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Do People Purchase What They Viewed from Youtube? : the Influence of Attitude and Perceived Credibility of User-Generated Content on Purchase Intention

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DO PEOPLE PURCHASE WHAT THEY VIEWED FROM YOUTUBE? THE INFLUENCE OF ATTITUDE AND PERCEIVED CREDIBILITY OF USER-GENERATED CONTENT ON PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of social media in the last decade, consumers are able to share their purchase and use experiences online with other users (Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). Research about the significance of user-generated content (UGC) increased; however, analysis about UGC on YouTube and how it influenced consumers future purchase intention were scarce. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between attitudes toward UGC on YouTube, the perceived credibility of UGC, and the factors that influence purchase intention of products being reviewed. This study aimed to answer the question whether differences existed between active and passive YouTube users’ attitudes toward UGC and their purchase intentions. One hundred and seventy YouTube users completed the online survey, but the final sample size was decreased to 131, because the lie item test removed the respondents who did not read the questions carefully. The results showed that positive correlations between each variable were significant at alpha = .05 level. Active users and passive users not only held different attitudes toward UGC and different purchase intentions for the products being reviewed, but also the predictive power was varied. For active users, parasocial interaction explained the most variance of purchase intentions; however, user activity had the most predictive power for passive users’ on their future buying behavior.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

It is prevalent in our society that people use makeup to enhance their beauty and facial attractiveness. Buying cosmetic products is an indispensable consumption in our daily lives. A great number of people are enthusiastic about sharing and exchanging their perspectives on beauty products. These reviews and discussions could be a demonstration of a newly purchased foundation, a collection of summer makeup, or a tutoring of how to choose the right eyeshades to match this season’s hottest lipstick. Apparently, these people need a platform to have their voices be heard and their insights be communicated.

The rapid development of social media enables people to share their purchasing and actual using experiences (Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). Following Google and Facebook, YouTube has become the third most visited website all over the world since its establishment in 2005 (Alexa, 2014). Online video sharing has become a popular phenomenon as a new media format (Molyneaux, O’Donnell, & Gibson, 2009). Millions of people upload their homemade videos and share them online with other people around the world.

These online product reviews and recommendations are generated by users are known as user generated content (UGC). Although Twitter, Facebook and YouTube represent different types of social media, and typically users visit these websites with dissimilar motivations, UGC has attracted great attention on all of these popular websites (Smith, Fischer, & Yongjian, 2012). Particularly because of its distinctive characteristics, YouTube encourages users to “Broadcast Yourself” which enables the users to be stars and celebrities by uploading their videos (Burgess & Green, 2009). Additionally, unlike other social media that is limited to textual and static picture content, YouTube is able to provide vivid video images and detailed introductions as
narrative. It is undeniable that YouTube is an ideal platform for people who are interested in showing and evaluating their purchased items and also a great network to communicate with other users by leaving comments. The advantages or disadvantages, satisfactions or dissatisfactions of a certain product could be communicated to millions of YouTube users through the whole world.

Individuals who choose video as a channel to post their everyday lives and ideas are usually called video bloggers (vloggers) and their videos are known as the video blog (vlog). The contents of their vlogs cover a great deal of their everyday life, from their makeup routine to their favorite purchases during a certain month. These beauty gurus, who upload their vlogs with surprising efficiency, are often the ones who lead beauty product discussions. Johnson and Kaye (2004) suggested that weblogs are more credible than any other online source, such as online newspapers, online radio news, and online television news. As a certain kind of weblog, video blogs may be given a great deal of credibility and trustworthiness as well. The viewers, who care a lot about their appearances and are eager to learn about makeup skills from these attractive vloggers, are highly involved in watching the updates and interact with the vloggers actively. Meanwhile, because of vloggers’ expertise and objectiveness, their opinions have a huge impact on their viewers’ buying decisions (Mir & Rehman, 2013). Prior research found that online consumer reviews are able to contribute to increasing product sales by posting positive comments (Bee & Lee, 2010). In that case, UGC on YouTube may be an important part of the purchase decision process.
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of attitudes toward UGC and the perceived credibility of UGC on consumers’ cosmetic purchase intentions for the products being reviewed. Based on this research purpose, there were two goals for the present study. The primary goal was to examine the relationships between attitude toward UGC ($A_{UGC}$), perceived credibility of UGC ($PC_{UGC}$), the user activities (UA) and user parasocial interaction (PSI) with vloggers, and purchase intention for the products being viewed (PIP) from UGC. The secondary goal was to examine whether there were differences between active UGC users and passive UGC users regarding their attitudes toward UGC and purchase intentions for the products being reviewed.

According to previous research (Hung, Li, & Tse, 2011), platform perceived credibility and interpersonal trust are critical to consumer online information search and consumption behavior. Mir and Rehman (2013) indicated that the perceived credibility of UGC on YouTube has a positive effect on user attitudes toward it and ultimately affects the viewers’ future purchase intentions. In this study, parasocial interaction is also considered as one of the primary factors that are influenced by the UGC perceived credibility and that affect viewers’ consumption behaviors. Therefore, the purpose of the current research was to examine the attitude, perceived credibility, user activities, and the parasocial interactions that affect UGC users’ purchase intentions.

1.3 Significance

Online consumer reviews are considered as a new element of marketing communication, and they serve as free “sales assistants” to help potential consumers to find the right products to meet their needs (Chen & Xie, 2008). Understanding the impact of UGC on consuming behavior
would shed light on online product information seeking and links between social relationships (Cheong & Morrison, 2008), adjusting marketing communication strategy (Chen & Xie, 2008), the persuasiveness of UGC on YouTube and its perceived credibility (Kapoor, Jayasimha, & Sadh, 2013), and how to utilize social media as a brand marketing tool to increase sales (Mir & Rehman, 2013).

