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YouTube: Let's Create Content!

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YOUTUBE: LET'S CREATE CONTENT!

By

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A capstone project submitted for Graduation with University Honors

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University of California, Riverside

APPROVED

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Abstract

The purpose of this creative project is to show the editing, recording, and planning process involved in the creation of a video to demonstrate the process behind content creation. YouTube is a platform that has grown exponentially since 2005, to the point where a lot of people are aware of the existence of this website and use it to create and/or consume content for a variety of purposes. Creating audiovisual content is an art that requires effort. YouTube allows any person to create something and express an idea or show a message. In my experience I have come across people who tend to think that video making is not something worthwhile and it is a waste of time, to the point that it is sometimes ridiculed and not supported. The goal of this project is to try to change that perspective as I produce a series of videos with different styles, such as first-person point of view, comic dubs, and skits. Statistics will be used to show evidence of how important video-sharing platforms have become. I will use a variety of software programs such as Adobe programs and Audacity audio editor to ensure good quality video, resulting in a well-structured project. Finally, to obtain experience and lessons from experts, I will use LinkedIn Learning to get a scholar perspective in audio and video editing, video logs will narrate my recording and editing process in detail, and I will use an autoethnographic approach for this research.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the people that helped me succeed in this project. I want to thank Dr, Ilya Brookwell for mentoring me throughout this capstone project, it has been an interesting journey and not only did I learn about research, but I also learned a little about virtual reality and videogames more in depth, which is something that I really appreciate and I really appreciate the support and encouragement throughout this project.

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Introduction

“Founded by former PayPal employees Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, YouTube’s website was officially launched with little public fanfare in June 2005” (Burgess & Green, 2018). Since then, YouTube has grown exponentially. People were given the content they liked and the website kept gaining popularity. “By 2013, YouTube was reporting that more than 100 hours of video were uploaded each minute; and in 2017 the company website claimed that their billion users were watching a billion hours of content each day” (Burgess & Green, 2018). It is clear that the website is in high demand, however, it has been my personal experience that some people do not take into consideration the effort and work that is required behind those videos that one consumes. Content creation on YouTube is sometimes ridiculed and discouraged by others. The purpose of this creative project, then, is to show how is the production process behind various styles of videos, with the ultimate goal to demonstrate how content creation is an art that requires time and effort to achieve a great product, hopefully changing the perspective of something that seems ridiculous and encouraging those people who are afraid to show their talents because of what other people might say.

A Little about YouTube

“The revolutionary nature of digital media goes well beyond the fact that they involve new technologies that a lot of the people are using a lot of the time. Rather, it is the characteristics of these new media which make them so culturally significant” (Barker & Jane, 2016). This is a very valid point for both authors since technology is always evolving and so does the way we interact with people in the digital world. Referring back to YouTube, people express themselves by making videos. People can give a message, store and share memories, and many more things.

Within the internet world it is important to know one key term, *Fandom*. This basically refers to a group of people (fans) who share a common interest in a certain topic. “Jenkins has characterized practices such as fanfiction and fan video-making as a type of ‘participatory culture’ in which fans not only interpret meaning in diverse ways but also create meaning in a moment of a fan cultural production” (Barker & Jane, 2016). To briefly explain some of the concepts that were brought in this quote, fanfiction refers to a story made by a fan of a book, videogame, movie, or anything in that style. It can be very beneficial to the creator to be aware of those fandoms. A creator can look for patterns or notice trending topics that have their own fandoms and create content for those fandoms to become relevant or trending. Even some creators can in a way choose their audience by creating specific content targeted at those fandoms.

