

Participative Art Marketing Communication and Creativity of User-generated Content

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Abstract: This paper deals with participatory communication in the field of the promotion of cultural institutions. Creativity is an important factor in the success and effectiveness of marketing communication. This phenomenon has not yet been explored in relation to the creativity of user-generated content. This research addresses the question of whether creativity is a significant factor in the success of UGC (user generated content). Analysis of the outputs generated by the recipients of the communication issued by the Getty Museum in Los Angeles – and their interpretation of the works of art available to the museum. We used a modified method of evaluating creativity developed by Smith et. al. (2007). We used correlation analysis to analyze our data. The findings show that creativity is an important factor in the design of the communication strategy rather than in the success of specific UGC products.

Keywords: art marketing; participatory marketing; creativity.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of our paper is to identify the degree and direction of creativity in participatory art marketing products—in the specific case of the Getty Museum campaign at the time of the emerging Covid-19 pandemic after the museum was closed to the public. We will focus on the role of the recipient with particular attention to their creativity, which was manifest in the outputs shared in online space as a response to the communication from the art institution.

The paradigmatic changes in the concept of marketing communication in the present-day late postmodernism, shift and even eliminate the boundaries between

the recipient and the creator of communication to such a degree that a recipient of communication becomes its multiplier (as its known from viral marketing), co-creator, and bearer of new meanings. This phenomenon plays a special role in art marketing, which aims to promote art, artistic institutions and cultural heritage; and its other specific role is the use of art in marketing. Interactivity and participation have increasingly become the typical features of art, and since the time of the first happenings and similar forms in the middle of the last century, they have also become the reception modes among the recipients of art.

THE POSTMEDIA ART, MARKETING COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATIVE DIGITAL CULTURE

The recipient's participatory role in art marketing blurs the boundaries between art and amateur creation and participatory marketing communication, and various hybrid communications often emerge with the hallmarks of social responsibility, participation and civic engagement. This also results in the building of the artistic community on social networks through the participation of art recipients: we are talking about "building brand awareness" within the bounds of the theory of digital marketing communication. The concept of user generated content (UGC) and user created content (UCC) is a special model of digital participatory culture (see Jenkins et al., 2006; Lutz & Hoffman, 2017) with a strong emphasis on creativity. Although the opinions on its origin differ (see Lobato, Thomas & Hunter, 2012), its theoretical anchoring can be identified in the definition of memes. The phenomenon of internet memes refers to the conceptual overlap of semiotics and intertextuality, with the defining frameworks such as:

remixed, repetitive messages that members of a participatory digital culture can disseminate rapidly for the purpose of satire, parody, criticism, or other discursive activity. Its function is to visually argue in order to initiate, expand or influence discourse (Wiggins, 2019, p. 11).

In this context, the definition of "floating artwork" is proposed, which is

re-created with each moment of perception [and compared to traditional artwork] (...) a floating artwork is not an entity, but a state transformed on the basis of the ever-changing influences (...) and is mobile and dynamic (Dinkla, 2002, pp. 27-41).

The above attributes defining the digital participatory forms when building a community of art recipients on social networks were also characteristic of the

Getty Art Challenge and Museum Art Challenge phenomenon in the start of pandemic in 2020.

There is evidence that UGC can have a positive impact on consumers in terms of the promoted product. (Bahtar & Muda, 2016; Luca, 2015; Malthouse, Calder, Kim & Vandenbosch, 2016) Research even suggests that UGC affects the recipient's behavior more than the content generated by standard marketing (Tsiakali, 2018). The UGC factors that Cresp, Gutiérrez and Mogollón (2015) identify as key for the subsequent use by their recipients, are mainly associated with information value, credibility of the source and interaction between the two variables. The similarity between the users and content creators on social networks was not significant. Despite the above, UGC also has its critics. This is especially true not only in relation to copyright issues, but also to the fact that content creators create content free of charge (e.g. Hesmondhalgh, 2010, Senftleben, 2019). This phenomenon became popular as early as in 2010 (B. Gunter 2010, online) and it turns out that it has been increasingly used for the dissemination of socially beneficial ideas, such as in health promotion campaigns (Hether & Calabrese, 2020). The UGC phenomenon has also appeared in the work of non-profit organizations, which use this tool for information and educational purposes, see for example the campaign #SafeHands Challenge initiated by the WHO in connection with the Covid-19 pandemic (Sanga, 2021). The use of UGC in the field of art marketing of cultural institutions is another example of these educational, popularized and socially beneficial possibilities.