Although prior research has studied consumer-to-consumer communication via social media (Kapoor et al., 2013), the consumers’ perceptions on online product reviews (Bae & Lee, 2011), source credibility of company-produced and user-generated content on the Internet (Jonas, 2010) and interpersonal trust in a beauty-care online community (Hung et al., 2011), the study of perceived credibility of vloggers and their UGC videos on YouTube and how they affect viewers future purchase intention is limited. Additionally, there is a paucity of research on cosmetics and review videos and how they affect consumers’ purchase decisions. Therefore, this study extended previous research and aimed to understand the significance of UGC on YouTube credibility influencing viewers’ social media consumption activities, parasocial interactions, and the future purchase intentions.
2.1 Attitude

Attitude is an important concept in advertising and marketing research because it is considered a stable and enduring predisposition in predicting consumer behavior (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Scholars have proposed numerous definitions of attitude over the past century. One way “attitude” has been defined is as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object” (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 6). Perloff (2013) defined attitude as “a learned, global evaluation of an object (person, place, or issue) that influences thought and action” (p.71). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) developed the expectancy-value approach, which asserts that attitude is a combination of cognition (i.e., beliefs) and affect (i.e., evaluation). Fazio (1986) identified three bases of attitude: (a) affection, (b) cognition, and (c) behavioral intention. The affective and cognitive components of attitude are essential, which are related to consumers’ feelings, beliefs, and evaluations of a product, whereas the behavioral intention accounts for the consumer’s ultimate action (Daugherty, Eastin, & Bright, 2008). Attitude can shape perceptions, influence judgments, and predict behavior (Perloff, 2013). Mir and Rehman (2013) researched the factors that affect consumers’ attitudes toward UGC, and they indicated that perceived credibility positively influences the YouTube users’ attitudes toward UGC. Therefore, this research postulated that the attitude toward beauty product UGC is positively correlated with the perceived credibility of UGC (H1).

2.1.1 Theory of Reasoned Action

Based on the theory of reasoned action (TRA), a person’s behavioral intention depends on his or her attitude and social norms of performing this behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980;
Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Positive attitude has a positive influence on behavior intention (Mosavi & Ghaedi, 2012). Attitude also plays a significant role in predicting consumers’ behavior. Belleau, Summers, Xu, and Pinel (2007) suggested that respondents’ attitude influenced their purchase intention: the more favorable the attitude, the higher the respondents’ purchase intention. It is important to understand YouTube users’ attitude toward UGC because consumers’ positive attitudes toward UGC will enhance their purchase intentions of such content (Daugherty et al., 2008). The present study assumed that there was a positive relationship between attitude toward UGC and purchase intention for the products being reviewed (H2).

2.1.2 Attitude Accessibility

Consumers will form attitudes by relying on “their perception of the object in the immediate situation” (Fazio & Towles-Schwen, 1999, p. 97). Daugherty et al. (2008) explained the “immediate situation” as environmental factors that trigger a memory of a consumer. Based on the theory of attitude accessibility, “the more frequency a concept is activated, the more accessible that concept will be from memory” (as cited in Roskos-Ewoldsen, Arpan-Ralstin, & St. Pierre, 2002, p. 52). Therefore, the user activity patterns, such as active or passive, may result in different attitudes toward UGC.

2.2 Perceived Credibility

2.2.1 Source Credibility

Authority, credibility, and social attractiveness are three fundamental characteristics for communicators (Perloff, 2013). Credibility is one of the most important criteria for assessing the quality of information (Bae & Lee, 2011). Credibility can be defined as “the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a receiver” (McCroskey, 1997, p.87). Credibility is “an audience member’s perceptions of the communicator’s qualities (Perloff, 2013,
People are more likely to accept recommendations by credible communicators because they are congruent with peoples’ values and attitudes (Perloss, 2013). Ohanian (1990) explored the effectiveness of using a credible communicator to enhance the persuasiveness of messages, and showed that if the source is trustworthy, attractive, or an expert, he or she will induce more attitude and behavioral compliance. Other studies also made a similar conclusion that high credibility perceptions of the information source ultimately lead to positive effects and favorable attitudes toward the brand (Erdogan, 1999; Friedman & Friedman, 1979). The research attention about product information created by other customers and its perceived credibility are increasingly growing over the last decade (Cheong & Morison, 2008; Hung et al. 2011; Jonas, 2010).

### 2.2.2 Word of Mouth and UGC

From as early as the 1960s, researchers have studied Word of Mouth (WOM) as a form of communication that relates to customer satisfaction (MacKinnon, 2012). Arndt (1967) defined WOM as an oral communication between two or more persons that concerns a brand, product, or service on a non-commercial basis. Delozier and Woodside (1976) explored the relationship between WOM and consumer perceived risk, and pointed out that as an informal group discussion, WOM is reliable and trustworthy enough to modify consumers’ willingness to choose a risky product, the product they feel uncertain about. The advent of the Internet enables consumers’ opinion exchanging and information sharing to be conducted from offline to online. Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) is defined as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet” (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004, p.39). Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) also explored the motivations of people to share their experiences.
and advice with other customers on Web-based platforms, and they found that people’s desire for social interaction and economic incentives, their concern for other customers, and the chance to enhance their self-worth are the primary reasons that lead to eWOM behavior.

Another very similar concept compared with eWOM is UGC. It refers to media content that is generated by the general public who have experienced the product, rather than by paid professionals, and is primarily distributed online (Daugherty et al., 2008). Prior research demonstrated that UGC is one of the most commented-on types of videos on YouTube (as cited in Smith, Fischer, & Yongjian, 2013). Cheong and Morrison (2008) clarified the difference between eWOM and UGC, and they stated that although these two concepts are closely related, a slight diversity depends on whether the content is generated or conveyed by users. Video that is posted by users is UGC, and the footage that is shared with other users is eWOM.

Regarding the credibility of UGC, Bae and Lee (2011) indicated that consumers tend to perceive UGC as informative and useful in terms of credibility. Jonas (2010) compared the source credibility of the company produced content (CPC) and UGC, and suggested that young people believed UGC are more credible than CPC. Recent research by MacKinnon (2012) found that 66.3% of consumers rely heavily on UGC when they attempt to make purchase decisions and 65% of consumers trust WOM more than content created by advertisers. Therefore, this study posited that the perceived credibility of UGC was positively associated with purchase intention for the products being reviewed (H3).

2.3 User Activities

2.3.1 Uses and Gratification

Uses and gratifications theory assumes that “(a) media behavior is purposive, goal-directed and motivated; (b) people select media content to satisfy their needs or desires” (Rubin
et al., 2003, p. 129). Haridakis & Hanson (2009), in a study of YouTube users’ motivations to view and share videos applied a uses and gratifications approach to examining the factors that influence YouTube users’ online behavior. They stated that interpersonal interaction on YouTube is shaped by users’ social and psychological characteristics. For example, offline interaction and social activity are characteristics that are more salient in the use of social media like YouTube, external locus of control is linked to Internet addiction, sensation seeking is a trait that reflects individuals’ willingness to search for novel stimuli, and innovativeness is related to a person’s level of Internet use. Additionally, Yeo (2010) examined the relationship between YouTube users’ personalities and their YouTube usage and found that openness and extraversion are positively associated with active user activities. People who reported themselves with a high openness characteristic were more likely to regard YouTube video usage as an active pursuit rather than an escape or pastime (Yeo, 2010). Therefore, due to different motivations or personalities, some YouTube users do not only passively watch UGC, but they are more active participants. For example, they may leave a comment, rate a video, or recommend a UGC to their friends. The research questions for this study were whether there were differences between active and passive users regarding their attitude toward UGC and purchase intention for products being reviewed.