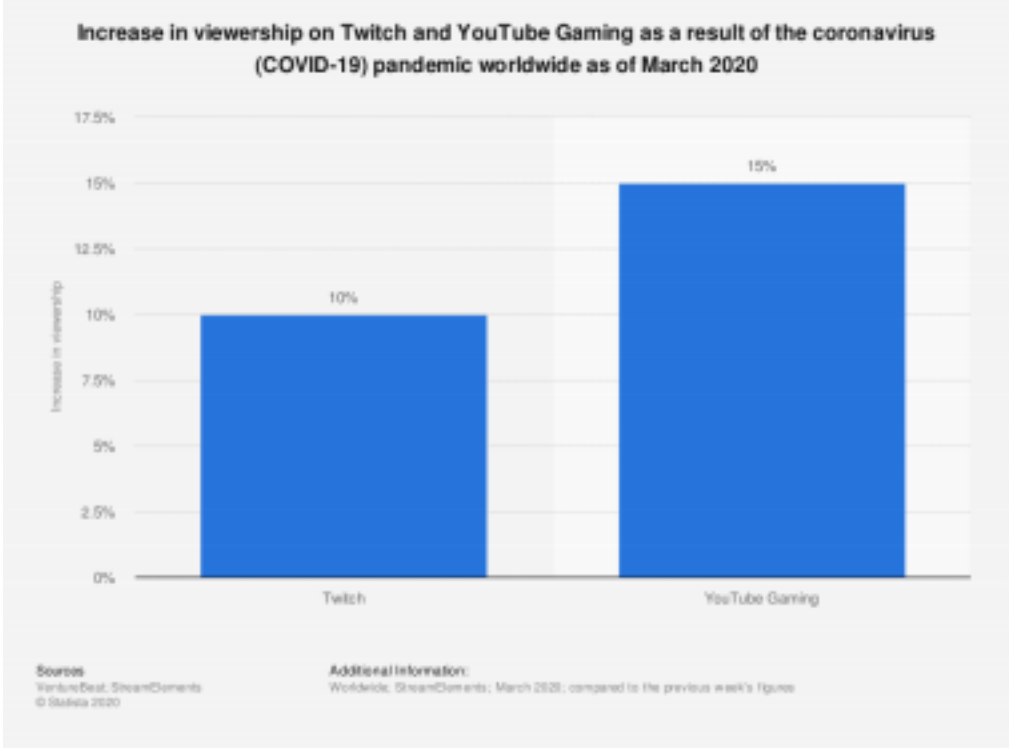
The book *Contagious* discusses many factors that can make something able to catch on. One of these principles is stories. “Make sure your desired information is so embedded into the plot that people can’t tell the story without it” (Berger, 2013). Stories make things more entertaining and engaging when trying to convey a message. YouTube can use this same principle, no matter if it is a 10-minute video or a 10 second video, if there is a story that people can talk about in that video, it will be something that will be caught on, that is how some become viral (popular). Stories are important to be memorable. “They provide a quick and easy way for people to acquire lots of knowledge in a vivid and engaging fashion” (Berger, 2013).

COVID-19 and Streaming

We are living in interesting times in the year 2021. I can assure that during the time that this capstone project was being written, many things in life have changed. The virtual world is no exception to that change. With people in quarantine, online entertainment has been more

demanded than ever before. Streams are especially popular, because many people are locked down in their homes, and many others were sent back home from their jobs to work/study remotely. Entertainment from streaming platforms became more important during this pandemic time.

In this figure below, it is shown how much the consumption of Twitch and YouTube Gaming has increased as of March 2020.



It makes sense why people have adopted the live streaming format more than any other format. Some content creators who use YouTube as their main platform still upload their usual content with their specific style to the website there. But some of those creators have experienced obstacles in their style of creating videos, especially those who rely on social interaction and traveling. With this in mind, the best way to stay safe and continue to provide content is through live streams because people have now more time to consume content which also encourages creators to create content in this style. Also, because many creators are using the streaming

style, there are many more collaborations. Even professional athletes from soccer teams have started to do live streams playing video games. One example includes Sergio Agüero from Argentina with his YouTube channel *Sergio Agüero Oficial* and his Twitch channel *Slakun10*. He has interacted with many other youtubers from Spain playing a popular game called *Among Us*. Overall, the pandemic has not only changed our consumption habits for entertainment but also the approach many creators are taking.

