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Blogging and Self-Identity: Analysing the Impact of a 'digital you' within Higher Education

(A work-in-progress project)

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Aims

- To identify whether the act of blogging has an impact on students' self-identities at university.
- To examine whether blogging should be incorporated into teaching in order to increase student engagement.
- To assess perceptions of the importance of fashion blogging in today's society.

Methodology

First year Fashion Marketing students were introduced to blogging as part of a session on developing a professional identity online. To encourage them to experience blogging, students were shown how to set up a blog, with individual support. Students were then set a compulsory assignment to produce a blog post reflecting on their experience at the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. Follow-up research on the students' blogging experiences was carried out through a qualitative study in the Spring Term.

Initial Findings



Each one of us want to step out and make a change in life but we wont be able to do that without the right shoes, as Marilyn Monroe said “give a girl the right shoes and she can conquer the world”. A lot of people tried to make themselves a shoe print through wearing different types of foot wear in different trends which changes a lot through time depending on the life style and interests.



Blog Example

Future considerations

- In-depth interviews are to be conducted to analyse how motivations and barriers to blogging link to students' perceptions of the value of a digital presence in relation to a perceived audience.
- Individual blog posts will be analysed using Nvivo software to identify any relationship between student perceptions and typology.
- The overall results from this longitudinal study will enable the researchers to make recommendations for the use of blogs within HE by focusing on the student experience of constructing a digital self-identity.