000	3,6111	4,0556
	Std. Deviation	,90980	,92805	1,13270	1,13962	1,30914
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,298	,307	,256	,208	,283
	Positive	,202	,230	,189	,130	,235
	Negative	-,298	-,307	-,256	-,208	-,283
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2,190	2,255	1,880	1,526	2,081
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,002	,019	,000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

SPSS output. Kolmogorov Smirnov test for the normality of ratings (1 to 5) of the impact of each characteristic on the decision to create an online story about MONTY THE PENGUIN.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		actors	animation	videor	music	sound effects	plot
N		46	46	46	46	46	46
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3,8913	4,2174	3,9783	4,1087	3,9565	4,6522
	Std. Deviation	1,21524	,94076	,93069	1,01605	1,15386	,79491
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,254	,276	,227	,245	,232	,452
	Positive	,181	,203	,165	,190	,183	,331
	Negative	-,254	-,276	-,227	-,245	-,232	-,452
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,723	1,869	1,538	1,659	1,576	3,064
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,005	,002	,018	,008	,014	,000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

SPSS output. Kolmogorov Smirnov test for the normality of ratings (1 to 5) of the impact of each characteristic on the decision to create an online story about PUPPY LOVE.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		actors	videor	music	soundeffects	plot
N		57	57	57	57	57
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	4,2456	4,1053	4,2632	3,8246	4,5614
	Std. Deviation	,96881	,95775	,89695	1,11999	,80217
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,343	,246	,303	,221	,409
	Positive	,218	,175	,206	,173	,292
	Negative	-,343	-,246	-,303	-,221	-,409
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		2,592	1,855	2,288	1,672	3,092
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,002	,000	,007	,000

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

FIRST KISS brand video

SPSS output. Friedman's test for the effect of characteristic on the weighted mean impact. Video: FIRST KISS by WREN.

First block compares all 6 characteristics and second block compares the five characteristics excluding the Plot

BLOCK 1: all
characteristics

BLOCK 2: excluding
PLOT

Ranks

	Mean Rank
actors	3,24
videoe	2,83
videor	3,37
music	3,54
speech	3,29
plot	4,73

Ranks

	Mean Rank
actors	2,99
videoe	2,63
videor	3,07
music	3,23
speech	3,09

Test Statistics^a

N	35
Chi-Square	26,789
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Friedman Test

Test Statistics^a

N	35
Chi-Square	3,913
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	,418

a. Friedman Test

SPSS output. Wilcoxon tests between Plot and the rest of the characteristics. FIRST KISS video by WREN

Test Statistics^a

	actors - plot	videoe - plot	videor - plot	music - plot	speech - plot
Z	-3,098 ^b	-4,106 ^b	-3,057 ^b	-2,835 ^b	-3,679 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,002	,000	,002	,005	,000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

EPIC SPLIT brand video

SPSS output. Friedman's test for the effect of characteristic on the weighted mean impact. Video: EPIC SPLIT by VOLVO TRUCKS. First block compares all 5 characteristics and second block compares the 4 characteristics excluding the Speech.

BLOCK 1: all characteristics		BLOCK 2: excluding SPEECH	
Ranks		Ranks	
	Mean Rank		Mean Rank
actors	3,21	actors	2,52
videor	3,35	videor	2,66
music	2,94	music	2,31
speech	2,36	plot	2,51
plot	3,14		

Test Statistics ^a		Test Statistics ^a	
N	54	N	54
Chi-Square	21,204	Chi-Square	3,447
df	4	df	3
Asymp. Sig.	,000	Asymp. Sig.	,328

a. Friedman Test

SPSS output. Wilcoxon tests between SPEECH and the rest of the characteristics. EPIC SPLIT by VOLVO TRUCK

Test Statistics ^a				
	actors - speech	videor - speech	music - speech	plot - speech
Z	-3,229 ^b	-3,419 ^b	-2,409 ^b	-2,139 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	,001	,016	,032

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

MONTY THE PENGUIN brand video

SPSS output. Friedman's test for the effect of characteristic on the weighted mean impact. Video: MONTY THE PENGUIN by JOHN LEWIS. First block compares all 6 characteristics and second block compares the 5 characteristics excluding the Plot.