Twitch is a video-streaming platform which focuses on live streams. It is different from YouTube in its regulations and its positioning in live streaming platforms. Many people rather watch live streams on Twitch than YouTube because of the chat interaction and a more personal interaction with the streamer. We can expect to see a higher quantity of live streams because of this pandemic. Creators have more freedom with live streaming because not only can they play video games, they can also react to videos while interacting with their audience and receive donations from that audience as well. Something that can be seen is that some content creators combine both the use of YouTube and Twitch to attract audiences who are comfortable just by watching videos and not being present during a live stream and those who like to interact in the live chat and like to see content in real time. Usually, what a content creator that uses both platforms will do is use Twitch as his/her primary platform to do live streams and after the stream is over, capture the best parts of the stream, edit them, and upload them to YouTube so that those who do not use Twitch can experience the entertainment as well.

Content Creation as a Job

At the end of the day, YouTube is just a small portion of the bigger picture. In the end, it is all about content creation. Similar to how Sabrina Cruz described in her Ted Talk, Youtubers do not exist anymore, they're too many social media platforms out there and if you're doing one, you're

doing them all” (Cruz, 2018). In order to be able to make content creation a job, one must be willing to get out of their comfort zone and try as many platforms as one can in order to reach out to people who use other platforms. Many content creators have a focus platform and other smaller platforms to reach out to their audience. Whether, it is YouTube, Twitch, TikTok, or any other platform, usually the best strategy is to implement as many as possible to target different audiences.

It is important to consider that not all people have the same preferences or schedules. Some might prefer live stream interaction, others might prefer longer and more edited videos, and still others might prefer videos that last only a couple of seconds. Creators should consider this and take it as an opportunity to consider different styles. Bigger channels usually do not need this approach since they already have an established audience, but if they want to diversify their content, it is a good option. For new content creators, this is probably the best approach to finding one’s audience and to decide to either focus on one platform or use the same amount of energy for others.

An additional thing to consider is that, if one truly wants content creation to be their job, they have to treat it as such. Sometimes that even means working harder than a traditional full-time job because of the intense competition there is across platforms.

Autoethnographic Research

Most of this research paper comes from my experience as a content creator and what I have learned through the years as content creation changes in style and new trends appear. My experience comes mainly from YouTube, I started since 2012 so I have witnessed many of the changes the platform has experienced, as well as the styles of content creation. However, the

intention of this project is not to focus just on myself, but the discoveries and lessons I have learned through those experiences. As quoted from Heewon Chang's book *Autoethnography as Method*, "Autoethnography is not about focusing on self alone, but about searching for understanding of others (culture/society) through self" (Chang, 2016).

Many of these experiences have not only been lessons, but they have impacted upon me in the long run, such as learning to edit, staying in touch with pop culture to know what is trending and what people are searching for, connecting with other YouTuber's from different parts of the world, and many great experiences that have allowed me to become a better person thanks to those amazing and creative people who give it there all in order to create the content they like and tell their own stories.

"Detailed descriptions add life to autoethnography. These details, even when expressed in a few simple words, draw readers to the world of the writer" (Chang, 2016). In the following section I will describe my creative process, writing process, and my way of telling a story. This previous quote by Chang reminds us that the details when telling a story are important in order to capture the attention to the writer. In my case I want to capture the viewer's attention by creating a video that has a message, emotion and a conclusion. I will now describe, how I create a story.

Video Styles

Go Pro (First Person)

A first-person video is one of the easiest videos to record and edit. In essence, everything one sees is what the camera will record. Some equipment that could make a difference while recording first person videos are the head strap and the chest strap. Head strap allows more mobility and results in a more fluid perspective as in what the person viewer. On the downside, during intense movement, such as running, the camera does not record that well. For the chest

strap, action shots can be taken by ensuring a better stability, the downside is that there is very little mobility.