2.3.2 Uncertain Reduction Theory

Because a large number of UGC viewers are motivated to seek purchase information, they have a clear intention in their online interactions, like online discussions and liking and sharing UGC with other friends. According to uncertain reduction theory (URT), people feel uncertain in interpersonal relationships and it makes them uncomfortable and unpleasant, so they are motivated to reduce it through interpersonal communication (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).
Berger and Calabrese (1975) demonstrated that passive, active, and interactive are three strategies that people can use to reduce uncertainty or seek information about someone. First, passive strategy includes unobtrusive observation of target individuals in a situation in which the target interacts with and reacts to others. Second, active strategy involves seeking information from third parties. The last strategy, interactive strategy, requires an obtrusive and direct information exchange with the target.

Tidwell and Walther (2002) extended these three strategies from face-to-face (FtF) communication to computer-mediated communication (CMC). They argued that the three strategies could be applied to CMC as well, but their availability could be limited in CMC settings. For example, both passive and active strategy require public settings to observe the target or ask questions from the third party (Tidwell & Walther, 2002). However, it is relatively difficult to receive one vlogger’s personal information from other vloggers. Instead, interactive strategy is the most commonly used strategy on YouTube.

Additionally, URT suggested that “(a) amount of communication and liking are positively related; (b) amount of communication and similarity are positively related” (Berger & Calabrese, 1975, p. 108). Active users often express their liking to the beauty vlogger through the comments, rating their videos, or recommending the videos to other friends. Simultaneously, users may identify themselves sharing a number of similarities with vloggers, such as a passion for makeup and skincare. Consequently, UGC viewers may have more user activities because of their liking and similarities.

2.3.3 Interpersonal Trust

Expertise and trustworthiness are cores of credibility (Perloff, 2013). Hung et al. (2011) pointed out that salient viewers’ communication and interaction with other online users will lead
to high interpersonal trust. Once a vlogger has a high perceived credibility, he or she will gradually become popular on YouTube. This popularity will attract more viewers to watch, leave comments, rate and like the vlog, and subscribe to the vloggers’ personal channel (Mir & Rehman, 2013). Prior study also posits that in a trusting Internet environment, users are willing to seek more information and feel safe and relaxed responding to the information to which they are exposed (Hung et al., 2011). Therefore, the present research postulated that perceived credibility is a factor that will increase viewers’ time spent watching UGC and the frequency of online interactions with the vloggers.

Furthermore, previous research posited that interpersonal trust and source credibility enhance users’ engagement in online activities and intentions to act on other consumers’ recommendations (Hung et al., 2011). Ultimately, this study suggested that there was a positive correlation between UGC perceived credibility and user activities (H4). Furthermore, more YouTube user activity would lead to stronger effects on users’ future purchasing behavior (H6).

2.4 Parasocial Interaction

Vlogging is a social activity and social communication. One of the primary motivations for people to conduct eWOM behavior is their desire to be engaged in social interaction (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). Consequently, users’ communication may not only happen on websites; it is also very likely that they will be willing to have a connection in their social life. From a psychological perspective, a form of parasocial relationship could be produced between vlog viewers and vloggers.

Horton and Wohl (1956) defined parasocial interaction (PSI) as a “seeming face-to-face relationship between spectator and performer” (p. 215). PSI is a one-sided and friend-like relationship that viewers form with on-air personalities (Cortese & Rubin, 2010). Mass media
users readily establish this typical social relationship with humans appearing in the media, such as presenters, actors, and celebrities (Giles, 2002). On YouTube, if vlog viewers build a parasocial relationship with a certain vlogger, they may respond to this relationship as if the vlogger could be their friend despite the fact that they probably never met before. This phenomenon will be amplified when viewers have already built firm interpersonal trust and believe that the vlogger is a credible source. According to Greenwood, Pietromonaco, and Long (2008), women who tend to form parasocial relationships also wish they could look like the on-air personalities, so perceived physical attractiveness served as a significant predictor of PSI. Beauty vloggers are often regarded as young, pretty fashion icons, and they always present their best appearance on their videos. Therefore, the vlog viewers are very likely to form parasocial relationships with the vloggers that they wish they could be.

In addition, based on narrative persuasion theory, entertainment overcoming resistance model (EORM), when a person parasocially interacts with a character, this character is viewed as a part of his or her social life and the character induces less reactance and more interpersonal trust (Moyer-Guse & Nabi, 2010). The current study postulated that YouTube users who gave more credibility to the UGC they watch were more likely to have more parasocial interactions with the vloggers in their real social life (H5). Thus, they were more likely to be persuaded by vloggers’ opinions, and their future purchase intentions would be heavily influenced by recommendations from vloggers’ product review videos (H7).

2.5 Purchase Intention

Intentions can be defined as “the person’s motivation in the sense of his or her conscious plan to exert effort to carry out a behavior” (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993, p.168). Purchase intention
represents “an individual’s conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand” (Spears & Singh, 2004, p. 56).

Facing a wide range of product types, varied brand names and confusing market messages, it is not an easy task for the consumer to make a purchase decision. Previous studies found that there are many factors, such as product characteristics, consumers’ individual characteristics, and environmental characteristics that may influence peoples’ consumption behaviors (Kwan, 2006). Individual characteristics and environmental characteristics are regarded as two important factors influencing consumers’ clothing purchase decisions (Kwan, 2006). According to Jalalkamali and Nikbin (2010), in a complex business environment, consumers usually make a purchase decision based on prices, quality, brands of products, advertisements, friends’ and families’ recommendations, and consumers’ previous purchase experiences.

Specifically, interpersonal influence plays a significant role in consumers’ cosmetic purchasing, because most cosmetics advertisements fail to carry credible information due to overestimated using effects (Hung et al., 2011). Therefore, consumers are more influenced by their friends’ and families’ opinions than by advertisements on cosmetics purchasing. As the Internet has become increasingly accessible, interpersonal influence on purchase decisions from online communication has rapidly grown. The Internet provides a wide choice of approaches for consumers to exchange opinions. These interpersonal interactions could be conducted via e-mail, homepages, blogs, forums, online communities, chat rooms, review sites, and social networking sites (Goldsmith & Horowitz, 2006). Consumers use the new media to give and seek product information and share user experiences. Online consumer reviews, especially the professional reviews, can significantly influence people’s purchase intentions (Zhu & Zhang, 2010).
Goldsmith and Horowitz (2006) also identified eight factors for online information seeking before purchase: (a) perceived risk, (b) influence of others, (c) price consciousness, (d) ease of use, (e) accidentally (unplanned), (f) it is cool, (g) getting pre-purchase information, and (h) saw it on TV.