BLOCK 1: all characteristics

Ranks

	Mean Rank
actors	3,18
animation	3,61
videor	3,00
music	3,47
sound effects	3,25
plot	4,49

Test Statistics^a

N	46
Chi-Square	33,662
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Friedman Test

BLOCK 2: excluding PLOT

Ranks

	Mean Rank
actors	2,89
animation	3,27
videor	2,76
music	3,13
sound effects	2,95

Test Statistics^a

N	46
Chi-Square	5,706
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	,222

a. Friedman Test

SPSS output. Wilcoxon tests between Plot and the rest of the characteristics. MONTY THE PENGUIN by JOHN LEWIS.

Test Statistics^a

	actors - plot	videoe - plot	videor - plot	music - plot	speech - plot
Z	-3,830 ^b	-3,024 ^b	-4,422 ^b	-3,405 ^b	-3,476 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,002	,000	,001	,001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

PUPPY LOVE brand video

SPSS output. Friedman's test for the effect of characteristic on the weighted mean impact. Video: PUPPY LOVE by BUDWEISER

Ranks

	Mean Rank
actors	3,03
videor	2,78
music	3,10
soundeffects	2,53
plot	3,57

Test Statistics^a

N	57
Chi-Square	25,471
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	,000

a. Friedman Test

SPSS output. Wilcoxon tests between Plot and the rest of the characteristics, and between Sound Effects and the other characteristics. PUPPY LOVE by BUDWEISER.

Test Statistics^a

	actors - plot	videor - plot	music - plot	soundeffects - plot
Z	-2,933 ^b	-2,891 ^b	-1,970 ^b	-4,177 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,004	,049	,000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on positive ranks.

Test Statistics^a

	actors - soundeffects	videor - soundeffects	music - soundeffects	plot - soundeffects
Z	-2,477 ^b	-1,845 ^b	-3,134 ^b	-4,177 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,013	,065	,002	,000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

Common Characteristics across videos

Chi-square comparison of effect of characteristic (No or minor, Moderate, Strong or Very strong) across the 4 videos.

Common characteristics across all videos are Actors, Video Recording, Music and Plot

Actors/ characters

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12,847 ^a	6	,046
Likelihood Ratio	13,694	6	,033
Linear-by-Linear Association	,518	1	,472
N of Valid Cases	192		

a. 2 cells (16,7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3,46.

Video recording

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8,962 ^a	6	,176
Likelihood Ratio	8,686	6	,192
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,227	1	,268
N of Valid Cases	192		

a. 4 cells (33,3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,55.

MUSIC

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6,449 ^a	6	,375
Likelihood Ratio	7,618	6	,267
Linear-by-Linear Association	4,443	1	,035
N of Valid Cases	192		

a. 4 cells (33,3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,92.

PLOT

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,977 ^a	6	,126
Likelihood Ratio	8,925	6	,178
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,046	1	,306
N of Valid Cases	192		

a. 8 cells (66,7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,82.

Fisher's exact test for the association of MUSIC FIT with the "Extremely Likely" or "Likely" to create an online story about the brand video - combined response.

Chi-Square Tests

video		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Puppy Love 1	Pearson Chi-Square	34,729 ^c	1	,000	,000	,000
	Continuity Correction ^b	32,773	1	,000		
	Likelihood Ratio	39,473	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test					
	Linear-by-Linear Association	34,573	1	,000		
	N of Valid Cases	223				
Puppy Love 2	Pearson Chi-Square	17,377 ^d	1	,000	,000	,000
	Continuity Correction ^b	16,135	1	,000		
	Likelihood Ratio	17,381	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test					
	Linear-by-Linear Association	17,299	1	,000		
	N of Valid Cases	223				
Puppy Love 3	Pearson Chi-Square	24,695 ^e	1	,000	,000	,000
	Continuity Correction ^b	22,281	1	,000		
	Likelihood Ratio	21,083	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test					
	Linear-by-Linear Association	24,584	1	,000		
	N of Valid Cases	223				
Puppy Love 4	Pearson Chi-Square	29,926 ^f	1	,000	,000	,000
	Continuity Correction ^b	25,793	1	,000		
	Likelihood Ratio	19,827	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test					
	Linear-by-Linear Association	29,792	1	,000		
	N of Valid Cases	223				
Total	Pearson Chi-Square	189,236 ^a	1	,000	,000	,000
	Continuity Correction ^b	187,027	1	,000		
	Likelihood Ratio	193,290	1	,000		
	Fisher's Exact Test					
	Linear-by-Linear Association	189,024	1	,000		
	N of Valid Cases	892				

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 84,58.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

c. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21,51.

d. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 26,26.

e. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6,03.

f. 1 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2,02.