CREATIVITY AND MARKETING COMMUNICATION

The essence of creativity is originality (novelty, uniqueness, unusualness, including a certain element of surprise) and relevance (Runco & Garrett, 2012; Walia, 2019; Glăveanu & Beghetto, 2021; Pichot et al., 2022). The recipients tend to enjoy creative advertising more (Lehnert, Till & Carlson, 2013) and it has a significant potential to attract attention (Reinartz & Saffert; 2013, Till & Baack, 2005) and improve the attitudes of the recipients of communication towards advertising (Ang, Lee & Leong, 2007). These issues can be found in all three components of attitudes as Rauwers et al. (2018) who find that compared to traditional advertising, creative advertising improves the affective, behavioral and cognitive responses of consumers. Baack, Wilson and Till (2008) argue that creative advertising increases the recognition ability of the advertised entities and this positive effect increases over time. Their results also suggest that the effectiveness of creativity in advertising depends on its type: cinema advertising, just like traditional advertising, increased recall, and creativity is an important aspect in ambient advertising (Šula, 2018; Wojciechowski, 2016, 2018).

However, creative advertising placed at airports did not have such a significant effect (Baack, Wilson & Till, 2008). By contrast, Wulandari and Darma (2020) suggest that creative advertising of fashion products on Instagram has demonstrated a causal relationship to efficiency and purchasing decisions. Similarly, H. Choudhary (2021) confirms that highly creative advertising has a significant communicative effect. This suggests that the degree of effects of creativity in advertising is also moderated by its other specificities – especially by its type and the goods or services it promotes. Consistent with the above, we believe that creativity could be an important factor when increasing the impact of participatory marketing.

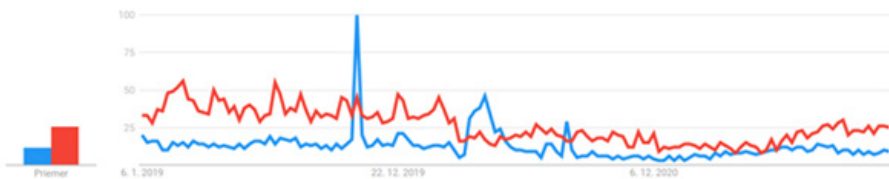
THE GETTY ART CHALLENGE

The call issued by the Getty Center in Los Angeles (known in the digital media environment as the Getty Art Challenge, Museum Art Challenge) followed the Dutch initiative of “Tussen Kunst & Quarantaine” supported by the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam (Potts, 2020). The initial impetus was the call of the Dutch communication agent and social event manager Annelos in Dutch. The call was an interesting impetus to fill the void caused by lockdowns, which were imposed on most countries in Europe and the world in the spring of 2020, and it was also a good marketing opportunity for museums. The art challenge was an original and creative way to compensate for social deprivation, the deficit of social communication, and was instrumental in sharing the hitherto unknown pandemic situation. Altogether three conditions were defined within the call: select a well-known work of art, use household objects and photograph and share the recreated (interpreted) work on social networks. The challenge was specific for its deliberate intertextuality with social isolation and the pandemic, and its focus was beyond the typical content shared by the social network users (e.g. home exercise, cooking, childcare).