This is how I record a first-person video:

A first-person video usually becomes more impactful with 2 things in mind. One of them is an interesting setting, second is an interesting activity. It is important to note that it is not necessary to have both. Sometimes I just want to show a beautiful place, sometimes I want to record myself in a zip-line, but what I consider to be important, is to at least have a message.” Why do I want to record this place?”, “Why do I want to record this activity?” When I find the reason why I want to press that record button, that video will have a meaning.

For this creative project, most of my footage was taken, before the times of Covid-19. I want to use that footage to remember what it was like when we had freedom and we did not know it and to hope that someday, we will go back to normal.

Voice recording:

A video that is based on voice requires acting skills. I have done this by recording commercials for Facebook pages in some restaurants and also some comic-dubs or comics in which I add voices. This kind of video requires mostly basic equipment which is a microphone and an editing Software. What I use is a *Blue SnowBall* Microphone, and *Audacity* as my main audio editor.

In this project what plays part of the voice recording is when I narrate how everyone has their own story. I will use this as my thesis argument in a creative way and justify how visual content can actually express a message and it is not just a waste of time.

Editing Process: In any editing process, dialogues are what come first if it applies. One can

hardly edit a project without dialogues. It helps the creator keep track of what it is going in the sequence of the video and it also helps the creator. For this capstone project, I decided to create a compilation of different recording styles. I will now introduce some entries of what happened in those days while I was capturing those moments.

Video Logs

Dubs: In this log, I recorded that small clip of a fan project, giving voice to a character. Usually there would be no need for me to record myself in a video of that style, but for this video I did. I used the camera on my phone so that it showed my face. I did some warm ups before recording, by rehearsing the lines I was going to say but without actually putting emotion into it, just to feel familiar with the movements my mouth had to perform. I would also try tongue twister if the phrase was hard to record. I would have a glass of water ready as well to make sure I can recover if my throat is dry.

One thing that I would do whenever I record it to add hand gestures and make sure to use facial expressions when recording, it really helps transmit emotion and it reflects on the audio of the recording. Once I recorded the clip what I would do for editing is synchronizing my recorded audio, with the video being dubbed and, in this case, also synchronizing the video from my phone camera to the audio. For this project, I wanted to capture that in order to effectively interpret a character, one must show emotion as if what it happening in the screen, is actually happening to you, sometimes one must even exaggerate gestures to obtain the best results and become that character.

Spray-paint: For the spray paint video my most important idea was to use different camera angles to capture the spray-paint process. The day was perfect for painting, it was not windy,

which is one of the worst times to attempt a video like that. It was sunny and simply a time that felt like it was the perfect time to spray-paint. My most important tool for this video, was the use of the slow-motion camera from my phone, this was used, to dry the painting faster, with the use of clear coat and fire, similar to a flamethrower. The sound it produces might be intimidating and if the flame is too close to the painting it might catch fire. But with practice one gets used to measuring the right distance. Slow-motion captures the beauty of fire drying, and the way the flame appears in the recording is simply beautiful. That was the main thing I wanted to capture.

Driving: For videos that involve first person as well but recording the point of view of a driver, I just wanted to capture something that we do on our daily basis to empathize with the viewer. I want to show that I am a person just like the person watching this video. The driving clips are not that complex at all, in fact they might be the easiest. I just attach a head strap and mount my GoPro in it, hit record, and start driving. In this particular clip I was driving back home from college. It was a lonely road so at times it could be peaceful to drive that way, it becomes relaxing.

Yosemite: Yosemite was also one of the places where I used first-person style. But in this specific scenario, I wanted to focus on the beauty of nature and adventure in the outdoors. All of the areas where I explored had an enjoyable feeling of cool wind, and when rock climbing, I could feel the desire to discover what is on the top of the rock, a mystery to explore, the mystery and how fascinating nature is. Throughout multiple clips, I emerged with the footage and I aimed for the viewer to feel adventure through my eyes. There are no special effects or anything. It is just a camera, my actions, and a beautiful environment in which I interact.

