

VIRAL VIDEO ADVERTISEMENTS:
USES AND GRATIFICATIONS RESEARCH

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**VIRAL VIDEO ADVERTISEMENTS:
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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to ascertain the uses and gratifications achieved by their choice to disseminate video advertisements that they view on the internet, allowing the advertisement to spread in a viral nature. The goal is to determine what gratifications are popular among college-aged individuals and how those gratifications change depending on the type of video as well as the content. The research is completed through a series of three small group sessions and an online questionnaire made available through the questions feature on Facebook. Upon examination of the data, it becomes clear that both young men and women in the age demographic targeted by this research seek to spread these videos in order to interact socially online with their friends and potentially provide their friends with humor. Women also showed a higher sense of concern for how spreading a video would affect their reputations than did men.

Chapter 1: Introduction to Viral Video Advertising

With the emergence of video streaming websites such as Hulu and YouTube, the field of viral marketing has the opportunity to reach a wider audience. These popular video streaming sites often include video advertisements in the places where television would normally include commercials, but since the videos are available online and on demand, when the user encounters the videos online, it is quick and easy for that user to spread the video to other consumers. This happens primarily through word-of-mouth, which in today's technological age could mean in face-to-face encounters, but it could just as easily entail use of social media or e-mail and those are just two of the emerging forms of e-WOM advertising (electronic word-of-mouth). A consumer witnessing a video on YouTube or Hulu needs merely to copy the link and paste it to their Facebook status or to any of a wide variety of pages within the Facebook network to spread the video to those with whom they are connected.

A viral video is a type of video that becomes popular through internet sharing. Viral video spreading occurs when a video is posted online and members of the audience viewing the video decide to copy the link to the video and share it with other people – usually friends, family, or coworkers. Those people may then share the video with other people that they know and then those people could spread it to people they know and so on. Any video can become viral if somebody decides to share it through the internet, from movie trailers to webcam product reviews to a video of a household pet that has learned a funny new trick. However, this study focuses on videos that have been commercially produced as a form of advertisement for a product or a service, or what one

could call viral video advertisements as a way to distinguish this particular genre of viral video from the rest.

As a Facebook user, one frequently encounters such links and advertisements either in the news feed feature or in the advertisements sidebar. Parr (2010) shows that the time the average Facebook user spends on Facebook in a day is steadily climbing from 9.3 minutes per day in June of 2009, to 11.5 minutes per day in August of the same year, up to 14 minutes per day in January of 2010. With Facebook's potential for a user to share a link to all of his or her friends with just one post, the potential for these videos to spread through word-of-mouth rapidly has increased. And even once a user posts a link for all their friends to see, it still has the potential to spread exponentially. And Facebook is just one of a variety of websites through which these advertisements can potentially spread in a similar fashion. Each of these methods of viral video advertisements spreading online, be it by e-mail, Facebook or another website, can be encompassed in the category of e-WOM advertising.

Video is not the only method for advertisements to go viral, but it provides a new twist on the way word-of-mouth has spread in the past. The popularity of viral video is demonstrated by Belar (2010) who reported that just 11 days after the band OK Go had released a viral video of its new song "This Too Shall Pass" in March of 2010, the play button on the video on YouTube had been pressed more than 7 million times. That is an average of more than 600 thousand plays per day. While OK Go's song is not an example of a viral video advertisement, it shows the popularity of the online video medium. If viral videos from one medium can reach those kind of numbers in such a short period of time, why couldn't viral videos from the advertising medium have that

same kind of success in reaching the public? And one could argue that this is a more meaningful forum to have those kind of numbers than commercials reaching much larger portions of the public because in this case the user made a conscious decision to press the play button, to view the video. One would expect that to mean that the individual was using the video to fulfill some need whereas the advertisements one sees on television are put before the audience without knowing for certain if the user is going to be paying attention to the screen during the commercial or even be interested in it if they were paying attention. With viral video advertisements, the advertiser knows that they already have the interest of the audience because they made a conscious decision to push play and make use of that video.

Viral video advertisements have the potential to spread more rapidly and to potentially reach a larger audience while also reaching an audience that made a conscious decision to view the video. As such, it is important for consumers and advertisers alike to understand why those videos are being used in that way by the audience, what the audience has to gain by spreading the videos, and how advertisers can harness the audience's desire to consume online videos and share them with others.

Word-of-mouth advertising has been a popular tool in marketing strategy for quite some time. In fact, some of the earliest research in the field, Arndt (1967) claims that “word-of-mouth emerges as one of the most important, if not *the* most important source of information for the consumer.” Today, word-of-mouth is widely regarded as a great alternative to regular advertising, as consumers are more apt to believe endorsements of the product or service if it comes from or appears to come from other consumers. According to Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), advice from other consumers about a service

has more influence amongst other consumers than all the advertisements generated by marketers combined. It seems somewhat obvious that consumers would be more likely to follow up on an endorsement from somebody that they know or from somebody that they believe to be like them than they would be to buy something just because of the advertisers' messages.

However, advertisers can and do attempt to find ways around consumers learning to not fully trust the word of advertisers alone. If word-of-mouth and commercial advertising is not helping sell their product or services as well as they would like, sometimes utilizing celebrity endorsements via social media. It is widely accepted that people like to buy the products that celebrities use – wear what they wear, eat what they eat, etc. As van der Waldt, de Beer and Plessis (2007) point out, this works best with the use of attractive and credible celebrities. Now, with today's social networking abundance it is easier than ever for word to spread virally from person-to-person via sites such as Facebook and Twitter. In fact, some advertisers have taken to paying celebrities such as Kim Kardashian to endorse their products through their Twitter pages. However, it remains unclear if advertisers compromise the integrity of the message and turn people off of the product due to the disingenuous feel of such tweets. Klaassen (2009) discovered that advertisers cannot buy their way into organic word-of-mouth advertising through paying for Twitter endorsements from individuals because most people tend to have a skeptical distaste of advertisements that are paid for. Klaassen finds that personal experience with the product on the part of the endorser is vital, at least when it comes to this form of viral advertisements.

Dichter (1966) finds that nobody will offer a recommendation through word-of-mouth unless doing so offers some sort of satisfaction. Furthermore, Dichter finds that the recommender is likely to only choose such products, listeners and words that will serve his underlying needs and ends. Furthermore, Dichter (1966, 148) finds that the motivations of the recommender will fall within one of four categories; (1) product involvement, in which the recommenders experience with a product produces a tension that must be alleviated by way of talk, recommendation and enthusiasm - either positive or negative, (2) self-involvement, in which the recommender seeks to gratify his emotional needs, (3) other-involvement, where the recommender seeks to provide a "gift" to others in order to express friendship, care or love., and (4) message-involvement, which comes from a recommender interacting with others based on their reactions to a product solely through the advertisements, commercials, or public relations relevant to that product and not any direct interaction with said product. Ultimately, however, Dichter (1966, 166) concludes that while word-of-mouth recommendations can help to influence public opinion concerning a product, they can not shape or mold it.

Marken (2007) estimated that \$1.4 billion would be spent on advertising communication through social media in 2007 and estimates that by 2012 that number should double. This social media advertising manifests itself in a number of ways. For instance, the social networking site Facebook contains sidebar advertisements that target specific individuals when they login to the site. These advertisements appear to specific individuals based on their interests on the site. For example, if an individual's home page reveals that they are single and would be open to dating, their sidebar on the site might be filled with various advertisements for dating websites like match.com. The more

information people share about themselves on the Internet through sites such as Facebook, the easier it becomes for marketers to reach individuals that fall within the range of interests they would like to target. Marken makes the case that social media is all about people and because it is where people go to share opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with other people it is in the best interest of advertisers to pay attention and use the information being shared to their advantage. Thus, he claims that communication between consumers and advertisers through social media is the most undiluted, most direct and most cost-effective means of learning about customers and reaching the ones the advertisers choose to target. There are several reasons Marken uses to exemplify his claims including the fact that word-of-mouth can have a tremendous amount of control over perception and acceptance when passed along via this method.

According to Hung and Li (2007), consumers looking for product information directly from other reviewers tend to gravitate toward product review sites that have a large number of viewers. They do this because it will give their own reviews a greater chance at being viewed and helpful to a larger number of their fellow consumers. Also, with a larger number of users there is a greater chance they will find reviews that are beneficial to them. Hung and Li's study focuses on e-WOM and how it is used by beauty product enthusiasts in China. They found that, through websites, consumers have the ability to interact with advertisers and their fellow consumers. Hung and Li's research finds that there are four categories in which word-of-mouth is used or sought on such sites: (1) to provide a source of social capital, (2) brand choice facilitation, (3) persuasion knowledge development, and (4) consumer reflexivity. Social capital in this instance can be defined from Bourdieu (1986, 51) as "resources embedded within,

available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit." Persuasion knowledge development refers to an individual's increasing knowledge that they are being manipulated by marketers and so they seek out reviews from other consumers who are not associated with the advertising plan of the manufacturer of the product in question. The idea of consumer reflexivity as stated by Hung and Li pertains to the empowering of consumers through participation in an information-sharing virtual community by balancing the information disadvantage that consumers have when interacting with marketers and giving them the opportunity to freely express concerns and interact with other consumers. Hung and Li conclude that as members of a virtual consumer community increase their knowledge of persuasion, they become more assertive in their word-of-mouth communication and undertake a form of reflexivity behavior to combat marketer's attempts to persuade them through advertisements. Also, they find that there are three sources of social capital (structured electronic word-of-mouth, cognitive focus, or social relations) that impact consumer learning and behavioral outcomes. In other words, those three sources of social capital affect how and what consumers learn about a product or service and how they respond. As such, their findings represent a strong correlation between word-of-mouth and consumer behavior.