In addition, Geissler and Edison (2005) introduced the notion of “market mavens”, which refers to consumers who believe they are expert in shopping with knowledge and influence across a brand range of product categories. They are seen not only as opinion leaders, but as technologically savvy (Cheong & Morrison, 2008). Geissler and Edison (2005) posited that market mavens have an affinity for Internet-related communication. In that case, vloggers who post a product review video and help other consumers to make a purchase decision on YouTube could be seen as market mavens. Earlier studies indicated that consumers are influenced by an online review generated by other users, and they think their opinions are perceived to be the most credible for consumers to seek information about a product (Bae & Lee, 2011). Therefore, it was safe to postulate that vloggers, as market mavens, could influence the viewers’ future purchase intentions.

2.6 Research Question

RQ1: Are there differences between active users’ and passive users’ attitude toward UGC?

RQ2: Are there differences between active users’ and passive users’ purchase intentions for the products being viewed?

2.7 Hypothesis

H1: There is a positive relationship between attitude toward UGC and perceived credibility of UGC.
H2: There is a positive relationship between attitude toward UGC and purchase intentions for the products being viewed.

H3: There is a positive relationship between perceived credibility of UGC and purchase intentions for the products being viewed.

H4: There is a positive relationship between the UGC perceived credibility and the user activities on watching the UGC on YouTube.

H5: There is a positive relationship between the UGC perceived credibility and the viewers’ parasocial interaction with the vloggers.

H6: There is a positive relationship between the user activities and purchase intention for the products being viewed.

H7: There is a positive relationship between the parasocial interaction and purchase intention for the products being viewed.

Note: $A_{UGC} =$ Attitude toward UGC. $PC_{UGC} =$ Perceived Credibility of UGC. $UA =$ User Activity. $PSI =$ Parasocial Interaction. $PIP =$ Purchase Intention of Products being Reviewed.

Figure 1

*The Hypotheses Model*
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Participant

A consumer sample was derived from the adult consumer population aged from 18 to 65. Samples were drawn by using a convenience sampling procedure. The researcher contacted a YouTube vlogger who has more than 6,000 subscriptions. The vlogger helped to recruit by making four announcements in total on her video by sharing the information of this study. The subscribers of her channel found the questionnaire URL under her video. Potential subjects received a brief explanation of general study aims and the recruitment incentive. To test the hypotheses, 240 YouTube users were chosen as participants. They were asked to complete an online questionnaire on Qualtrics Surveys in approximately ten minutes. The questionnaire was composed of multiple choice and Likert-type scales, mostly adapted from prior relative research. Participants were asked to give the best answers that could most accurately describe their personal YouTube using activities and the perceived influence from UGC. They were informed that their participation was completely voluntary and their anonymity was guaranteed.

3.2 Procedure

After participants agreed to the informed consent document, the first section asked whether the participants were equal to or older than 18 years old. For the participants who choose “I have not turned to 18 yet” the survey went to the end page automatically. For the participants who chose “I am 18 or older” the survey turned to the page presenting the definition of UGC. Then the questionnaire assessed attitude toward UGC on YouTube. The questionnaire then presented respondents with the measurement of perceived credibility, user activities, parasocial interaction, and purchase intention. In the last section, participants were asked to offer
their demographic information, including sex, age, race/ethnicity and the highest level of education they had completed. When participants finished the whole questionnaire, they could enter an email and/or a name for a drawing, but it was separated from and not identifiable to the survey data.

3.3 Measurement

3.3.1 Attitude

Attitude toward UGC on YouTube was measured with semantic differential items from Betra and Ray (1986). The five items were useful/useless, important/unimportant, pleasant/unpleasant, nice/awful, and good/bad. The Cronbach alpha for these five items has shown to be .80 (Batra & Ray, 1986).

3.3.2 Perceived Credibility

To measure the perceived credibility of UGC on YouTube, a five-item scale from Chi (2011) was utilized; the Cronbach alpha = .94. Participants rated their opinions according to a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 referred to strongly disagree and 5 referred to strongly agree. The five items were “User generated product content on YouTube is unbiased,” “User generated product content on YouTube is dependable,” “User generated product content on YouTube is honest,” “User generated product content on YouTube is reliable,” and “User generated product content on YouTube is truthful”.

3.3.3 User Activities

The scale to measure user activities, was adapted from Yeo (2010). Participants rated the list of items by the question, “How frequently do you do the following activities via YouTube?” The eight items are “Watch UGC,” “Search for UGC,” “Rate a UGC,” “Favorite/bookmark a UGC,” “Recommend a UGC to someone,” “Post a comment about a UGC,” “Subscribe to
someone’s UGC channel,” and “upload a UGC.” The answers ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (all of the time). Based on Yeo (2010), passive consumption was labeled as read and active participation was labeled as write. Three items (comment, subscribe, and rate) were chosen as write indicators whereas read had only two indicators (watch and search).

3.3.4 Parasocial Interaction

First, participants answered the question “Do you have a favorite vlogger?” If they answered “Yes” (n = 73), the following question would be “Who is your favorite vlogger?” Participants (n = 58) who did not have a favorite vlogger or could not name their favorite vlogger would automatically skip the parasocial interaction questions, and go to the ten-item PSI scale from a previous research of soap operas (Rubin & Perse, 1987), but it was adapted for YouTube videos. The statements included “my favorite vlogger makes me feel comfortable, as if I am with a friend,” “I see my favorite vlogger as a natural, down-to-earth person,” “I would like to meet my favorite vlogger in person,” “I find my favorite vlogger to be attractive,” “I look forward to watching my favorite vlogger on the next video,” “If my favorite vlogger appeared on another online video, I would watch it,” “my favorite vlogger seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know,” “If I saw a story about my favorite vlogger in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it,” “I miss seeing my favorite vlogger when he or she is ill or on vacation,” “I feel sorry for my favorite vlogger when he or she makes a mistake”.