The Getty Museum campaign was a success even according to the search metric in Google Trends (Graph 1) and it made the museum’s website popular among internet users. Three significant spikes are clearly visible in the graph: the first is not the result of a well-structured campaign, but of the fires that broke out in the immediate vicinity of the museum at the time (October 27, 2019 – November 2, 2019). The second significant spike falls within the period of Getty Art Challenge, which included the call for the museum followers to get involved in the creation of works of art. This spike occurred about a month after the announcement of the call (April 19 – 25, 2020). Although this challenge followed almost immediately after its original model of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, the nonstandard fluctuations cannot be deducted in the case of the European

Challenge even though it has almost continually registered more search queries than the Getty Museum. This can be interpreted in many ways, with two most salient explanations: first, it must be noted that the Getty Museum call was verbalized in a world language while the Rijksmuseum call predominantly used Dutch (approximately 17.4 million inhabitants, of which 15.88 million use the internet, compared to the 245.43 million internet users in the USA (Roser, et al., 2015). The second probable reason is that the original communication strategy was more of a random initiative by a museum worker at the place of inception of the original idea, but the Getty Center call was of an intentional marketing nature. We can also factor in other possible variables, namely the degree of penetration of digital social networks in the given areas.

Graph 1. Development of search queries of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in the period from March 1, 2019 to October 28, 2021



Legend: red = Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Holland; blue = J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, USA, data from March 1, 2019 to October 28, 2021. Source: Google Trends

In both cases, the campaigns gained considerable traction with the public. We hold that some of the motivations included the opportunity to showcase own creativity and transition from mere recipients of art to its co-creators and active participants. On the other hand, the interpretations and individual shifts of the original works by ordinary gallery visitors, which brought unusual and fresh ideas to the recipients, and were often transformed by the experience and reflection of the present. The pandemic situation was novel with all its contexts and the changes in our daily lives (ranging from the lock-downs and the need to deal with them, to the panic shopping for certain items).

RESEARCH SECTION

Based on the above, we formulated the following research problem: Is there a significant positive relationship between the creativity of adverfacts (products of participatory art marketing) and their sharing on Twitter in the period under review? In our study, we focused on identifying the possible correlations between creativity and selected communication effects – the degree of sharing of communication messages.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research material consisted of adverfacts generated by the recipients of the Getty Museum in Los Angeles call for user generated content¹. At the time, Getty Museum in Los Angeles had on Twitter 6820 views, 1.3 million followers, 10,708 retweets, 3490 quote tweets and 26,226 likes. The period under review started on the date of publication of the call by the museum, i—March 25, 2020—and ended on February 4, 2020. We identified a total of 308 posts published in the museum call thread. Of these, we selected 20 adverfacts with the highest retweet rate (100 and more, with a maximum of 1200 retweets per post). The posts shared by the museum also included a link to the specific artifacts in the museum’s collection.

Figure 1. Samples from a set of adverfacts generated by the recipients of communication by the Getty Museum in Los Angeles (pairs from left to right, line by line: G, L, B, A, H, C)



Sources: G: Getty (2020b), L: Embee (2020), B: rachelforest (2020), A: Getty (2020a), H: Ann Zumhagen-Krause (2020), C: Kyle Bates (2020)

1 Note: ‘adverfact’ is a melding of advert(ising) + fact, and while it is an analogy to the word ‘artefact’, the melding is an advertising communication and not any product of human activity. M. Zelinský (2007) coined the word.

To identify the creativity of adverfacts, we used a modified creativity assessment tool by Smith et. al. (2007) (in the original “Measurement scale”), which identifies multiple facets of creativity using expert scoring. Of all the available factors, we only used five in our research – namely those to which the authors also offered preliminary standards, and those that met the specifics of the assessed material. We present the criteria and their specification in Appendix A. Evaluators in accordance with the recommendations of Smith et. al. (2007), and each criterion is assigned a value of 1–6. The criteria are based on the confluence models of creativity, especially the approach of Guilford (1975, 1992), but also on the model of Dacey and Lennon (2000) that derives from Guilford and is oriented towards the divergence and relevance of ideas. Divergence consists of several factors, for example originality, which is understood as the infrequency of an idea in the population. Other factors include fluency (number of ideas) and flexibility (variety of solutions). The factors used by Smith et. al. (2007) are specified in Appendix A. Two experienced scorers (1 male and 1 female) participated in the scoring-process. They received a detailed description of a modified version of the tool by Smith et. al. (2007) and detailed instructions on the scoring procedure. The scorers have been dealing with creativity for a long period throughout their professional careers —15 years of expertise on average. Both are devoted to the topic both theoretically and practically. They have lectured and implemented several projects focused on the creativity of adverfacts, and they also did foreign internships, stays and invited lectures on creativity in marketing communication. They are also active as judges in adverfact creativity competitions. A satisfactory degree of agreement was reached between the two scorers in four out of five factors: originality ($r(18)=0.7383$, $p=0.000202$), flexibility ($r(18)=0.5167$, $p=0.01967$), elaboration ($r(18)=0.6139$, $p=0.003986$) and artistic value ($r(18)=0.63449$, $p=0.00266$). (After completing the Sidak correction ($p_{\text{Sidak}}=0-0085$), the correlation for the flexibility factor can be seen as weaker). In the area of synthesis, the resulting inter-rater reliability was too low ($r(18)=0.4433$, $p=0.05027$), we therefore did not take this factor into account in the subsequent analysis. We processed the data using inferential statistical procedures. The data are presented in tables.

ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND RESULTS

The maximum number of points an adverfact (marked with letters of the alphabet) can score is 6 in each of the evaluated areas. The most creative adverfact scored 23 points out of 30. The least creative only scored 6.5 points. For each of the factors, Smith et. al. (2007) define the relevant norms, which indicate which values can be considered to signal a high level of creativity. Smith et. al. (2007) list several options (e.g. averages of highly creative ads – award winners). In this study, we relied on the author’s data presented as “across all ad”, with all those that reached above-average values ($AM + sd$) assessed as creative, and those

that achieved below-average values (AM-1sd) assessed as having low creativity. The specific limit values are presented in the footer of Table 1. As the data in the Table suggest, the occurrence of uneven scores was rare in the examined material; they were only achieved in some indicators and only by the adverfacts “I” and “L”, which also achieved the best results in the overall comparison.

The data analysis results suggest that even the highly retweeted adverfacts did not score significantly in the creativity factors (Table 1). This is also evidenced by the identified correlation coefficients (Table 2), on the basis of which it can be stated that creativity is not a factor that increases the probability of retweeting, or a higher number of “likes” or comments. This finding does not correspond to the research results presented by J. Mohammad, et. al. (2020), which confirmed that the content, quality and emotional values of UGC are significantly related to the impact of UGC. Likewise, G. Christodoulides, et. al. (2011) see creative efforts as an important part of UGC. In contrast, A. J. Kover, S. M. Goldberg and W. L. James (1995) arrived at similar results in their research – they identify some creative ads to be effective, some effective ads to be creative, while other ads in their research were neither creative nor effective. In our research, the findings show similar variations.

Table 1. Indicators of the impact and degree of creativity identified in a set of 20 most commented on adverfacts generated by the recipients of the call issued by the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, 24.03.2020

Adverfacts	Degree of impact			Degree of creativity					Total	Ordering
	Comments	Retweets	Likes	Originality	Flexibility	Synthesis	Elaboration	Artistic value		
A	111	1200	9800	3.5	2	2	1.5	2.5	11.5	13.5
B	89	1100	9200	4	2.5	3	1.5	5.5	16.5	6
C	57	556	6000	2.5	2.5	2	2.5	3.5	13	12
D	37	464	5200	4	4	4	3	2	17	4.5
F	58	369	4200	3.5	2	2	3.5	3.5	14.5	9
J	82	368	3300	2	1	1.5	3	6	13.5	10.5
I	33	354	3400	5	5	4.5	4.5	3	22	2
E	50	351	5000	2.5	1	1	2.5	3	11	15
H	54	327	3600	4	2.5	1.5	1.5	2	11.5	13.5
CH	18	278	3400	4	4.5	2	1	2	13.5	10.5
G	29	244	3800	1.5	1	1.5	1	1.5	6.5	20
M	66	202	2700	2	3.5	3.5	3	4	16	7
K	26	196	3200	2	3	2	1	1.5	9.5	18
L	33	193	2900	5.5	5	5	4	3.5	23	1
R	30	175	2300	3	2	1.5	2	0.5	9	19