In short, there are many methods of word-of-mouth advertising that are already being employed and electronic word-of-mouth is a field which has become increasingly popular and scholars have begun researching its merits and uses in the past five years or so. Viral video is just one of a variety of forms in which electronic word-of-mouth plays

a significant role and it is one in which fewer studies have been completed and which has a large amount of potential.

The viral advertiser's ultimate goal is to attract more users to a product or service in an effort to increase profits. However, in order for that relationship to exist, the audience has to want something from the advertiser. While this study of viral video advertisements relies heavily on self-reports, one would think that the subject matter would not give the subjects any type of motive to hide their feeling and opinions on the issue as it is not a subject matter in which one would expect a subjects' responses to lead to any kind of judgment or condemnation of the subjects based upon their responses. Simply put, any reason for somebody to lie about why they find humorous viral video advertisements amusing, barring the use of widely controversial advertisements, seems rather unlikely and in the event that such a motive should exist it would likely be a minor one which wouldn't have too profound of an effect on the findings of the study. Furthermore, the study would attempt to trace the needs of the audience to their origin by attempting to determine in part why individuals want to use viral video advertisements in the first place and what gratification they gain from it.

The research questions this study attempts to answer are as follows. (1) What gratifications are satisfied among the audience through the use and spread of viral video advertisements? (2) How do the gratifications achieved by the audience differ between separate genres of viral video advertisements? (3) What gratifications achieved through the spreading of viral video advertisements are most sought after by the audience?

The first hypothesis of this study is that there are only a small number of gratifications that will entice the majority of individuals to spread a viral video

advertisement. If the data collected shows a large variety of responses correlating with the amount of responses received from the subjects, then it could be argued that this hypothesis is incorrect. The second hypothesis of this study would anticipate that individuals expect to gain different gratifications from spreading different types of videos. This hypothesis would be supported if there are significantly recognizable differences in the questionnaire responses concerning the gratifications received or desired from the spread of one type of video as compared to the others. Should this hypothesis be supported, this study would endeavor to identify those differences and how they affect the potential success of each type of video advertisement. A third hypothesis of this study would anticipate that the most common gratification for spreading viral video advertisements would fall within the excitement cluster as outlined by McQuail, Blumler and Brown's study (1972) into uses and gratifications of the media by the audience. In fact, it is quite possible that a number of the responses will combine or straddle multiple clusters. If the majority of the gratifications identified by the audience can be reasonably argued to fit within the excitement cluster, this hypothesis could be judged to be accurate.

Chapter 2 - Uses and Gratifications Theory and Word-of-mouth

I. Review of Uses and Gratifications Theory

Uses and gratifications theory is an effects-oriented method focusing on what draws and holds the attention of the audience. By researching how the audience seeks and achieves gratifications through the use of video advertisements, three goals can be achieved: (1) a greater understanding of what draws the audience to these video advertisements, (2) knowledge of what makes some videos successful where others fail and (3) a know-how of ways to increase the chances that an advertisement will go viral.

Among the formative works in uses and gratifications research were Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974), which reshaped Katz and Foulkes' (1962) assertion that individuals used the media as a form of escape from their normal day-to-day experiences. Instead, Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) state that individuals use the media in order to gratify specific needs. They claim that the audience's expectations, which are derived from their desire to have specific wants fulfilled by the media, have a significant impact on what news is aired by the media. In essence, because the media rely upon the audience to meet its own goals, it has an incentive to satisfy the desires of its audience. That incentive is made easier to accomplish through a better understanding of what members of the audience want and why they want to seek out media content to satisfy their perceived needs instead of looking to another outlet.

It was McQuail, Blumler and Brown (1972) who narrowed the reasons for media use to four categories or clusters of needs that the audience wants gratified. The four clusters that were revealed by this research were the Self-Rating Appeal, Basis for Social Interaction, Excitement, and Educational Appeal. Those in the self-rating appeal cluster sought the opportunity to learn about themselves. The individuals in the basis for social interaction cluster sought to use the program in order to find opportunities to use it in their social environment. Those in the excitement cluster were found largely to be hard working individuals who, as Katz and Foulk (1962) suggested, sought to find an escape from their day-to-day lives through the program's entertainment value. The final cluster, educational appeal, were typically those with the least educational experience seeking to learn new information.

Ruggiero (2000) suggests that uses and gratifications researchers must be more willing to explore interpersonal and qualitative aspects of the media. Ruggiero describes some of the early criticisms of uses and gratifications research approaches as being were that they were heavily reliant on self-reported data and were unsophisticated in examining audience needs. However, he concludes that studying uses and gratifications on the internet leaves an easily traceable trail and is readily accessible for the researcher to observe, interpret and copy, which may lead to advances in this approach. He states that “if the Internet is a new domain of human activity, it is also a new dominion for uses and gratifications researchers.”

This study seeks to reveal patterns in the use of the viral video medium, but realizes that it will not be able to provide advertisers with a definite way to promote the viral spread of their commercials. It will instead hopefully provide qualitative

information about why people want to partake in this medium in the first place and uncover just what they believe they are gaining from doing so.

II. E-WOM Marketing

A business probably should not build its entire strategy around users selling their products or services for them, but word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth are becoming considered to be highly influential means of advertising. Marketers should understand why it is effective and how to harness its power. Allsop, Bassett, and Hoskins (2007) viewed word-of-mouth marketing through the lens of complexity science modeling and identified ways in which marketers can influence it to create an advantage for themselves. They describe complexity science as a tool developed in the 1980s that provide researchers with three fundamental concepts; 1) everything is related, 2) nothing is linear, and 3) small changes can create unexpected and disproportionate outcomes. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins' study states that one of the key reasons that word-of-mouth advertising is effective is because it has passed through the filter of "people like me," so if people in similar situations and with similar tastes like using a product or service other people become interested in trying it out for themselves. They also state that since trust in institutions is declining, people are putting more faith in what they hear from others. A 2006 Harris Interactive survey cited in the study shows the importance of word-of-mouth in multiple categories. According to the survey, an overwhelming number of consumers said that they were influenced more by word-of-mouth and recommendations from

friends, family, or coworkers than other forms of learning about their product options in three of the four categories listed – fast food, cold medicine, and breakfast cereal. In the fourth category, personal computers, most people said they were actually influenced more by expert advice. However, in that category word-of-mouth was the second most influential.

Allsop, Bassett, and Hoskins (2007) provide five principles to help businesses maximize the use word-of-mouth amongst their consumers. The first principle to remember is that not all social networks are equal, nor do all individuals in a given social network have the same level of influence. For example, celebrities on Twitter generally have more follows than the average user, thus their tweets reach more users. However, the group sites Columbia University professor Duncan Watts' (2007) argument that these influential people are often not the ones responsible for social change, that in fact social change is often brought about by easily influenced individuals passing information to other easily influenced individuals. So, Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins suggest that it would be more effective for businesses to target individuals that most frequently seek word-of-mouth tips and those that most frequently give out such tips through social networks. As a result, businesses can determine which demographics are most likely to participate in social networking activity and which categories of information are most likely to be passed along by which demographics. For example, men are more likely to pass along or receive word-of-mouth tips on vehicles and politics while women are more likely to concentrate on word-of-mouth involving health care services or nutrition, according to Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins. As a result of having such information on multiple demographics, marketers can customize their ads to target the demographics that will be

most likely to spread good news about their products to others. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins' second principle states that word-of-mouth happens in the context of a specific situation and occasion. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins suggest that there are different factors that effect the ability of word-of-mouth to draw in new customers: attributes of the source, size and density of the social network, rate of activity within the social network, personal relevance, characteristics of the message, efficiency of exchange, polarity of the message, and participant role. These factors determine the speed at which the information spreads, the size of the group to which the information is passed, and the whether or not the information is passed along at all. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins' third principle states that people make decisions based on a complex interplay of cognitive preferences and emotional benefits. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins claim there are three levels upon which people make decisions about products: the attributes of the product, the functional benefits and emotional consequences derived from those attributes, and the personal values that those consequences reinforce. As such, businesses need to provide information to their consumers that has personal relevance by addressing the three levels previously mentioned. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins' fourth principle states that the environment in which word-of-mouth takes place is constantly changing. So it is important for advertisers to develop new techniques to keep up with the changes and not underestimate the power of new technologies to spread the word. The fifth and final principle of Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins (2007) states that the diffusion and impact of messages within the social network varies based on the polarity of the messages being communicated. Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins claim that it is equally important for businesses to neutralize negative word-of-mouth as it is for them to promote positive

word-of-mouth because negative messages tend to spread more quickly within a social network. Deitz and Cakim (2005) find that the average influential individual on a social network spreads positive messages to an average of 13 people while the same individuals will spread negative messages to an average of 17 people. Allsop's group claims that negative word-of-mouth can be diffused by making improvements to products to alleviate the concerns of people passing along negative word-of-mouth, strike out with the facts about your products to fight negative word-of-mouth spread by your oppositions, and good crisis management in the event that there is some sort of failure or safety issue with the product. Good crisis management involves an honest response and taking quick action towards improving the product.

The Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins (2007) study does not seek to determine what the individuals spreading the messages are gaining or believe they are gaining from doing so. Nonetheless, it provides significant insights for the current study: the methods of word-of-mouth advertising are frequently changing and the power of emerging media should not be underestimated. In fact, since Allsop's groups' study was conducted, at least one significant functioning tool of e-WOM has emerged in the Facebook news feed. The Facebook news feed allows a user to view the recent activity of their friends including new photos added, status updates and new developments in what their friends like and do not like. It also allows a user to share a link with every one of their friends immediately upon that friend's next log in to the site. For example, if a user encounters a funny new advertisement for Coca-Cola and want their friends on the Facebook network to see it, they need only copy the web browser link and past it into their Facebook status. This will bring the video to the attention of other users without them having to log out of

Facebook, open up a new browser window or even open a new web page. A second user, one of the original user's "friends," can then use Facebook's comment feature, and then that comment and the video itself will pop up in the news feed of all of the second user's "friends" as well, thus spreading the link to even more users.

Ed Keller of the Keller Fay Group, a word-of-mouth researching and consulting group, claims that there is abundant evidence to support the claim that word-of-mouth is the most important and effective communications channel. Like Allsop, Bassett and Hoskins, Keller (2007) offers some ways that businesses can make word-of-mouth work for them. Based on surveys with consumers engaged in word-of-mouth interaction, Keller offers these five insights about how word-of-mouth works as of 2007: billions and billions of word-of-mouth conversations take place daily, word-of-mouth spreads predominantly through face-to-face interaction, word-of-mouth is generally positive towards brands, word-of-mouth carries credibility and passes along the intent to purchase, and word-of-mouth is driven by marketing communications.

Allsop's and Keller's claims differ somewhat as Allsop says negative word-of-mouth spreads faster than positive, while Keller finds that positive word-of-mouth is far more prominent by a ratio of six to one. Allsop also describes the importance of online word-of-mouth, while Keller finds that face-to-face word-of-mouth has a larger effect with almost 76% of word-of-mouth interaction occurring face-to-face. However, both studies agree that word-of-mouth can be very beneficial for businesses and suggest the importance of marketers understanding how to make word-of-mouth work.

While Keller may point out that face-to-face word-of-mouth interaction is more common than word-of-mouth interactions that take place electronically, that is something

one could easily see changing in the future. As online social networks become more commonly used, one might expect the public's want for face-to-face social interaction to decrease as many of the same social needs that one may desire to have fulfilled can be accomplished through video chats and instant messaging through electronic mediums and online social networks. Of course, the need and desire for face-to-face interactions is not going to disappear. However, it could logically be implied that as the availability of social interaction online increases and is more frequently utilized, the desire and need for face-to-face interactions would see a correlating decrease. The same should hold true then for new forms of electronic word-of-mouth advertising. As they become more popular, the instances of face-to-face word-of-mouth interactions could see a correlating decrease. As such, so long as these new forums for e-WOM remain in use among significant portions of the public and as new forums are created and expanded upon, it remains beneficial to study the uses and applications of those new forums. And one could argue that if face-to-face word-of-mouth interactions decrease due to the increasing reliance on electronic word-of-mouth, the understanding of emerging media within the scope of electronic word-of-mouth becomes all the more important. The viral video medium provides substantial opportunities to the advertiser that face-to-face word-of-mouth advertising does not provide. When the video spreads virally, it still carries the direct message from the advertiser to each new individual receiving the message whereas in face-to-face word-of-mouth interactions, the advertiser has no direct influence whatsoever upon the receiver of the word-of-mouth.

Like Allsop and Keller, Golan and Zeidner (2008) review some viral advertisements in an effort to determine what is effective and how businesses can learn

and benefit from that knowledge. Amongst the leaders in viral advertising in its earliest stages were companies such as Microsoft, Burger King, Anheuser Busch, and Volvo, and large companies continue to lead in such techniques. Internet technology has advanced to the point where advertisers can place high definition ads at equal or greater quality than those that one could normally see on television. Golan and Zeidner analyzed more than 350 viral advertisements and found that most advertisers based their ads on “individual ego oriented appeals” and most were based on humor and sexuality. They suggest that humor and sexuality are in fact the two main themes in what makes an advertisement viral because they are the categories of advertisements that are entertaining enough or moving enough to motivate individuals to pass along the ads to others.

However, Golan and Zeidner fail to indicate just why they feel those two genres give their advertisement the greatest chance of success in spreading virally. If it can be better understood why individuals want to spread those types of videos, be it to increase their social standing in some manner, to entertain their friends or for some other perceived purpose, then the advertiser can potentially utilize that knowledge to create advertisements that will help individuals fulfill the most commonly desired gratifications rather than assuming that the advertiser already knows what the audience wants. While advertisements promoting sexuality may effectively sell products, consumers may not spread it virally because it may embarrass them to have that video then connected to them or they may not feel that it is something appropriate to post online for all of their friends, their family and the people they work with to see.

Smith, Coyle, Lightfoot, and Scott (2007), like Allsop, believe in the importance of online social media in the effectiveness of word-of-mouth. Smith claims that there is a

preconceived notion that word-of-mouth comes from an elite, highly-connected few, but their study refutes that notion. They find that people want to pass along positive word-of-mouth in an effort to be helpful or seek out valuable information about products. One of Smith's studies explores the usage of word-of-mouth through a variety of consumer websites such as GameSpot, TV.com, and the shopping section of CNET.com as well as some others. This particular study emphasizes the prominence of word-of-mouth in online media and not necessarily just the main social media networks. Many websites that offer online purchasing such as walmart.com, amazon.com and ebay.com for example, also offer user reviews on products that other users can access and use in their decision making process. It has become very easy for users of such sites to access a variety of reviews by their fellow users in a way that is not connected to the businesses supplying the products. This totally bypasses the consumer's reliance on marketing from the businesses themselves as it offers a direct conduit from consumer to consumer and since people are skeptical of information obtained from business marketers, sites that offer reviews on products purely from fellow consumers are increasing in popularity.

Smith, Coyle, Lightfoot, and Scott (2007) suggest just one form of gratification satisfied by the audience in spreading word-of-mouth – to help out other people. However, their study focuses on a different form of electronic word-of-mouth in online consumer reviews of products. It is entirely possible that the current study involving viral videos could garner similar results, but since it is a different medium, it is also quite possible that a different set of gratifications could be more prominent among individuals who spread viral video advertisements to others. It could be that those individuals have significantly different motives for spreading advertisements.

In their approach to understanding the behavior of individuals spreading viral marketing electronically through the use of e-mail, Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry, and Raman (2004) analyze the motivations of the people that are essential for viral e-mail advertising strategies to be effective, the people that spread the e-mails. Phelps acknowledges that while there has been an abundance of research concerning web-based advertising, only a few studies focus on this particular technique. In order for e-mail marketing to be successful, a business must somehow influence people to take word-of-mouth to a higher level and put forth extra effort outside of daily conversation. Phelps develops a model that details the requirements of an individual as they receive and pass along an e-mail ad. They must first identify the message as being a pass along e-mail and consider where it comes from, then they must determine whether or not to open the e-mail and examine its content, and finally determine whether or not they would like to pass along the e-mail as well as how many people they want to pass it along to and which ones. Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry and Raman found that people view those that send pass along e-mails as people with too much free time or as somebody that must have a political or religious cause. They also found that people that are on the receiving end of these e-mails experience a variety of emotions ranging from irritated, frustrated, or skeptical to relieved, excited or curious. Also, people typically receive multiple pass along e-mails in a week, but only open pass along e-mails from people that they know and trust. So, what are some of the reasons that people send along pass along e-mails, even though there is a pretty good chance that they will be ignored or possibly irritate people? Phelps finds a variety of motivations with the most prevalent including entertainment value, they think it will help others, or to take a break from their daily

schedule. One of the main reasons why consumers pass along certain e-mails over others is because they like the company's message and want to share it with their friends. (Ives, 2005) As such, advertisers should know that advertisements that people would find entertaining or contain good quality information are the most likely to be passed along via e-mail.

Chapter 3: Methods

In an attempt to answer the aforementioned research questions, subjects within a group of 2-4 participants were shown a selection of five viral video advertisements commercial produced, ideally by the company marketing the product. The selected advertisements fit along the lines of the types of advertisements seen during the Super Bowl, in that they are humorous and / or entertaining and at the same time promote a product and generate buzz amongst consumers through word-of-mouth and other viral methods. The five advertisements used in the study were selected from among the most viewed advertisements on the most well known video streaming website, YouTube, in the months of July and August 2011. After each video was shown, a discussion was conducted among the group participants about the video. Initial questions sought to determine the reactions of the groups to the video and find out if they would be likely to show the video to others, either online or in person. Follow up questions were asked as necessary in response to the answers given by the subjects. The primary purpose of the group sessions was to identify potential gratifications to be utilized as options during the questionnaire phase of the research. As the subjects were volunteering their time, the group sessions were planned to not last much longer than an hour at the most, although in one instance the time was substantially extended due to the enjoyment level of the participants being so high and their willingness to talk at length about their feelings on each video.

