Professional Use of User-Generated Video - Views of Producers and Contributors

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Abstract

Professional broadcasters now have the opportunity to leverage user generated video (UGV) content to enhance professional coverage of festivals and similar large events; offering a broader perspective more like 'being there'. Structured focus group discussions with (1) professional content makers and (2) potential contributors of UGV - have been conducted to help enhancing the use of this footage in broadcast coverage. Results demonstrate the potential impact of UGV, spanning from the motivation to create and use content, to technical requirements, ethical considerations and reward.

Author Keywords

User-Generated Video (UGV); User Experience research; focus groups; professional creative practice.

ACM Classification Keywords

h.5.m. Information Interface and Presentation (e.g. HCI) Miscellaneous.

Introduction

At large-scale public events, even the most comprehensive of professional TV coverage cannot convey the feeling of 'being there'. For example, at a

large music festival, broadcasters are likely to concentrate their finite resources on the main stages and on interviews with a small number of performers and/or attendees. For the highlights of a marathon, they will use cameras placed at key locations and potentially mobile cameras following a very small subset of the athletes. Whilst the main action will be captured successfully, what may be missing is the human perspective that only 'being there' could portray. Members of the public are likely to be present at more peripheral locations and, as such, their material is likely to be distinct and rich, providing viewers at home with a rich representation of the event. As an additional resource, the inclusion of this 'user-generated video' (UGV) has the opportunity to be complementary to professional footage.

This paper briefly reports on formative discussion-based user studies. Facilitators working on the EU project COGNITUS[1] led focus group conversations with (1) groups of potential contributors, and (2) groups of professional content producers, whose work stands to be enhanced by inclusion of UGV. These focus groups were intended to help researchers understand the perspectives of both groups in terms of the value and status of using UGV in professional content. It also aimed to understand related factors such as motivation and reward, quality, rights, contributor-producer relationship and communication, and requirements for any software applications to support the activity. As such, the discussions between researchers and users; formed an important role in requirements gathering for the project: where are innovative user experience (UX), technical or operational developments needed?

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1 http://cognitus-h2020.eu/

Professional Producers

Structure and Participants

Three 60-minute discussion sessions were held for professional content producers; one with two participants, one with three, and the last one with a single participant. Each session was facilitated by two researchers from the COGNITUS project. Some of the participants were employed by the professional broadcasting organisation that hosted the discussion, and others produced content independently. All have experience producing video coverage of events and/or of working with contributors and UGV material.

The semi-structured interview schedule aimed to capture participants views about the concept of using UGV in broadcast content. Using a case study of an arts festival, participants were asked to describe how and why they would use UGV, including the tools they might require, the metadata and information they would need from both content and contributors, and thinking around the potential workflows/timelines for receiving, using (or rejecting) and repurposing UGV. It also explored issues around ethics and motivation for contributors.

Insights and Outcomes

Key themes from the discussion were elicited through thematic analysis. Two researchers carried out this analysis independently and results were cross checked and corroborated. Six key themes emerged in relation to participants' understanding, views and desires for UGV:

SYSTEM DESIGN

Professionals wished to have a simple system that could enable them to review and filter submissions in an easy and transparent way.

The following specific features were identified as required within the system or process:

- Semantic/categorical tagging, including automatic annotation
- High-level tagging for audiovisual 'quality'
- Highlighting videos that have already been used
- Straightforward communication channel, for feedback and for sending automated acknowledgement messages
- Communication/agreement of rights and ownership
- Contributor profile pages for contributors - that could allow producers to see other/all UGV that contributors have made
- Smart presentation to support easy review of submissions

BARRIERS

Professionals outlined the following potential barriers:

- When the technical audiovisual quality is not up to standard of typical broadcast standards
- When there is zero or bad quality network connectivity
- Managing the rights of both the creator of the video and the people featured within it

MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Producers saw the potential benefits of including UGV in their work. They would like to put out calls to action for specific types of content, to serve two purposes, firstly, to increase engagement amongst potential contributors, and secondly, to provide an idea about the types of content they would be looking for.