Adverfacts	Degree of impact			Degree of creativity					Total	Ordering
	Comments	Retweets	Likes	Originality	Flexibility	Synthesis	Elaboration	Artistic value		
U	21	166	2000	3.5	2.5	2	3	4	15	8
P	21	149	2000	3.5	2.5	2	4	5	17	4.5
W	34	122	2400	2.5	2	1	1.5	3.5	10.5	16.5
N	13	110	1400	3	2.5	2	2	1	10.5	16.5
O	19	100	862	4	3.5	2.5	4	5.5	19.5	3
sd	26.76	317.11	2242.75	1.04	1.21	1.12	1.12	1.57	4.31	n.a.
AM	53.07	443.00	4692.86	3.28	2.73	2.33	2.50	3.20	14.03	n.a.
Smith norm. max.				5.87	4.74	5.72	5.19	6.08		
Smith norm. min.				2.53	1.8	1.94	2.39	2.74		

Legend: an adverfact can earn a maximum of 6 points in the degree of creativity in each of the factors

Source: own processing (columns 1–4) and own research (columns 5–11), the last two lines with the norms processed by: R. E. Smith et. al. (2007)

Table 2. Correlation analysis results of the observed variables in a set of adverfacts generated by the recipients of the call issued by the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, 24.03.2020

	Comments	Retweets	Likes	Originality	Flexibility	Elaboration	Artistic value
Comments	1	0.00001	0.00002	0.638275	0.15533	0.541899	0.161111
Retweets	0.829	1	0.00001	0.560633	0.56751	0.279863	0.521518
Likes	0.799	0.971	1	0.810694	0.46576	0.158001	0.813622
Originality	-0.112	0.138	0.057	1	0.00035	<u>0.036249</u>	0.666572
Flexibility	-0.331	-0.136	-0.174	0.72	1	0.091399	0.870326
Elaboration	-0.145	-0.255	-0.328	0.471	0.388	1	<u>0.023525</u>
Artistic value	0.326	0.152	0.056	0.103	-0.04	0.504	1

Regular = Pearson coefficient value R, **bold** = significant result, *italics* = level of significance, **bold+italics** = high significance after Sidak correction (see: Goss-Sampson, 2020)

$P_{Sidak} = 0.00244$, *italics + underlined* = originally significant result, after Bonferroni correction without significance. The values that did not reach the significance level were not corrected

Source: own research

The user-generated content that received the lowest creativity score achieved a good (medium) success rate in the responses (Fig. 1 G). However, even the most creative design has average to subnormal results in the responses (Fig. 1 L). By contrast, the designs with the highest amount of “likes” and retweets (Figure 1 A and 1 B) had an average degree of creativity. There were only a few cases where the generated output had a high degree of creativity and a high

response rate (e.g. 1 C). However, some situations are the exact opposite, with a highly creative design (Fig. 1 O) not significantly successful in reposting and receiving a low response (20th position out of 20). The design H (see Fig. 1 H), a response to Warhol's pop-art work, received medium success and fitted into the pandemic context relatively well, in which the Warhol's interpretation of Campbell's Soup was replaced by Xanax (an anxiolytic, anti-anxiety drug). The sales of anxiety drugs during the pandemic exhibited a growing trend (see e.g. Benzodiazepine Market Information, 2021), and a more pronounced effect than the identified one can be expected in this area. Based on the above data, the answer to the formulated research problem whether there was "a significant positive relationship between the creativity of adverfacts (products of participatory art marketing) and the degree of their sharing on Twitter in the period under review" was negative. Such a relationship could not be demonstrably proven.

LIMITATIONS

The present study has several limits. The most striking one is the relatively small scope of research material and the focus on a single case use of UGC. However, a wider selection of adverfacts would, on the other hand, have meant materials that were retweeted below the numerical limit (and therefore did not meet the criteria), and they would most probably and paradoxically increase the detected correlation (taking into account the low number of retweets and unattractive and uncreative content). It is also necessary to mention certain metric pitfalls of the modified method by Smith et. al. (2007), which we used in our research, and in which we found a lower degree of agreement between the evaluators in one particular case. At the same time, our research suggested that in order to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of content reposting by the recipients, it would be necessary to identify several intervening variables.