The second phase of the research consisted of a questionnaire which was conducted through the use of the Facebook questions feature. Questions to be a part of

the Facebook questionnaire were determined based upon the results of the focus groups. The questions sought to determine which are the most prevalent and desired gratifications as well as which are the most often received by the subjects. Because the feedback from the focus group sessions was overwhelming that humor was the key element to entice the subjects to send a video to others or tell them about it and other genres of videos were far less appealing, the second research question and hypothesis the study initially sought to answer were not explored further in the questionnaire.

In review of methods used in conjuncture with uses and gratifications theory in the past, Ruggiero (2000) points out that researchers had spent decades of quantitative studies that had revealed trends and patterns about the uses of the media, but that those methods had not provided researchers with a reason why the media was being used in specific ways by the audience. More recent studies Ruggiero presents such as Dervin (1980) suggested the importance of ascertaining the world view of the individuals who will be seeking out the information presented by the media in an effort to understand the answers that those individuals will be looking for. In that way, those utilizing the research would gain useful knowledge that would have an impact on what they chose to include in their media coverage in the future. In addition, Jensen and Jankowski (1991) suggest that quantitative and qualitative methods in uses and gratifications studies would both be important and that quantitative studies would be quite useful in informing and interpreting the results found in qualitative research on similar topics. This study seeks to gain qualitative responses as to why consumers endeavor to spread viral video advertisements to others. While experimental methods in determining quantitative data concerning people's practices and habits in the spreading of viral video advertisements

would prove to be interesting and beneficial, one could argue that finding out why could provide information that strongly enhances the knowledge of how the process of spreading the videos occurs and also provides new insights into how the videos could be more effectively targeted towards those consumers who might aid in the spread the video virally on the internet. Should the results of this qualitative study peak the interest of an advertiser, an experimental study to quantify and double-check the accuracy of the results could substantially increase the benefits of the knowledge provided.

It is somewhat evident that in order to understand why a person exhibits a certain behavior or goes about a specific practice, it is advantageous for the researcher to attain feedback directly from the people. In the application of Uses and Gratifications theory to the aforementioned research question, feedback directly from the people using the videos concerning the gratifications they receive from it and why is a necessity.

Jensen and Jankowski (1991) states that data collection in qualitative research often involves a variety of techniques; in-depth interviewing, document analysis, and unstructured observations. Historically, Jensen and Jankowski point out that these three techniques had been joined under the terminology of participant observation, but that this term is misleading because in a number of cases there is no connection to be made between qualitative research methods and participant observation. They also go on to point out the downfalls of assuming that multiple method strategies are inherently superior to single method strategies and that the basic assumption concerning multiple method strategies is that the other methods will compensate for the weaknesses of any single method employed in the strategy. Later in the same text, Jensen lays out the process of reception analysis, of which the main premise as stated by Jensen is that

“audience research, in order to construct a valid account of the reception, uses, and impact of media, must become audience-cum-content analysis.” He goes on to note that when dealing with reception analysis, the interpretation of the audiences responses should constantly refer to the context of the media to which they are responding and the context of how they are viewing it.

The intention in the interaction with individuals in the focus group sessions was to gain contextual information from the subjects as well as reactionary information. For example, one question put to the volunteers asked how frequently the subject encounters the viral video advertisement medium and gauge their normal reaction to it as well as gauging the typical percent of videos encountered are passed along to others by each volunteer. Such information provides valuable context to consider because while some subjects responded well to the videos and claim that they would view and spread them to others, some of their responses indicated that this is not a medium they use or spread as frequently as the norm. That being the case, in some instances, it was important to take that into consideration and not lend as much credibility to the reactions of a subject who rarely interacts with viral videos as was given to a subject who interacts with the videos much more frequently. The feedback of individuals who encounter or spread videos less frequently is still important, especially knowing that electronic word-of-mouth is still a growing field. It is also important to acknowledge that when somebody answers a question using the Facebook questions feature, their responses are visible to all of their friends within the network. As such, there is a potential bias for their responses that must remain in consideration. However, with the subject matter having a relatively low risk of embarrassment being an issue for the subjects, this concern rates fairly low. And of

course, the subjects had the option to simply not answer a question if they felt it might embarrass them in some way rather than give a false answer they feel portrays them in a better light. Some of the volunteers did in fact choose to answer some of the facebook questions, but not all of them.

I. Sampling

Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, which Leedy (1993) states does not attempt to present a representative sample of the population and does not attempt to eliminate or control bias that may exist on the part of the subjects. The subjects selected for the study sought to provide valuable insight into reasons for why humorous viral video advertisements spread. In these sessions, individuals were asked primarily to simply identify reasons why the specific video advertisements were appealing or unappealing to them and other data collected provides a background for their responses. As the research is set up, one could assert that this research is among one of the least demanding upon the subjects. Leedy suggests that convenience sampling is an appropriate and useful form of sampling when dealing with less demanding forms of data collection. As far as identifying reasons why viral video advertisements are selected, the use of convenience sampling from among a variety of volunteer subjects is appropriate in generating answers and useful information for advertisers, consumers, and scholars to consider. The form of sampling selected does certainly skew the demographic of the volunteers entirely to college-age students. However, being that this is the most

common demographic viewing and interacting with the medium on the internet, this is not an inappropriate way to skew the demographic of the volunteers.

II. The Group Sessions

A total of three group sessions were held to gauge potential and common responses from the volunteers on a number of questions concerning the subject. The focus groups took place on the dates of September 14, September 17, and September 29, 2011. Each group was slightly limited in that each featured only 2-4 volunteers, yet each yielded insight as to what about viral video advertisements draws some college students to view and potentially spread viral video advertisements. Using convenience sampling, subjects were gathered from the University of Missouri through the creation of an event on facebook although individuals from Columbia College and Stephens College were invited to take part as well. Around 70 individuals were initially invited to take part in the focus groups and were given the power to invite others to take part as well. Volunteers who took part in the group sessions were rewarded with refreshments for the duration of the session and were given the option of taking leftover refreshments with them at the conclusion of the session. Nine total participants volunteered to take part in the focus group sessions, all from the University of Missouri.

As Greenbaum (1998) describes it, the term focus group has come to mean different things for different people. He determines that focus groups can be broken down into three different groups, Full groups, mini groups, and telephone groups. Full

groups are considered to take place as a discussion among eight to ten people, while minigroups would include just between four to six people. Due to a lower turnout than was anticipated and confirmed by volunteers, what was intended to be a series of focus group sessions instead resulted in what could best be termed either a small group session, or fit within the scope of what Greenbaum termed minigroups. In all types of groups as outlined by Greenbaum, the moderator leads the subjects in a discussion and stimulates the discussion while at the same time saying as little as possible, in essence attempting to not bias the subjects in any way while prompting the subjects to share their thoughts and opinions amongst each other. In this study, volunteers were also encouraged to make any comments on the medium as a whole and to discuss any elements of the videos that they felt were overlooked.

Treadwell (2011) states that with focus groups comes the assumption that a higher quality of insight and more diverse ideas may be generated by a group than by individuals who were interviewed separately. He suggests that a properly conducted focus group should provide the researcher with beneficial ideas and when applied to forms of new media such as viral videos, focus groups should help the researcher find areas of agreement or disagreement about how that new media is used.

The purpose of using convenience sampling in this phase of the research was to gain qualitative insights into why the subjects want to spread the videos, not to collect data representative of how percentages of the population react to the data and not to determine how different types of humorous video are received by different demographics within the population. Wimmer and Dominick (1983) express the concern that while non-probability sampling is commonly used in mass media research, particularly in the

use of voluntary subjects, that erroneous research results may occur. In particular, Wimmer and Dominick cite Rosental and Rosnow (1969) who identified a number of characteristics inherent among voluntary subjects which could skew the results of the research. Such characteristics included higher educational levels on the part of the volunteer subjects, as well as a greater need for approval and lower authoritarianism. This does speak to the potential concern that volunteer subjects would provide information that they feel the researcher wants to hear rather than accurate information that they may think the researcher doesn't want to hear because volunteer subjects may tend to carry a greater need for approval. However, this is a concern which volunteers were encouraged to avoid. The volunteers were encouraged to offer whatever points and answers throughout the sessions, and informed that so long as it was an accurate response on the part of the subject, that response would be appreciated and in no way would disappoint the researcher or effect how the researcher's view of that person. This is a concern that is largely undetectable and the researcher must simply hope that the volunteers felt comfortable enough to offer honest feedback and opinions.

In contrast to Wimmer and Dominick's concern, Treadwell (2011) suggests that when a focus group element is involved, since active participation is a requirement if the method is going to be successful, volunteers would be more likely to actively participate in the discussion. Treadwell actually divides volunteer sampling into a separate group than convenience sampling and that the enthusiasm provided by volunteer subjects may be needed if one wants to translate the research into action. While no specific action is intended to be the result of this study, subject enthusiasm should very rarely be considered a negative thing. While the use of volunteer sampling does in essence target

only one type of individual, volunteers, and thus there is no indication of what non-volunteers might have said, one must keep in mind that non-volunteers may not provide the best results due to the fact that their participation in the study was determined for them in whatever way whereas volunteers cared enough about the material being studied to make a conscious decision of their own accord to participate.