REWARD

Professionals described ideas for a credit system for contributors:

- A badge system to indicate that the broadcaster valued their contribution
- Feedback provided to contributors in line with the specificity of the brief, ranging from automated acknowledgement to specific critiques
- Providing more tailored feedback, when possible and necessary, in order to improve the skillset of contributors

COMMUNITY

A living system to highlight the clips that have been chosen and provide information about good practice and feedback

Potential Contributors

Structure and Participants

For discussion with potential contributors of UGV, two 60-minute session were held. Members of the public were paid a small financial incentive for attending the sessions and were recruited, according to a specific brief, by a specialist agency. One session had four participants and the other three. All identified as regular attendees of live events—such as festivals, performances or concerts—and as regular users of their smartphones' video camera feature.

In complement to the discussion structure used with the professionals, these groups focussed on the participants being the potential makers and contributors of the content. The discussions explored their views about the potential added value of UGV, as well as the motivations, barriers and

encouragement/feedback they might like to have. Discussions addressed work relationships between themselves and professionals, as well as a potential app, in terms of how it might look and function. In addition, facilitators probed the idea of rights, control and permissions in relation to the actual content itself.

Insights and Outcomes
Discussion data was analysed using the same method as used previously. In each session, the participants discussed the potential experience of contributing UGV to a professional broadcaster. Discussion was rich and transcended the elements of the facilitation structure. In brief summary, our potential contributors' views and ideas are classified under the following six themes:

FOOTAGE
In relation to the types of footage they would capture at large scale events, participants described capturing a wide range. Their usual behaviour is to capture material 'in the moment' to create memories or to share live video with friends/family. They would also potentially capture footage in response to a brief or call to action.

SUPPORT AND RIGHTS
Participants were somewhat naïve about their rights and would require support to make informed choices. They felt unsure about what material they are allowed to record and share, where their video is stored or used and who owns the content. Specifically, they were unsure about sharing their personal experiences more widely, and the impact that might have on the people included.

Participants were also ambitious to improve their skills for recording events with a video camera. Feedback was generally very welcome.

MOTIVATION
Participants described their motivation to record videos at live events. They outlined they typically capture:

- The 'best bits', such as specific/parts of songs
- Personal or social footage that is not captured in the mainstream/broadcast, such as social or unpredictable action
- The 'on the ground' view - being there and part of the crowd

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE
When watching professional event coverage, participants preferred mix would be a blend of both the main broadcaster material, combined with backstage and other supplementary video. This would offer a more personal and authentic experience of the event.

REWARD
When theirmaterial is used participants wish to be rewarded in the following ways:

- Credit and acknowledgment for their material
- Financial incentives
- Freebies (e.g. tickets for concerts or TV shows)

SOFTWARE OR TOOLS TO SUPPORT CONTRIBUTION
Software tools/apps for contributing video must be simple, and support the following:

- Awareness and communication about their rights and support for making informed choices
- Communication with producers and feedback about video. In the case where their material is used then clear acknowledgement is anticipated
- Upload of videos to a platform
- Clear information about permissions of using UGV
- Tagging UGV

Discussion / Conclusion

This paper briefly outlines ideas and considerations for using UGV within broadcast coverage of a live event such as a festival. It presents the perspectives of both the professional content makers who would use UGV in their work, and prospective non-professional contributors of the UGV itself.

Through conducting formative discussion-based user studies, this paper explores the issues inherent with using UGV in broadcast content, with the findings feeding into the EU project COGNITUS. These issues and related factors range from motivation and reward, quality, rights, contributor-producer relationship and communication, and requirements for any software applications to support the activity.

Professionals and contributors were highly motivated in the concept of incorporating UGV in broadcast content. Professionals saw the value in that it could potentially enhance their professional footage through gaining a more authentic, behind the scenes perspective, and contributors were motivated to successfully create content that could have a wider audience than that of friends and family. Contributors also indicated an interest in being financially rewarded or accredited/acknowledged for their content in the event of it being used by a professional.

In terms of workflows and processes involved in the use of UGV, both groups valued an easy to use system that offered a high level of transparency in the way in which content would be tagged. The system would allow professionals to see all content created by contributors and incorporate methods to surface the highest quality content. They would like a feedback system that allows easy communication between themselves with potential contributors, which offers a two-way communication method.

Contributors placed further interest in gaining feedback from professionals as it would help them to develop their content making skills in the future. Professionals also highlighted the value in providing feedback to improve contributors' skills, and would also like to put calls out for specific content. Providing feedback may be a method to enable a return in higher quality content in future events.

Understanding the rights of both the people who create UGV as well as those within the specific content was met with a level of uncertainty by both groups. Professionals indicated that contributors would have to sign a release form, but contributors were somewhat naïve about their rights and would require support to make informed choices.

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