These would have included the age of recipients and their affiliation to a given generation (Štrbová & Boldišová, 2021), motivational variables (Gonzalez-Rodriguez, et al., 2021), or factors related to the medium and audience preferences (e.g. Black, 2020; Mikuláš, 2020). These factors could be subjected to a multivariate analysis, thereby providing a more complete picture of the preferences of the audience. Such an approach rather requires an experimental research plan which, however, loses the advantages of spinal reactions, which are key for this topic (the well-known "Hawthorne effect" in the research by E. Mayo (1945), or the "guinea pig effect" described by M. Disman (2002)). For these reasons, it is vital that the presented results be viewed as specific findings requiring further elaboration but also serving as a stimulus for more in-depth research in the field, and especially as a probe into the hitherto unexplored topic.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we approached some aspects of the use of UGC, which is gaining more and more popularity in art marketing. O'Herm and Kahle (2013) suggest that we can even discuss a paradigm shift in marketing communication thanks to UGC because the boundaries between consumers and businesses are becoming fragmented. There is a clear trend, in which an ever-increasing number of users are becoming active contributors, and not mere recipients of innovation and promotion. Digital media channels are generally preferred over traditional or offline channels on the consumer decision journey (Black, 2020).

User generated content also has a huge potential in the field of art marketing; users respond significantly well to the opportunity to become co-creators of content although it turns out that their level of creativity is not related to the success rate of their products (as confirmed by our research). This finding does not correspond to the knowledge base about the function of creativity in advertising communication (see e.g. Smith, Yang, 2004, Aichner and Shaltoni (2019)). It can be stated that the designers of the UGC strategy must be especially creative to make the challenge attractive for the target group, while the success or failure of particular UGC is rather linked to other factors. To reveal these intervening variables, it is necessary to perform a deeper analysis of UGC as well as an analysis of audience preferences that repost the content. The motivations of potential UGC authors and multipliers can significantly differ among individuals and across cultures (Gonzalez-Rodriguez, et al., 2021) and, as Maggioni et. al. (2020) contend user behavior may also show signs of randomness. At the same time, it will be necessary to consider the selection of shared content by the museum itself. Future research will show those elements that contribute to the success of specific user-generated outputs, and to what extent.

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APPENDIX A.

Selected criteria of adverfact creativity according to the “Measurement scale” by R. E. Smith, et. al. (2007) and their brief description

Criterion	Description	Score
Originality	The adverfact's* ideas are rare, surprising, or move away from the obvious and commonplace. The adverfact's ideas was “out of the ordinary”. The adverfact broke away from habit-bound and stereotypical thinking. The adverfact was unique.	Each criterion: max 2 points, total max. 6
Flexibility	The adverfact had different ideas and shifted from one type of subject matter to another. 2.1 The adverfact contained ideas that moved from one subject to another. 2.2 The adverfact contained different ideas. 2.3 The adverfact shifted from one idea to another.	Each criterion: max 2 points, total max. 6
Synthesis	The picture combined or connected normally unrelated objects or ideas. 3.1 The adverfact connected objects that are usually unrelated. 3.2 The adverfact contained unusual connections. 3.3 The adverfact brought unusual items together.	Each criterion: max 2 points, total max. 6
Elaboration	The adverfact provided numerous details. The picture finished, extended, and detailed basic ideas so they become more intricate or sophisticated. 4.1 The adverfact contained numerous details. 4.2 The adverfact finished basic ideas so that they become more intricate. 4.3 The adverfact contained more details than expected.	Each criterion: max 2 points, total max. 6
Artistic Value	The adverfact striking visual and/or verbal elements. 5.1 The adverfact was visually/verbally distinctive. 5.2 The adverfact ideas come to life graphically/verbally. 5.3 The adverfact was artistically produced.	Each criterion: max 2 points, total max. 6

* Note: In the original, the “adverfact” rating is replaced by “ad”

Source: Smith et. al. (2007, p. 830)