The first video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmH6VZFsvgE>) the volunteers were shown was a humorous type of a mock public service advertisement titled Steal My ID in which the viewer is told that in just a few easy steps, he or she can have their identity stolen.

The second video(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LVf1swl9uQ>) the volunteers were shown was an advertisement for the upcoming Puss in Boots movie set to release in October 2011. It was not a trailer for the movie, but instead featured the main character, an animated cat, making multiple references as to why he does not wear any pants

The third video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btViXvIDsi0>) featured a long introduction package into a stunt driving video by driver Ken Block. The advertisements in this video were achieved through product placement rather than direct spoken endorsement.

The fourth video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzIBZQkj6SY>) shown to the volunteers was a T-Mobile commercial advertising that with the T-Mobile service you could play popular games on your phone like Angry Birds anywhere you go and to demonstrate this, they chose to set up a live-action version of the game.

The fifth and final video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4_dZPVg8KI) was advertising the creation of the new Star Tours attraction at Disneyland. This was achieved through humorously following Darth Vader and two Storm Troopers around Disneyland as they went through typical activities experienced by tourists at Disneyland while seeming out of place and waiting for the Star Tours attraction to open.

A more detailed description of each of the videos shown and a description the responses of the volunteers to each video can be found in Appendix C.

III. The Questionnaire

The second phase of research consists of a questionnaire, which was designed and utilized through the Facebook questions feature. There were a total of 68 participants in the questionnaire, although not every volunteer chose to answer every question. The questionnaire was posted on Facebook the second week of October 2011 and responses for that week started coming in about 9-10 per day and then after 4-5 days decreased and responses then slowed to a rate of perhaps 2-3 volunteers every couple of days for the remainder of October 2011. The questionnaire contained ten questions. The questions pertained primarily to what gratifications the subject receives from spreading video advertisements to others. Other goals of the questionnaire were to determine if gratifications identified in the focus group sessions were popular among a larger population of volunteers and which gratifications were more prominent in the volunteer's decision-making process when deciding whether or not to send a video. In four of the ten

questions, a yes or no response was required. In two other questions, volunteers were asked to select one of four options derived from the results of the focus group sessions. In the final four questions, volunteers were asked to give responses to the question in their own words. Some of the volunteers chose to provide multiple answers on the questions where they were asked to give responses in their own words. The way those last four open-ended questions worked on the feature was that once somebody gave a response, anybody responding after that could see that answer and choose to select it or offer one of their own or perhaps both. In that respect, not every volunteer chose to answer those four questions in their own words, but instead chose to agree with somebody else's response.

In reviewing the responses to the questionnaire, noticeably differences in the responses to a couple of questions between men and women became apparent, particularly concerning how the choice to send or show a viral video advertisement to others might affect one's reputation. It was not until reviewing the responses to the questionnaire that the differences among responses to questions from men to women was thought of as a relevant piece of information to consider within the study. As a result of that determination surfacing during the review of questionnaire responses, the published results of the questionnaire include a comparison of the percentage of men who gave a response to a question and the percentage of women who gave the same response.

The responses to the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. It should be taken in consideration when reviewing said results that the answers given by any of the volunteers participating in the questionnaire would be visible to any of their "friends" on Facebook, as well as any other volunteers to answer the question after them. A possible

drawback to this method that should be taken into account in review of this study is that the public nature of the questionnaire could be a deterrent for answering those questions truthfully rather than answering with what one believes people want to hear and how their answer would effect their reputation.

The way a majority of people might prefer to provide feedback is through the use of a questionnaire of some sort. Creswell (2009) shows a number of ways in which data may be collected directly from the subjects of the study by way of an interview type process. These include face-to-face, one on one in-person interviews, telephone interviews, focus groups and e-mail interviews or interviews over the internet. Advantages of some of these methods, Creswell states, are that the participants may be able to provide the researcher with historical information and that it allows the researcher control over the line of questioning. Disadvantages include that the information is provided in a designated place rather than the natural field setting, the presence of the research may present bias in the responses, and that not all people are on the same level of articulation and perception.

As a researcher, one might feel that in order to get the highest return of responses, the method preferable to the audience might be a good place to start, which would logically include the involvement of a survey or questionnaire. The incorporation of a survey allows the subject to go at their own pace and not to be hurried along or slowed up by the other subjects. Also, some of the disadvantages suggested by Creswell are minimized in this study by adding a face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the subject in the focus group phase of the study. In this way, direct interaction between the researcher and the subjects gives the researcher the opportunity to read the body

language and expressions of the subject as well as their mood, which can serve as an indicator of the presence of personal bias on the part of the subject. In the focus group phase of this study, the researcher was able to directly observe that group of volunteers as they viewed the material and responded to the questions and had any significant bias been detected in those subjects, it could have been taken into account when analyzing the results of the questionnaire.

Reagan (2006) points out that in designing a questionnaire, a researcher need keep in mind that few studies can answer all questions and as such it is key that the researcher keep the questionnaire trimmed to a reasonable length. Reagan suggests that the ideal length for a questionnaire conducted in the mail be limited to four pages. While this research will not be conducted in the mail, it seems reasonable to compare ideal length to a mail questionnaire to the ideal length of the online series of questions to be conducted as a part of this study. Reagan also asserts that the questionnaire should be tested before application in research to ensure that the possibility of subjects burning out due to the length of the questionnaire. According to Reagan, open-ended questions can be especially useful because they allow for the respondents to give any answer they want, which comes in handy when the researcher does not know what the responses are likely to be. Open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire for this research because there could be any number of reasons why a specific individual spreads or doesn't spread an advertisement and allowing the volunteer to answer in their own words gives the researcher a greater chance of identifying more potential motives. Close-ended questions are a useful element as well, but mostly in setting up for an open-ended question. Multiple response questions, which provides a set list of answers for the respondent to

choose from and check all that apply would be useful in gauging how familiar a subject already is with the spread of advertisements virally, by asking if they commonly encounter advertisements from a list of ways that such advertisements spread. As each type of question provides its own unique benefits, some of each type of question were included in this questionnaire.

One substantial benefit afforded by using the Facebook questions medium to conduct the study is that the feature comes with a built in section for comments to be made on each question answered. In this way, subjects were able to check all of the answers that apply to each question and should they have felt the need to qualify their response in some way or add something that they feel will be of value to the study, they had a ready made forum in which to do so. Only two volunteers ultimately made use of the opportunity to use the comments feature on the questions, which greatly minimalizes said benefit, unfortunately.

Among advice Reagan (2006) offers towards creating the questionnaire is to keep everything short, simple and to the point. According to Reagan, this is useful towards reducing biased responses. Also, keeping things short and simple ensures that subjects do not get tripped up over the language used in the survey and it should lessen the likelihood of the subjects becoming burnt out from having to think overly hard about how to respond to any of the questions. The majority of their critical thinking should come during the focus group session and the questionnaire should provide first reactions and brief identifications of what the subject would gain in gratification from spreading or from not spreading a video advertisement. Other advice includes keeping a logical order to the questions being asked and put any sensitive items towards the end of the

questionnaire. Other types of questions Reagan suggests be avoided included leading or loaded questions, questions to which the respondent might feel pressure to provide socially desirable responses such as asking an individual how much they read, negatives in the wording of the question and double-barreled questions. Reagan describes double-barreled questions as asking a question that combines topics and asks for one response when really the response to the two different topics being asked about might be completely different. Another key piece of advice Reagan offers is to be precise and avoid answering questions which use the wording frequently or occasionally because some respondents may have different ideas of how often frequently or occasionally means. Reagan suggests that it may be better to ask respondents how often they perform a behavior or encounter a phenomenon whether than asking them to classify it using terminology which could have multiple interpretations. But perhaps the most important piece of advice Reagan offers up is that the rules he suggests can be broken if there is a good reason to do so.

A Chi-square value has been calculated based on the responses of the volunteers for each question in the questionnaire, measuring the significance of the difference in the responses of men and women. A Chi-square goodness of fit test compares the observed frequencies of a response with those that might be expected or hypothesized. (Wimmer & Dominick, 1983) In this instance, the expected values are calculated by multiplying the total average value of each response by the number of male participants and then the number of female participants. Those numbers, along with the observed values are then plugged into a formula, subtracting the expected value from the observed value, squaring the difference and then dividing it by the expected value. The resulting values are then

added together to result in the total Chi-Square value for each question. Using that total value and the number of degrees of freedom (2 in this case - men and women), the significance value is calculated. The resulting significance value represents the probability that the differences showcased between the observed values and the expected values are random chance. For example, if a significance value is .036, as it is in the first question, according to the Chi-square goodness of fit test there is a 3.6% chance that the observed difference from the expected or hypothesized values are merely random chance and not of real significance.

Chapter 4: Results

Through facebook, a number of friends and acquaintances of the researcher, all college aged individuals approximately 18-24, were invited to take part in one of three focus group sessions and were encouraged to invite others to attend as well. Nine volunteers chose to participate in the group sessions, all of whom are college students. Demographic information on the nine volunteers can be found in Appendix B.

In each of the group sessions, the volunteers were asked how often they encounter video advertisements on the internet and what percentage of those videos they typically choose to send or show to other people or tell other people about. They were asked what benefits they think they receive from spreading videos to others. They were asked after each video what about that advertisement they found appealing or unappealing, would they link that video to their social media such as Facebook or Twitter, would they recommend that video to other people in person and why or why not they would spread the video. And after all of the videos, they were all asked if these types of videos were helpful in their decision making process for using the products being advertised.