First Person Zip Line Journey: The summer adventure for ziplining was part of a family

vacation. My intention is to transmit adrenaline as I turn on my camera and show the viewer what I experienced. What is so different from other first-person videos is that in this one, it is focused on an activity that could be considered high risk. The adrenaline I felt while zip-lining from a mountain to the next, crossing hanging bridges, and all of the adrenaline felt in those days, it is something that I want to transmit in this specific type of video. It becomes a story that at some point I can narrate without any words. I just turn on a camera and face the obstacles put ahead of me, conquer them, and enjoy the beauty of a thrilling experience and what it feels like flying in those ziplines. It becomes more than just recording a simple video of a family trip. It becomes a story. It becomes my story.

LinkedIn Learning

Throughout this research I noticed that video editing can go beyond just entertainment platforms such as YouTube and other trending websites. It is also a job, and as such, it is expected that some people have experience and are well trained in order to take this task as a professional. While working on this project, I worked on multiple certificates through LinkedIn Learning, to acquire experience from professionals who are knowledgeable in these areas. I will show the certificates obtained and how it relates to my project, from the courses taught by experts.

As described by Rob Garrot from his course, Learning Video Production and Editing, there are 3 types of stories, “the story you write and conceive, the story you shoot in camera, and the story you edit” (Garrot, 2019). These aspects all become true during the time I was working on the video for this project. It is all part of creating something that reaches the viewer. I argue that a person who is aware of these 3 types of stories and knows how to relate with those who are watching the video, will be able to capture emotion. It also comes down to practice, the more

projects one becomes involved with, the better the person will become at creating content that becomes effective to obtain the desired goal. “Everything that you do and learn should be helping you to create better projects and communicate with your audience” (Garrot,2019).

Stories:

Stories are important, they have evolved from conversation to conversation, to writing, and now also through film. In her course, *Introduction to Video Editing*, Ashely Kennedy describes that “storytelling through film making has only been possible for a little over a century and within that period, we've seen the medium evolve from the simplest subjects imaginable to the most action-packed blockbusters of our times (Kennedy, 2015). It has become increasingly important in filming to create a story that has meaning and using technology and other tools that go beyond a simple campfire story, can lead to an amazing creation, something new, even a new genre that could change the film industry. But one thing is for certain, in order for a story to be effective, a message must be clear to the viewer after experiencing that story.

An important part of the creation of these stories is the editing process, “Without the editor, there would just be a mountain of footage with nothing to hold it together” (Kennedy,2015).

Essentially, the editing process is what allows a video to be even more meaningful than an unedited video, one can add transitions, background music, narrative, etc. The possibilities with editing become endless.

Editing:

“A crucial concept in controlling how the audience feels is to control what the audience sees” (Hollyn, 2013). In his course from LinkedIn Learning, *Foundations of Video: The Art of Editing*. Norman Hollyn describes how it is like to edit a project, as well as briefly going over the history

of what editing is and multiple strategies like camera angles and different shots to get the audience engaged. I use many of these principles in my video compilation because I use different video styles, from traditional recording using a camera and showing my entire body, to using an action camera to capture events that involve lots of movement in first person. More specifically addressing this quote, in the end while I edit a project, I am the one who decides what the viewer will see in that video. That is something that has to be carefully planned if taken seriously, especially if one seeks to create a specific effect or capture an emotion. I can get to decide if perhaps a shot is too boring or if a shot is too distracting. Or in the case of a transition from one scene to another, I make sure that the timing of that transition fits the video as best as possible.