3.3.5 Purchase Intention

The measurement of purchase intention used an intention scale put forth by Mortazavi, Esfidani and Barzoki (2014) with the Cronbach alpha = .87. The items were “I will definitely buy products recommended by UGC in the near future,” “I intend to purchase a product recommended by UGC in the near future,” and “It is likely that I will purchase a product
recommended by UGC in the near future.” The items were rated on five-point scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data was downloaded from Qualtrics and analyzed using SPSS 20 statistical software. First, a descriptive analysis of each measured variable described means, standard deviations, and correlations. Correlation analysis examined the hypothesized relationships and illustrated the shape, direction and strength of association between each continuous variable. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was used to confirm the reliability of the construct indicators. Second, a t-test compared the response on attitude and purchase intention between active UGC users and passive UGC users. The third phase of analysis used stepwise multiple regression analysis, including a multicollinearity test of the independent variables. From the regression procedures, the researcher determined which independent variables explain the most variance in purchase intentions. Furthermore, the researcher also analyzed whether the predictive power was different based on the active users’ and passive users’ different user activities.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the data analysis results for the seven hypotheses and the two stated research questions. The probability of Type I error was set at .05 level for all tests of statistical significance reported in this study. The p-values reported were one-tailed for all the hypotheses tests.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The survey opened on January 9, 2015 and closed on February 24, 2015. The sample was from the population who were older than 18 years old in the United States, and most of them were YouTube vlog subscribers. The total responses were 240, and among them 170 respondents completed the survey, so the response rate was 71%. In order to increase the validity of the survey, the researcher designed a lie item to test whether the respondents carefully read the question. The question for testing is “How frequently do you do the following activities via YouTube? – Select answer “Sometimes” for this question.” 77.1% of the respondents (n = 131) followed the instruction and chose the answer “Sometimes.” However, 9.4% of the respondents (n = 16) chose the answer “Never,” 5.9% of the respondents (n = 10) chose the answer “Rarely,” 4.1% of the respondents (n = 7) chose the answer “Often,” and 5.3% of the respondents (n = 9) chose the answer “All of the time.” The researcher deleted all the other answers from the respondents whose answer was not “Sometimes” for the lie item. Therefore, the final sample size decreased to 131 n.

The age of the respondents was from 18 to 62. The mean was 34.09, the median was 33, the mode was 26 (7.8%), and the standard deviation for the age was 10.04. Not surprisingly,
females were the majority population to watch vlogs on YouTube. In this study, 124 respondents (96.9%) were female and only four respondents (3.1%) were male.

Respondents (n = 131) were from very varied ethnic backgrounds, but half of them were Asian. In detail, 10.2% of the respondents (n = 13) were Hispanic or Latino, and 89.8% of the respondents (n = 114) were not Hispanic or Latino. 1.6% of the respondents (n = 2) were American Indian or Alaska Native, 50.0% of the respondents (n = 60) were Asian, 9.5% of the respondents (n = 12) were Black or African American, .8% of the respondents (n = 1) were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander and 38.1% of the respondents (n = 48) were White.

Figure 2

Respondents Race Distribution

Most of the respondents were well educated: 71.8% of the respondents (n = 92) earned bachelors or higher degrees. Only .8% of the respondent (n = 1) chose “Did Not Complete High
School,” 5.5% of the respondents (n = 7) chose “High School/GED,” 21.9% of the respondents (n = 28) chose “Some College,” 36.7% of the respondents (n = 47) chose “Bachelor’s Degree,” 26.6% of the respondents (n = 34) chose “Master’s Degree,” and 8.6% of the respondents (n = 11) chose the answer “Advanced Graduate Work or Ph.D.”

![Education Distribution](image)

**Figure 3**

*Respondents Education Distribution*

All of the means of the five variables are above three, indicating moderately strong responses on these measures. The mean of the PSI was the highest score ($\mu = 4.14$, s.d. = .52), which demonstrated that the sample had a very strong parasocial relationship with the vloggers. $A_{UGC}$ was the second highest score ($\mu = 4.08$, s.d. = .76), which showed that the most of the respondents held a positive attitude toward UGC. The mean of the UA was lowest ($\mu = 3.09$, s.d. = .72) compared with other variables, but it is still above three. Therefore, the average user activity was “sometimes.” Additionally, reliability statistics for the employed measures are larger
than .75, with a range of .83-.90, indicating measure stability for each variable. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach alpha.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.Deviation</th>
<th>Cronbach alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A&lt;sub&gt;UGC&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UA</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC&lt;sub&gt;UGC&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIP</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A<sub>UGC</sub> = Attitude toward UGC. PC<sub>UGC</sub> = Perceived Credibility of UGC. UA = User Activity. PSI = Parasocial Interaction. PIP = Purchase Intention of Product being Reviewed. n for variable PSI = 73. n for other variables = 131. A<sub>UGC</sub> mean is an aggregate of five items rated on 5-point scales where 1 = low A<sub>UGC</sub> and 5 = high A<sub>UGC</sub>. UA mean is an aggregate of eight items rated on 5-point scales where 1 = low UA and 5 = high UA. PC<sub>UGC</sub> mean is an aggregate of five items rated on 5-point scales where 1 = low PC<sub>UGC</sub> and 5 = high PC<sub>UGC</sub>. PSI mean is an aggregate on ten items rated on 5-point scales where 1 = low PSI and 5 = high PSI. PIP mean is an aggregate of three items rated on 5-point scales where 1 = low PIP and 5 = high PIP.

4.2 Testing the Hypotheses

Cohen (1988) has written extensively on interpreting coefficients using a scale of magnitudes, and suggests that any correlation greater than 0.5 is strong, 0.5-0.3 is moderate, 0.3-0.1 is weak, and anything smaller than .01 is trivial. Hence, most of the significant correlations found in the current research are moderate.