The first group interview session, which took place on September 14, featured only two volunteers, Subjects A and B, both on campus students at the University of Missouri and both from Lebanon, Missouri. Subject A is a male, junior financial planning major. Subject B is a female, freshman art history and archaeology major. For the majority of this focus group, Subject A did most of the talking and Subject B tended

to agree with what he had to say. Even when prompted specifically to express her opinions first, Subject B was typically more reserved and brief in her responses. Both said that they only tended to pass along approximately five percent of the advertisements that they encounter on the internet. However, of the five videos the two of them were shown, both said they would be likely to spread significantly more of the videos than a meager five percent. However, taking into account that these five videos were among the most popular from the previous two months, such a response should not be unexpected. The two agreed that in most cases, they would be more likely to spread shorter videos than longer ones, that the videos would be more appealing to them and their friends if they had more humor in the form of what Subject A termed "one-line moments".

The second session, a minigroup, which took place on September 17, featured four volunteers. Subject C is a male fifth-year college student from St. Louis and an industrial engineering major who lives off campus. Subject D is a male junior history major from St. Louis who lives off campus. Subject E is a female sophomore architectural studies major from St. Louis who lives off campus. Subject F is a male junior psychology major from St. Louis who lives on campus. This group had very good chemistry as they carried the discussion without much prompting from the moderator. Subject F said that he encounters a lot of videos while surfing the web and sends or shows a good number of them to others because he wants to be seen as clever and / or witty by passing along funny videos. Subject D said that sending or showing videos provides him a good way to quantify his friendships with others. For instance, if he posts a link to a funny video on his Facebook page, he can look at the number of likes and

comments the video receives from his friends and tell which ones are paying attention to his social media pages and he can tell what they think about his sense of humor.

The third and final group session, which took place on September 29, featured three volunteers. Subject G is a male senior geography major from Kansas City who lives off campus. Subject H is a male sophomore journalism major from the Detroit area who lives off campus. Subject I is a male sophomore journalism major from the Chicago area who lives on campus. As for what they would look for in the typical kinds of videos that they would send or show to others, the group said over the top action is typically good, humor is good, but more specifically shock humor or jokes that you do not expect to happen are very appealing. Offensive humor, they said can be appealing to certain groups of their friends and so they would send some videos like that, but only to those specific groups. Also, videos involving zombies or other such things that are big in popular culture right now they said would be more likely to be passed along by them than videos without it. Subject H, like Subjects D and F from the previous group, said that in sending videos he hopes to keep up his reputation as a funny guy and sending videos to others gives him a means to check how much his friends pay attention. As Subject H was saying this, Subject G and Subject I quietly nodded along in agreement.

Based upon the input received from the three focus group sessions, a list of ten questions was formulated and made available to the public through use of the questions feature on the popular social networking page, Facebook. The questions were initially visible to friends and acquaintances of the researcher immediately as a result of Facebook's programming. From there, friends of those individuals were able to see their friends' responses to the questions in their news feed and had the potential to respond.

Also, links to the questions were posted on various facebook pages and forums in which people who had no link to the researcher were also able to view and potentially answer the questions.

Based upon the three focus group sessions and the responses to the questionnaire, this study results in the following conclusions in regards to the research questions as previously outlined. Those conclusions are that 1) there are a small number of gratifications sufficient to motivate 18-24 year old individuals to show or send viral video advertisements to other people, 2) individuals ages 18-24 within scope of viral video advertisements, are primarily interested in sending or showing humorous video advertisements to others, and 3) the gratifications received by individuals ages 18-24 fall within McQuail, Blumler and Brown's (1972) social interaction cluster rather than the excitement cluster.

As the results of this survey overwhelmingly show, for most college age students, the number one reason for them to send or show a video advertisement to somebody else is for them to make that person laugh or amuse them in some way. This is evidenced by more than ninety-eight percent of the volunteers who took the survey stating that amusing others is the primary reason they send or show viral video advertisements to others, beating out the desire to help others, to have an effect on their reputation or to gain reciprocation by potentially receiving videos from others in the future. So, if one were wanting to create a video advertisement and allow it the greatest chance to spread virally amongst the 18-24 demographic, humor would seem to be the primary way to go about it. While the college-aged demographic has in the past had social networking sites almost exclusively to themselves, such as Facebook, which originated purely as a means

of exclusive college student interaction on the web. However, as time has moved on, that was no longer the case and college students no longer have the social networking web all to themselves. As such, future studies may be necessary in order to gauge how viral video advertisements are responded to and sought after by older demographics. However, as Hampton, Goulet, Rainie and Purcell (2011) show, while the college aged demographic no longer makes up such a high percentage of the users on social networking sites, they still log in, comment and make status updates with greater regularity than their older counterparts.

The first hypothesis of this study was that there would be only a few gratifications that would entice the majority of viewers to send or show a viral video advertisement to others. The evidence collected from this study would seemingly back-up that hypothesis. All potential gratifications that were mentioned in the focus group sessions were included in the survey as potential answers as to the reasons why somebody would send or show a video to others and amusing or entertaining others was the only option to receive an overwhelming positive response. The effect of the choice to send or show a video to somebody else on one's reputation received a mildly positive response (37.3% of the total said it effected their decision) and was actually influential to over half of the female volunteers (52.4%), but well under half of the male volunteers (28.9%). And then in question number nine, where volunteers were encouraged to list in their own words what they believed they gained from sending or showing videos to others, the overwhelming response was the happiness they would gain from making their friends laugh and the only response not similar to that was a desire to be a trusted source of good information, which harkens back to the effect sending or showing those videos would

have on one's reputation. It would appear that there being just a few gratifications sufficient enough to spur the majority to action when it comes to spreading viral video advertisements was overstating it, as there appear to be just a couple of gratifications that are sufficient, judging by the results of this survey.

The second hypothesis for this study, which anticipated that individuals would expect to gain different gratifications from spreading different types of videos was not supported one way or the other due to the feedback from the focus groups that humor and amusement were for the most part the only reasons the volunteers would want to send or show the videos. That assessment is backed up by question number six on the survey where action sequences received zero positive responses from the volunteers, despite the fact that the action-packed gymkhana video received positive feedback in the focus group sessions. This lends itself to the notion that perhaps the gymkhana video was not popular in two of the focus groups due to the amount of action and "awesomeness" involved, but instead it was so over the top that the focus groups found it amusing and humorous rather than riveting. The gratifications being sought by college age demographic through the viral video advertisement medium appears to have only eyes for comedy and humor and as such, the hypothesis that they would gain different gratifications from different genres of video advertisements would seemingly be in at least some part false because the interest in obtaining gratification through this medium for this demographic lies almost exclusively with only one genre.

The third and final hypothesis of this study anticipated that the most common gratification for spreading viral video advertisements would fall within McQuail, Blumler and Brown's (1972) excitement cluster. In review, the excitement cluster was

characterized by hard-working people seeking to find an escape from the tedium of their day to day lives through the entertainment the medium provides. The results of the survey would seemingly support this hypothesis to be quite false and instead the gratifications the volunteers say they receive come primarily from the social interaction cluster as they seek to find ways to use the video in their social environment. As most volunteers responded that they either wanted to make their friends laugh or effect their reputation amongst their social circles through the viral video advertisement medium, they are not actually seeking an escape from the tedium of their day to day lives, although one could argue that by showing the videos to others they are seeking to provide an escape for others. In viewing the viral video advertisements themselves, they may in fact be seeking that escape for themselves, but in spreading the video to others, they have moved into the social interaction cluster and so by sending or showing these videos to others, one can perhaps say that they are then using the medium to receive gratification in two separate clusters, first by viewing the video themselves and gaining gratification in the excitement cluster and then using the same medium to also gain gratification socially.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

It would appear, based on the results of this research that in order to achieve the goal of having a video advertisement successfully spread virally among the college demographic, it would behoove advertisers to consider ways in which the initial viewer can increase his or her social gratification level by showing their video to somebody else. The results of this survey would suggest that the way in which to do that would be to create a short and humorous video with some popular culture references and a few inside jokes, but primarily intended to make the average person laugh without necessarily knowing anything about the product or company being advertised. In doing so, it appears that the initial viewer will send or show the video to whomever among their friends, family or acquaintances that the initial viewer feels they need to increase their reputation with provided that they believe the video they have seen is sufficient enough to achieve that goal.

The use of this method of data collection does not inform the researcher about questions which he does not ask and that do not occur to the subjects to think about. Thusly, it was important for the questions put before the subjects to be thorough, yet at the same time in order to ensure the willful participation of the subjects, the amount of time the questions would take to answer were made to be comfortable for the subjects. The group sessions were designed to not go much longer than an hour unless volunteers sought to discuss the videos at greater length and bring up more ideas and opinions following the conclusion of the planned portion of the session. Because the questions

needed to be thorough, yet brief, not everything the researcher would benefit from knowing could be asked. As such, a challenge was posed to determine which information is the most relevant and focus on that. Another challenge was to steer the conversation during the focus group portion of the research towards the most relevant information. At times, volunteers enthusiasm over certain film franchises that were involved in the videos selected in the focus group sessions led them to take the conversation off topic and into the merits of those films and it was a challenge to get the discussion back to the matter at hand. This method does not eliminate or attempt to control bias on the part of the subjects who volunteer to participate in the study. However, no such elements were detected. This research does not attempt to determine correlations between bias in relation to types of video advertisements among one demographic or another. Nor does it attempt to determine the origin for any bias that can be identified.