Hollyn explains a very interesting concept known as *Rule of Threes*. “Simply, put, the Rule of Threes means that the impact of a shot. Is completely dependent upon the shot that came before it and will indelibly affect the shot that comes right after it” (Hollyn, 2013). In the case of a project that continuity is very important and details. The previous scene that one recorded is important for that next scene to have more impact. It involves lots of smart decisions when using transitions, sound effects and overall small details that some might think is not important, but in reality, those small details are what creates the scene and makes it so important.

Audio:

One of the crucial parts of any video is the audio. The sound of a project can greatly contribute to the effect the video creator wants to transmit to the viewer. In this specific course by Mark Simon called Voice-over for Video and Animation covers many strategies in order to efficiently work with voice-over projects. “Now physical acting also affects your voice, so, maybe you'll want to try jumping around or acting it out completely or emoting physically” (Simon, 2018). I

have repeatedly stated how important it is to create emotion in a video, and if it is referred to recording one's voice, the best way to create emotion is to record with emotion. By doing that it is reflected in the video and it feels like a more realistic interpretation of a character, commercial, or whatever it is you are trying to create. There is a high possibility that if one asks a voice actor or actress what do they recommend to become better at voice-overs is to take acting classes or study acting. I would argue it makes sense; it allows the person who is trying to personify a character to give a more realistic version of that character. When I do voices, I personally do a lot of hand gestures and facial expressions in order to project myself at the time of recording, even if it is just voice and there is no mouth movement from a character to follow.

In his course, Mark Simon also describes the process of removing background noises using software. This helps improve the quality of the audio to be inserted in the video. If one wants to take their projects to a better quality, then they should definitely apply this process. The easiest way to do so is to record a piece blank space or background noise at the beginning and then start recording. By doing this, the user can then select that portion of the recording containing the background noise at the beginning and apply the option to remove background noise. The audio should sound cleaner after this and the quality over all should be improved.

Certificates





LinkedIn LEARNING

Certificate of Completion
Congratulations, Fausto Ramirez

Introduction to Video Editing

Course completed on Apr 04, 2021 at 01:05AM UTC • 2 hours 53 min

By continuing to learn, you have expanded your perspective, sharpened your skills, and made yourself even more in demand.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Rodriguez".

Head of Content Strategy, Learning

LinkedIn Learning
1000 W Maude Ave
Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Certificate Id: AYIPMyR7p6v5N9wfITWJna49EHzb



LinkedIn LEARNING

Certificate of Completion
Congratulations, Fausto Ramirez

Learning Video Production and Editing

Course completed on Mar 23, 2021 at 06:59AM UTC • 18 min

By continuing to learn, you have expanded your perspective, sharpened your skills, and made yourself even more in demand.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Bolintz".

Head of Content Strategy, Learning

LinkedIn Learning
1000 W Maude Ave
Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Certificate Id: ASH7W6E02KkQUn2_otgCYmFjjlIA



LinkedIn LEARNING

Certificate of Completion
Congratulations, Fausto Ramirez

Voice-Over for Video and Animation

Course completed on Mar 29, 2021 at 07:12PM UTC • 1 hour 30 min

By continuing to learn, you have expanded your perspective, sharpened your skills, and made yourself even more in demand.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Bolintz".

Head of Content Strategy, Learning

LinkedIn Learning
1000 W Maude Ave
Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Certificate Id: AaZxGTNaBZS6xgHvIRw4b0Ae88Y4

Conclusion:

In conclusion, content creation is of great importance. It goes beyond just a hobby; people consume large quantities of content. Whether it is at a more amateur style such as Twitch or YouTube or a more professional style like Netflix and Hollywood movies content creation is everywhere. In this Pandemic we observed how much content we consumed, as many of the people who now had to stay at home had to change their behavior as well, they had more time to consume content. We also saw that this goes beyond just entertainment, there are professionals who teach courses to improve content creation skills and help those who want to learn know about theory and how to apply it. Content creation will only continue to improve as time goes by. As of today, I can say that I am fortunate to record amazing experiences, have the chance to write about these experiences, and have established amazing connections thanks to YouTube and creating content. This is my story. What is your story?

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