Hypothesis 1 posited that there is a positive relationship between A<sub>UGC</sub> and PC<sub>UGC</sub>. The correlation (r = .371, p < .001) showed that the attitude toward UGC and perceived credibility of
UGC are moderately positively correlated. When $A_{UGC}$ increases, $PC_{UGC}$ also increases. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted $A_{UGC}$ is positively correlated with PIP. The correlation ($r = .379$, $p < .001$) indicates attitude toward UGC and purchase intention of the products being viewed are moderately positively associated. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted the $PC_{UGC}$ and PIP are positively related. The correlation ($r = .309$, $p < .001$) indicates that the perceived credibility of UGC and purchase intention of products being viewed is moderately positively correlated. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 4 indicated $PC_{UGC}$ is positively correlated with UA. The correlation ($r = .263$, $p < .001$) is significant at .05 level. Therefore, when perceived credibility of UGC increases, the user activity increases as well even though the strength is moderately weak. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 5 stated that there is a positive correlation between $PC_{UGC}$ and PSI. The correlation ($r = .259$, $p < .05$) demonstrates that the perceived credibility of UGC is positively associated with parasocial interaction. The strength is moderately weak, but it is statistically significant. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 6 posited that UA and PIP are positively correlated. The correlation ($r = .491$, $p < .001$) suggests that the user activity is positively correlated with purchase intention of products being viewed. The hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 7 stated there is positive relationship between PSI and PIP. The correlation ($r = .375$, $p < .001$) is significant at .05 level. It shows that there is a positive correlation between parasocial interaction and products being viewed. The hypothesis is supported.
Furthermore, the researcher noticed that user activity and parasocial interaction had the strongest positive correlation ($r = .491$, $p < .001$) compared with other relationships. Although it was not a stated hypothesis in this study, it showed an interesting relationship: the higher the user’s activity on vlogs, the more likely that the user had a stronger parasocial interaction with his or her favorite vlogger. Table 2 reports the Pearson Product Moment Correlation between the variables. According to the results from the data, the stated hypotheses were summarized in Figure 4, which demonstrates the correlation coefficient between each variable.

![Research Model Diagram]

*Note: $A_{UGC}$ = Attitude toward UGC. $PC_{UGC}$ = Perceived Credibility of UGC. $UA$ = User Activity. $PSI$ = Parasocial Interaction. $PIP$ = Purchase Intention of Product being Reviewed.

**. Correlation is significant at the .001 level (1-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the .05 level (1-tailed).

Figure 4

*The Research Model*
4.3 Testing the Research Questions

This study focuses on examining whether there are differences between active and passive users regarding their attitude toward UGC and purchase intention for products being reviewed. According to Yeo (2010), some YouTube users not only passively watch and search the videos in which they are interested, but also they would like to actively participate in rating, leaving comments on the videos. The researcher reordered the sum of the three items regarded as write label (rate, comment, subscribe) from high to low and operationalized the active users as the first 25% of the respondents (n = 33) who had the highest score on these three items. The active users were considered as more likely to actively participate on YouTube vlogs. The passive users were operationalized as the last 25% of the respondents (n = 33) who have the lowest scores on the three write labels (rate, comment, subscribe). Therefore, passive users rarely
rate, comment, or subscribe to the vlogs. The researcher used an independent-samples t-test to compare the passive and active users on their attitude and purchase intention. Table 3 and Table 4 demonstrate the active and passive group statistics on attitude and purchase intention. Table 5 is the t-test results for active and passive users’ differences on attitude toward UGC and purchase intention of products being viewed.

According to the following tables, the passive users and active users have statistical significant differences in attitude toward UGC and their purchase intention on the products being reviewed. Active users had more positive attitude and simultaneously, they reported that they were more likely to purchase the products being reviewed on YouTube vlogs.

Table 3

*Group Statistics on Attitude toward UGC*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4

*Group Statistics on Purchase Intention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

*Independent Samples Test*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Mean Diff</th>
<th>S. E.</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$A_{UGC}$</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIP</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* $A_{UGC}$ = Attitude toward UGC. PIP = Purchase Intention of Products being Reviewed.

### 4.4 Additional Analyses

The current study was also aimed to examine the importance of each independent variable influencing YouTube UGC viewers’ future purchase intentions, so the research conducted a regression analysis to determine the predictive power on purchase intentions. There were total two steps in this analysis. For the first step, the researcher used the whole sample ($n = 131$) to examine whether $A_{UGC}$, $PC_{UGC}$, UA and PSI explained variance in PIP. Based on the results that are presented in Table 6, only UA had predictive power on PIP ($F = 22.746, p < .001$), indicating the independent variable UA can predict the outcome variable PIP in the population.

Furthermore, for this model, $R^2 = .253$, which means that about 25.3% of the variation in PIP can be explained by the variable UA. Theoretically, it is reasonable that the more that users participate in viewing the vlog, the more likely that he or she will purchase the products that being viewed. Other independent variables failed to explain the variance on the dependent measure. Table 7 shows other excluded variables coefficients.
Table 6

Regression Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Std. B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.924</td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>5.075</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Activity</td>
<td>0.548</td>
<td>0.115</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>4.769</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention*

Table 7

Excluded Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
<th>Collinearity Tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A_{UGC}</td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>1.475</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC_{UGC}</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>1.835</td>
<td>0.071</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>0.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>1.395</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.169</td>
<td>0.772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: A_{UGC} = Attitude toward UGC. PC_{UGC} = Perceived Credibility of UGC. PSI = Parasocial Interaction. Dependent Variable is Purchase Intention. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), User Activity.*

For the second step, considering the difference in the active and passive users, the researcher conducted the regression analysis again to test if the independent variables predictive power changes based on the two groups of people. It is impressive to find out for the active users (n = 33) PSI is the only independent variable that can most explain the variance on PIP (F = 4.79, p = 0.04, R² = 0.21). However, for the passive users (n = 33), UA turned out to be the only
independent variable that had predictive power on PIP (F = 7.76, p = 0.02, R² = .437). It is significant to note that the differences between the active and passive YouTube users. For active users, parasocial interaction is the only factor that can predict their future purchase intention of products being viewed. The stronger the parasocial relationship the users with the vlogger, the more likely the users will purchase the products that the vlogger recommended. However, for the active users and the overall users, the user activities are the key to predict their future purchase intentions.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, a demographic analysis of the sample was first addressed. This was followed by a discussion of descriptive statistics of the variables. PIP was the highest score of the mean, which indicates that the samples have a strong parasocial relationship with the vloggers. All of the hypotheses were supported at alpha = .05 level. Additionally, another strong positive correlation was found between user activity and parasocial interaction. The two research questions were answered as well. Results from the t-test revealed that the positive users and passive users had significant differences in attitude toward UGC and the likelihood of purchase intention. The positive users had more positive attitudes and simultaneously they were more likely to purchase the products being reviewed on the vlog.

The researcher was interested in examining the predictive power of A_{UGC}, P_{UGC}, UA and PSI on the outcome variable PIP even though this was not the research question. For the overall sample (N = 131), user activity can explain the most variance on PIP. However, when changing the sample to active users (n = 33), only PSI was the independent variable that had predictive power on the purchase intention of products being viewed. UA also served as the only significant predictor on PIP for passive users (n = 33).
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The advent of social media has profoundly changed the way we communicate as well as influenced our purchase decisions. Even through advertisers invest more effort into communicating with consumers through online social networking (Chi, 2011), today’s consumers rely more on UGC than on product advertisements (Mir & Rehman, 2013).