Because this study focuses on the reactions of the audience, this method does not inform the researcher what the goals of the advertiser were in creating a specific video other than to garner attention for a product and it does not inform the researcher what response the advertiser intended the video to generate - only the response of a few college-aged volunteers. While one may have a general idea and be able to hypothesize what the goals of the advertiser were and what their intentions were without a deeper analysis of the videos themselves or conducting interviews with the advertiser. Furthermore, this study does not predict the success or failure of any given advertisement, but it should provide useful guidelines for advertisers to utilize in providing the audience with what they want or need in order to become satisfied or fulfilled.

What the involvement of uses and gratifications theory in this study does not reveal is a specific blueprint for building a successful viral video advertisement. Uses and gratifications is an explanatory tool, an effects driven theory will help deepen the understanding of why, but not predicting what people are going to do in the future. Tastes and trends come and go, making it nearly impossible to predict what is going to be successful years, months, or sometimes even weeks in the future. Also, uses and gratifications theory will not be able to provide all of the answers pertaining to why. It cannot fully account for factors such as bias or brand loyalty because while uses and gratifications likely plays a role in the formation of brand loyalty, it cannot explain or predict how that will influence how people view or spread videos or predict how brand loyalty translates from product consumption to the viewing of video advertisements. For example, an individual could be a loyal Coca-Cola consumer, but that may or may not have an influence on their attitude towards Pepsi advertisements. In instances where the company producing the viral video advertisements has a strong competitor with a large media presence, uses and gratifications probably would not be the best tool to account for all of the factors, but should prove to be very useful in the determination of what drives individuals to use the medium in the first place and thus give the producers of said videos and indication of what they should be trying to achieve and a direction to work towards.

Also, it should be kept in mind that while the college-aged demographic is currently among the leaders in frequent use of social media, trends such as in Hampton, Goulet, Rainie and Purcell (2011) show, this may not always be the case. As such, it will be important for future researchers in the field of viral video advertising and other forms of e-WOM that involve marketing through online social networking sites. Even

currently, more in-depth research on the topic involving a wider age demographic would not be impertinent. While the results of this research find that humor is a key component in influencing the spread of viral video advertisements among the college-aged demographic, in coming years that demographic will experience turnover and people that fit within that demographic now may grow and change in their desired forms of social interactions and gratification.

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Appendix A: Tables of Questionnaire Results

Question #1 - Does helping others factor into your decision to send / show a viral video advertisement to others?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Yes	1	5	6	9.7%	2.5%	22.7%
No	39	17	56	90.3%	97.5%	77.3%

Chi-Square = 6.629 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.036

Question #2 - Does amusing / entertaining others factor into your decision to send / show a viral video advertisement to others?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Yes	38	20	58	93.5%	97.4%	87%
No	1	3	4	6.5%	2.6%	13%

Chi-Square = 2.614 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.270

Question #3 - Does the thought of how posting a viral video advertisement will affect your reputation factor into your decision to send / show a viral video advertisement to others?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Yes	11	11	22	37.3%	28.9%	52.4%
No	27	10	37	62.7%	71.1%	47.6%

Chi-Square = 3.176 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.204

Question #4 - Does the idea of receiving videos from others in return factor into your decision to send / show a viral video advertisement to others?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Yes	4	3	7	11.3%	10.5%	13.6%
No	34	19	55	88.7%	89.5%	86.4%

Chi-Square = 0.143 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.931

Question #5 - Which of the following options would you say is the primary reason you send / show a viral video advertisement to others?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Helping Others	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
Amusing Others	38	23	61	98.4%	100%	95.8%
Effect on Your Reputation	0	1	1	1.6%	0%	4.2%
To Receive Videos in Return	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%

Chi-Square = 1.014 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.602

Question #6 - Which of the following characteristics of a viral video advertisement would you say is most relevant to your decision to send / show the video to other people?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Popular Culture References	2	1	3	4.9%	5.1%	4.5%
Humor That is Relevant to a Small Group of People	15	6	21	34.4%	38.5%	27.3%
Humor That is Relevant to Many People	22	15	37	60.7%	58.4%	68.2%
Action Sequences	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%

Chi-Square = 0.824 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.662

Question #7 - In your own words, how is the satisfaction you receive from sending / showing a viral video advertisement to others affected by the length of the video, if at all?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Length Does Not Matter	18	7	25	39.7%	45%	30.4%
Less is More	13	10	23	36.5%	32.5%	43.5%
Depends How Funny the Video Is	6	5	11	17.5%	15%	21.7%
Depends on How Slowly the Gag Builds or How Many Gags There Are	4	1	5	7.9%	10%	4.3%
Sometimes I Won't Bother Showing / Sending Because I Know People Will Get Bored	2	2	4	6.3%	5%	8.7%

Chi-Square = 2.283 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.319

Question #8 - In your own words, how is the satisfaction you receive comparably different when you send a viral video advertisement to others as opposed to recommending the video to them in person or showing them the video directly, if at all?

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i># of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Showing Them in Person > Sending it to Them > Telling Them	23	11	34	56.7%	62.1%	47.8%
I Prefer to Show it to Them in Person so I Can See Their Reaction	1	6	7	11.7%	2.7%	26.1%
More Satisfaction is Gained by Showing in Person, Can See Expressions	5	2	7	11.7%	13.5%	8.7%
I Would Rather Show Them in Person. If Not, I Would Not Care for the Others	3	3	6	10%	8.1%	13%
I Would Rather Send it to Them, so They Can View at Their Own Convenience	2	0	2	3.3%	5.4%	0%
I Prefer Showing to Telling, but Don't Really Ever Send	1	0	1	1.7%	2.7%	0%
In Person, They Know it's Not a Facebook Virus, so I Know They Actually Watch It	1	0	1	1.7%	2.7%	0%
I Would Probably Only Show in Person, or Perhaps Tell About it. I Wouldn't Send.	1	0	1	1.7%	2.7%	0%
I Like Seeing their Reaction, Feel Good Factor, but Comments Like on Facebook Work Too.	0	1	1	1.7%	0%	4.3%

Chi-Square = 12.433

Degrees of Freedom = 2

Significance Value = 0.002

Question #9 - In your own words, briefly describe what you believe you gain from showing / sending viral video advertisements to others.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
I Feel That Viewers Will Have a Laugh, Which Makes me Happy	23	15	38	63.3%	60.5%	68.2%
Reputation as a Trusted Source of Good Information	6	6	12	20%	15.7%	27.3%
Make Them Laugh, Opportunity to Share Something I Enjoy With Others	7	3	10	16.7%	18.4%	13.6%
Throw Some Laughs at My Friends	4	2	6	10%	10.5%	9.1%

Chi-Square = 1.268 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.531

Question #10 - In your own words, briefly describe what characteristics of viral video advertisements provide you with the greatest amount of satisfaction in sending / showing it to others.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% of Men</i>	<i>% of Women</i>
Make 'em Laugh	36	15	51	82.3%	87.8%	71.4%
Sarcasm / Wit / Esoteric References	11	7	18	29%	26.8%	33.3%
Comedy and / or Cool Presentation	6	0	6	9.7%	14.6%	0%
Knowing What is Going On	2	1	3	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%

Chi-Square = 3.723 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Significance Value = 0.155

Appendix B: Demographic Information of Group Interview / Minigroup Volunteers

All of the volunteers in the group interview sessions or minigroups are students at the University of Missouri. Two of the volunteers were women and seven men. The limited number of participants in this portion of the study, particularly female participants, is a weakness present in this research. One participant is a fifth-year college student who previously completed an associate's degree from St. Louis Community College Meramec. The others consist of one senior, three juniors, three sophomores and one freshman. Four are from the St. Louis area. Two are from Lebanon, Missouri. One is from the Detroit area and one is from the Chicago area. Four reside in the campus dormitories while five live in various houses and apartments off campus. Two are journalism students and of the other seven volunteers, one of them is studying each of the following; industrial engineering, architectural studies, history, psychology, financial planning, geography and art history & archaeology. Even though not very diverse in age and highly slanted towards men, the crop of volunteers for this portion of the research is at least widely varied in their educational interests.

Appendix C: Descriptions of Videos

The first video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmH6VZFsvgE>) the volunteers were shown was a humorous type of a mock public service advertisement titled Steal My ID in which the viewer is told that in just a few easy steps, he or she can have their identity stolen. In the video, having your identity stolen is portrayed as a means to starting over, as in people who weren't currently satisfied with the outcome of their lives could just start over. However, we all inherently know that only bad things can come from having your identity stolen and that voluntarily giving somebody the information that they need in order to steal your identity would not be a smart decision. As such, the premise of the video is humorous and obviously sarcastic and not meant to be taken literally at all.