This study tried to examine the influence of YouTube UGC on viewers future purchase intention and test the difference between active UGC users and passive users. In order to achieve these goals, the researcher analyzed the relationship between viewers’ attitudes toward UGC, the perceived credibility of UGC, the user activity, the viewers’ parasocial interaction with the vloggers, and the purchase intention of the products being reviewed. 131 YouTube UGC viewers were the study sample and the research used Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Regression for data analysis. In the current research, all of the hypotheses were supported at alpha = .05 level and the two research questions were answered by the results as well, which fully indicated the literature could be applied to the vlog subscribers genre. The results presented moderate positive correlations between each variable. Furthermore, it was interesting to found out that active viewers and passive viewers did have significant differences in \( A_{UGC} \) and PIP, even the predictive power of the dependent variables were varied for the two groups of people.

5.1 Theory Reflections

This study added to the UGC literature by assessing the influence of \( A_{UGC} \), \( PC_{UGC} \), PSI and UA with purchase intention. First, according to Mosavi and Ghaedi (2012), positive attitude served as a positive motivational tendency of conducting a consumer behavior. This study supported this conclusion and indicated there was a mediate positive association between
viewers’ attitude toward UGC and their future purchase intention. The more positive attitude toward UGC the viewers had, the more likely that they would buy the products that were recommended by the vlogger.

Second, perceived credibility of the source is a critical element in persuasion theory (Ohanian, 1990). The current study also aimed to examine the significance of perceived credibility, and the results fitted in with previously published knowledge. The high credibility of the UGC will lead to high user activities and high parasocial interaction. Consistent with past research (Mir & Rehman, 2013), the present study found that perceived credibility of the YouTube UGC and attitude toward UGC positively correlated, and both of them had great influence on YouTube UGC viewers’ purchase intentions.

Third, the results of the current research indicated that user activity played one of the most significant roles in affecting the likelihood of purchase intention. According to uncertain reduction theory, the amount of communication is positively related to liking (Berger & Calabrese, 1975); thus, the more that UGC viewers watched the vlog, the more likely that they liked the vloggers. Furthermore, a likeable source brings positive feelings to the audience and can transfer to the message as well (Perloff, 2013). Consequently, the findings of the current study showed conclusions consistent with prior theory.

Last, the most significant implication of this study was that it applied PSI to YouTube vloggers and their subscribers. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, this was the first time that PSI was studied on the UGC genre. It was interesting to find out that for the active UGC users, the PSI had the most predictive power on their purchase intention. Therefore, the findings reflected the importance of PSI on reactance reduced in persuasion (Moyer-Guse & Nabi, 2010).
and expanded PSI literature from the genre of soap opera characters (Rubin & Perse, 1987) and television-shopping hosts (Cortese & Rubin, 2010) to YouTube vloggers.

5.2 Implication

This study was unique because the samples were actual YouTube vlog subscribers, and the previous studies for this genre can rarely be found. Therefore, this research was important because it allowed us to understand the YouTube vlog subscribers’ attitude toward UGC and their purchase intentions of the products being viewed. We also learned that the beauty product channels’ subscribers have a strong parasocial relationship with their favorite vloggers. The high user activities, such as watch, rate, and comment to the vlogs, led to a high probability of buying the products. The passive and active users held significantly different attitudes toward UGC, and the active users are more likely to purchase the products in the future.

Furthermore, the findings of the current study had important implications for both advertisers and vloggers. Social media advertisers could sponsor or provide free samples to the vloggers because of their enormous influence on their potential customers. Additionally, advertisers should have real product users instead of actors or actresses on their social media advertisements. The testament of using effects will be more credible from a person who actually used the product than from a celebrity’s mouth. On the other hand, popular vloggers on YouTube should try to build more online interactions and parasocial interactions by multiple channels with the subscribers, especially young women who are keen on seeking information online before purchase. This is an effective way for vloggers to gain more source credibility and interpersonal trust. Consequently, their popularity will be increased quickly on YouTube. Furthermore, the findings of the present study can provide a theory frame for future research on UGC persuasive communication and the factors influencing people’s purchase intentions.
5.3 Limitations

In statistics, the probability of rejecting the false null hypothesis is called the power of the test. Type II error occurs when we fail to reject the null hypothesis even though the alternative hypothesis is true. There are many factors that can increase the power of the test, such as alpha level, sample size, effect size, etc. For the present study, the alpha level was set at .05 level, but in the correlation analysis, six pairs of variables shows significant positive associations at .001 level. Furthermore, all of the seven hypotheses in this study used a one-tailed test, which increased the power as well. The biggest challenge to improving the test power is that the sample size was not large enough. Even though the total number of respondents was 240, some people (n = 70) dropped out during the process and some people (n = 39) did not pass the lie item test. Therefore, the actual sample was only 131 n. The researcher strongly feels that the current study should be replicated by using a larger sample size (n > 200), because not only will the power be increased, but also additional path analysis can be applied to this study.

Another limitation of the sample is the sampling methods. Although the current study used a sample that was from the general population, generalization could be a problem for this research. First, this study used a nonprobability-sampling method, which is a lack of power of generalization. Second, only one vlogger helped to recruit. It is important to notice that other vloggers’ subscribers may have different backgrounds and they could present different answers to each question on the questionnaire.

The last concern is that the respondents actually did not view the same products when they answered the measurements of PIP. The vlogger who helped recruit made a total of four announcements about this study on her YouTube UGC, so she discussed and recommended different products every time. If we can ensure that all respondents watch the same product
review, we can rule out other factors such as price, product involvement, etc., that affect the future purchase intentions.

### 5.4 Future Research

Future research has the opportunity to fix the limitations discussed above. Additionally, it would be more preferred and meaningful to measure actual purchase behavior instead of purchase intention. For the present study, we did not make any comparisons between YouTube vlog subscribers and non-subscribers. The results could be interesting and profound if future studies can shed light on the differences between these two groups of people. Furthermore, this study only analyzed the overall attitude and perceived credibility toward UGC, so future studies should also examine the other factors affecting YouTube vlog subscribers’ purchase intention. For example, they may focus on some specific data that we can directly find on the YouTube webpage, such as the total quantity of vloggers’ posts, the numbers of vlogs being viewed, and the numbers of liking or disliking. These factors may play significant roles in influencing viewers’ attitudes and further determining their future purchase intentions as well.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please choose one of the following statements.

☐ I have not turned 18 yet.
☐ I am 18 or older

User Generated Content (UGC) refers to online consumer reviews generated by users who experienced the product. The UGC on YouTube is the users home-made videos that is used to share their opinions regarding recently purchased products.

Please check the following table based on your thoughts about UGC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Much</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Useless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unimportant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Awful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How frequently do you do the following activities via YouTube?

1 = Never. 2 = Rarely. 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often. 5 = Always

A. Watch user generated content
B. Search user generated content
C. Rate a user generated content
D. Favorite/Bookmark a user generated content
E. Recommend a user generated content to someone
F. Post a comment about a user generated content
G. Subscribe to someone’s user generated content.
H. Upload a user generated content.
I. Select the answer “Sometimes” for this question.
Please rate the following statement.

1 = Strongly disagree. 2 = Disagree. 3 = Neutral. 4 = Agree. 5 = Strongly agree.

A. User generated product content on YouTube is unbiased.
B. User generated product content on YouTube is dependable.
C. User generated product content on YouTube is honest.
D. User generated product content on YouTube is reliable.
E. User generated product content on YouTube is truthful.

Do you have a favorite vlogger?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Who is your favorite vlogger? ______________

F. My favorite vlogger makes me feel comfortable, as if I am with a friend.
G. I see my favorite vlogger as a natural, down-to-earth person.
H. I look forward to watching my favorite vlogger on next video.
I. If my favorite vlogger appeared on another online video, I would watch it.
J. My favorite vlogger seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.
K. If I saw a story about my favorite vlogger in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.
L. I miss seeing my favorite vlogger when he or she is ill or on vacation.
M. I would like to meet my favorite vlogger in person.
N. I feel sorry for my favorite vlogger when he or she makes a mistake.
O. I find my favorite vlogger to be attractive.
P. I will definitely buy products recommended on UGC in the near future.
Q. I intend to purchase a product recommended on UGC in the near future.
R. It is likely that I will purchase a product recommended on UGC in the near future.
Please choose the answer that best describes you.

1. What is your age? ________

2. What is your sex?
   - Male
   - Female

3. Please identify your ethnicity as”
   - Hispanic or Latino
   - Not Hispanic or Latino

4. Please identify your race as (you may select more than one)
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian
   - Black or African American
   - White/Caucasian
   - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

4. What is the highest level of education you completed?
   - Did Not Complete High School
   - High School/GED
   - Some College
   - Bachelor’s Degree
   - Master’s Degree
   - Advanced Graduate work or Ph.D.
APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL MEMORANDUM AND CONSENT FORM

Date: 1/9/2015

To: Cen Wang

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
Do People Purchase What They Viewed from YouTube? The Influence of Attitude and Perceived Credibility of User-generated Content on Cosmetic Purchase Intention

The application that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and one member of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Expedited per per 45 CFR § 46.110(b) and has been approved by an expedited review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If you submitted a proposed consent form with your application, the approved stamped consent form is attached to this approval notice. Only the stamped version of the consent form may be used in recruiting research subjects.

If the project has not been completed by 1/8/2016 you must request a renewal of approval for continuation of the project. As a courtesy, a renewal notice will be sent to you prior to your expiration date; however, it is your responsibility as the Principal Investigator to timely request renewal of your approval from the Committee.

You are advised that any change in protocol for this project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee prior to implementation of the proposed change in the protocol. A protocol change/amendment form is required to be submitted for approval by the Committee. In addition, federal regulations require that the Principal Investigator promptly report, in writing any unanticipated problems or adverse events involving risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the Chair of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols as often as needed to ensure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Human Research Protection. The Assurance Number is FWA00000169/IRB number IRB00000446.

Cc: Brian Parker, Advisor
HSC No. 2014.14299
INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT
Approved on 1/9/2015 The Assurance Number is FWA00000168

You are invited to be in a research study that will help understand opinions about attitude and perceived credibility of user-generated content on purchase intention. You were selected as a possible participant because you represent a typical U.S. consumer and a YouTube user at the ages 18 or older. We ask that you read this form and if you have any concerns or questions before agreeing to be in the study, please feel free to contact the researcher at the email listed at the end of this document.

This study is being conducted by Cen Wang, School of Communication, Florida State University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of attitude toward user-generated content (UGC) and the perceived credibility of UGC on consumers’ cosmetic purchase intention.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you are asked to do the following things:

Answer a series of questions that are easy and quick to answer and, of course, there is no right or wrong answers. We just need your truthful opinions. During the survey we will ask your opinions about UGC and have you rate some different statements. The survey typically takes about 10-15 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey you will be offered a chance to enter a drawing for one free gift. Details will be provided at the end of the survey.

Risks and benefits of being in the Study:
Risks are minimal for involvement in this study. No appreciable risk to subjects beyond what would be encountered in daily life or conversation. There are no direct benefits for participation. However, it is hoped that through your participation, information will contribute to our general understanding U.S. consumers’ opinions about the UGC.

**Compensation:**

You will have the opportunity at the end of the survey to submit your e-mail address in order to be entered into a random drawing for a chance to win an iPad mini value ($249). Emails will be stored electronically, separately from and not identifiable to the survey data. You will be given a choice to receive drawing results and winners will automatically be notified by email with instructions for claiming the gift.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private and confidential to the extent permitted by law. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. The data collected will be stored in PASSWORD SECURED, HEALTH INSURANCE PRIVACY AND PORTABILITY ACT (HIPPA) compliant database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator and will only be reported in a conglomerate format (only reporting combined results and never reporting individual results).

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. If you desire to withdraw, please just close your Internet browser.
Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Cen Wang. If you have a question later, you are encouraged to contact her at FSU, School of Communication, (850)-644-5034.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742, or 850-644-8633, or by email at humansubjects@magnet.fsu.edu.

You can print a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read, understood, and printed a copy of, the above consent form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have received answers. By selecting the continue button below I consent to participate in the study.

________________  _________________
Signature                                          Date

________________  _________________
Signature of Investigator                  Date
REFERENCES


Brace College Publishers.


MacKinnon, K.A. (2012), User generated content vs. advertising: Do consumers trust the word of others over advertisers. The Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications, 3(1), 14-22.


Mosavi, S.A. & Ghaedi, M. (2012), An examination of the effects of some factors on


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Cen Wang earned her Bachelor of Art in Shanghai Theater Academy in 2010 majored in TV Program Production and Direction. She graduated from Department on Art Education, Florida State University and earned her Master of Art Degree in the spring of 2012. She is to receive her Master of Science Degree in Media and Communication Studies from the School of Communication at Florida State University in the spring of 2015. Cen’s research interests include social media, media effect, consumer behavior, parasocial interaction and persuasion.