Subjects A and B found this video to be humorous and possibly worth showing to a few people, but very awkward. They said they felt the joke got old after a while and the video just kept going. The second group, subjects C-F, found the sarcasm in the Steal My ID video to be appealing and got quite a few laughs and Subject D said he was very much amused by one scene where a woman who is apparently leaving her husband, stops mid-argument and takes the time to pick up the plant in the background and cradles it against her as she makes her exit because it is far from normal in movies and television to see somebody storming out on their spouse and stop to take a plant of all things. Not a television or jewelry or some other type of valuables, but this lady goes for the plant. Subjects G, H and I found this video somewhat appealing because of the sarcastic and ironic humor involved and they also liked that it felt to them like it was making fun of bankruptcy advertisements at the beginning of the video where the spokesperson asks a

bunch of questions like "Are you having marital problems?" or "Do you not have any friends on Facebook?" and attempts to convince you that having your identity stolen can remedy these problems. However, they ultimately found it to be unworthy of showing or sending to others.

The second video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LVflswl9uQ>) the volunteers were shown was an advertisement for the upcoming Puss in Boots movie set to release in October 2011. It was not a trailer for the movie, but instead featured the main character for the film, an animated talking cat who wears boots and a hat and carries a sword on a belt around his waist, as he talked about how comfortably he is not wearing any pants on his adventures. Puss in Boots is a character from the Shrek movies who is now receiving his own spin-off movie and he is voiced by Antonio Banderas. In these animated Shrek movies, none of the animated animals wear pants and this particular video shines a humorous light on that fact while simultaneously advertising the upcoming movie. In the video, Puss in Boots does a series of action maneuvers, one of which features him leaping spread-legged over a needle sticking up on top of a building and narrowly missing scratching himself on it, with the implication being that if he were wearing pants he would not have been able to make it over the needle on his leap.

Because the Puss in Boots video was short and sweet and both Subjects A and B said they had numerous friends who were fans of DreamWorks movies, they said they would show it to others. Subject A said he would definitely be showing the video to his girlfriend at the least and maybe a few other people. In the second group, there were some mixed feelings because Subjects E and F that they had friends who were fans of the franchise that they would maybe show the video to, but at the same time, all four subjects

C through F kind of felt that the advertisement was too sexual for a kids movie and so they said they definitely would not be showing the video to any of their younger relatives and they may show it to some of their friends their age, but only a few if any. Calling attention to the fact that the cartoon cat doesn't wear pants didn't seem appropriate to them, and they said they saw Puss in Boots throw a few hip thrusts in there, which was unappealing to them. Subject C said he was particularly put off by the close up of the cat's groin area as he jumped over the large needle atop the building and that such a shot was unnecessary to make the point the advertisement was going for, even though the cat was animated and so there was nothing inappropriate to see in that shot. Subjects G, H and I found it mildly amusing and thought it was a decent idea, but it fell short in the execution and they agreed with the second group that the video became at least mildly awkward.

The third video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btViXvIDsi0>) featured a long introduction package into a stunt driving video by driver Ken Block. In the introduction portion of the video, the viewer is bombarded with constant, non-stop product placement advertising for DC Shoes, Monster energy drinks and Ford cars. The logos for Monster, Ford, and DC Shoes are plastered all over the car used in the stunts as well as all over the driver's jacket and hat. The introduction portion of the video features several pop-up graphics to advertise the products and the driver using graphic styles from popular Hollywood movies and movie franchises like Top Gun and Back to the Future among others. The introduction portion of the video also features the driver's suit being set on fire, a zombie chewing on a leg wearing a DC Shoe, a ninja slicing through a hat with the Monster logo on it and a jacket with a Monster logo on it being blow up, among a lot of

other gratuitous and over the top displays of action. Unless groups wanted to watch the rest of the video, they were only shown the introductory part of the video where most of the advertising takes place. The rest of the video featured the driver performing a series of stunts such as sliding the car around a corner and through a wall, spinning donuts around moving forklifts and driving over a ladder which had a person in a gorilla costume standing on top of it and the person in the gorilla costume jumping off the top of the ladder just before contact and then landing on his or her feet safely as the car continues to barrel along the track on the way to the next stunt. The stunts take place on old movie lots and at one point, a robotic shark from the Jaws movie franchise is featured prominently as it jumps out of the water as the car slides by. The car also burns out around a set for the online video series Epic Meal Time, providing more in video advertising as the action is taking place. The video culminates with a Bollywood dance number as the driver climbs out of his car and into a shopping cart and is carted away by his entourage.

Subjects A and B both agreed that Ken Block's Gymkhana video was too confusing and they probably would not recommend for people to watch the entire video, but Subject A said the introduction segment of the video was interesting enough to show some people due to the pop culture references and all the obvious references to movies, plus the zombie appearance in the first minute. Subjects C, D, E and F were all very impressed by the Gymkhana video. Subject E said she found it a bit confusing at first, but the more the group talked about it, the more she understood what was going on. This group requested to watch the entire video and Subject C said that even though the entire video was several minutes long, it seemed to go by faster than the thirty second Puss in

Boots video because it was so much more entertaining and everybody else chimed in that they agreed with that sentiment. The blatant movie references in the graphics, they decided as a group made it appealing and also challenging to try to remember which movies all of the graphic styles came from. They agreed that only with a few exceptions like the Gymkhana video, if they were to send a video or show a video to somebody it had to be short and funny. The third group really liked this video because there were lots of action sequences. Plus, it was manly and there were zombies, fast cars and tricks. They enjoyed the level of "awesomeness" in the video which made it stand out from many of the other video advertisements they encounter on the web.

The fourth video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzIBZQkj6SY>) shown to the volunteers was a T-Mobile commercial advertising that with the T-Mobile service you could play popular games on your phone like Angry Birds anywhere you go and to demonstrate this, they chose to set up a real life version of the game in which versions of the different birds used in the game, perhaps crafted out of wood or Styrofoam, were created and launched via slingshot across a street and into a structure built to resemble the structure the birds demolish in the game in just the same way. As individuals would step up to the real life version of the game, they would be prompted on a cell phone to play Angry Birds and as they did so, they would be shocked to see a real life version of the bird they just launched go flying by in front of their eyes and crash into a structure and then seemingly explode or pop, knocking down part of the structure. A street party then slowly forms around the game site as people continue to launch the real life versions of the birds, sometimes ending with the birds flying off into the crowd or landing in a

nearby fountain, all while a mariachi band shows up and starts playing music along with the game.

Subjects A and B decided together that the T-Mobile Angry Birds Live video was funny, but that there was not enough information included in the video and that it didn't appeal specifically to them. Subjects C, D, E and F all found this video amusing, but not really all that interesting and they found it to be lacking a lot of information. As Subject C pointed out, he didn't know it was an advertisement for T-Mobile until the logo popped up at the end. He said he had thought it was just an advertisement for Angry Birds. Subjects G, H and I thought the live action and the popular culture awareness of the video were good additions, but the whole thing felt kind of silly and over the top to them.

The fifth and final video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4_dZPVg8KI) was advertising the creation of the new Star Tours attraction at Disneyland. To promote this in the advertisement, the viewers are shown a dark figure holding up a map of Disneyland in front of his face as he tries to read it and there are two Storm Troopers in the background as the figure slowly lowers the map and reveals to the audience that it is Darth Vader himself, the personification of evil in the Star Wars universe and he's at Disneyland, which right away is an absurd contrast that could put the viewer off his or her guard. Various humorous situations then follow including Darth Vader riding the Teacups, the Storm Troopers attempting to pull the Sword from the Stone unsuccessfully and then having to move out of the way as Darth Vader uses the force to remove the Sword from the Stone, one of the Storm Trooper's doomed attempt to drink from a bendy straw through his helmet, Darth Vader and the two Storm Troopers admiring their picture during the Space Mountain ride, and Darth Vader being spooked on a ride to the point

where he feels the need to draw his light saber to protect himself. All of this is occurring as Darth Vader and the Storm Troopers attempt to kill time while they wait for the Star Tours attraction to be completed. However, when they go back at the end of the day, the attraction is still not operational and Darth Vader then uses the force to force the doors to the attraction open and the three of them storm inside. One of the Storm Troopers then comedically covers the rear as they make their way into the attraction and a graphic on the screen states that the Star Tours attraction is now open.

The Star Tours video, both subjects A and B felt was full of humor that specifically appealed to them and a majority of their friends as well. Because it had to deal with Star Wars, which they had seen and are fans of the franchise, all of the inside jokes appealed to them like Darth Vader, a very serious character, being frightened and having to pull out his light saber on a ride at Disneyland, the Storm Trooper having an "epic fail" moment when he tried to take a drink through his helmet. Subject A said he liked that there was constantly something new, the humor was more specific and the video added personality to popular characters that everybody would be familiar with. Combining two existing popular items, Star Wars and Disneyland, to make a new attraction both held a great amount of appeal to the two of them. The Star Tours video was a big hit with the second group, primarily for the same reasons as it was with the first focus group. It used appealing subject matter from popular culture in Darth Vader, used an ironic sense of humor by following Darth Vader around Disneyland and they felt the jokes were legitimately funny. All three groups were pretty much in agreement that the Star Tours video was "awesome" and for much the same reasons. Star Wars, being a very notable franchise, automatically piqued the third group's interest and they felt it did a

good job of making the humor work and not harming the image of the characters or the franchise. Star Wars fans are typically very well known for their fervor about the way the franchise should be viewed, remembered and conceptualized and Subjects G, H and I each made it clear that they are Star Wars fans and that all three of them were in agreement that the video was "awesome."