

How the Old Spice Brand Lives Online Through User-Generated Content

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Abstract

This research will look at how the Old Spice brand lives online through the use of User-Generated Content. Three different areas will be researched. The first area will look at how the brand lives on YouTube, a video sharing website. The second area will look at how the brand lives online through product reviews. Finally, the third area that will be looked at is how the brand lives on social networking sites.

Introduction

Clever, Kirchner, Schray and Schulte (2009) explain that User-Generated Content (UGC) “refers to different kinds of media content created and published by amateurs who have just been at the consuming end in the past.” An additional definition is introduced by Krumm, Davies, and Narayanaswami (2008) explaining that, “User-generated content comes from regular people who voluntarily contribute data, information, or media that then appears before others in a useful or entertaining way, usually on the Web.” There is not a common definition for User-Generated Content because UGC is changing all the time. When looking at UGC, Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery (2007) show three central characteristics that need to be considered.

The first, publication requirement, is content that is published online that only select people can see. Second, creative effort, is content that has had creative work put into it by adapting existing content or creating new content. Third, creation outside of professional routines and practices, implies that content cannot be made and established as User-Generated Content if it has been done for a professional purpose. These characteristics help mold the various definitions of User-Generated Content. UGC can be created in various ways including wikis, social networking sites, video sharing sites, and blogs. The Old Spice brand was almost extinct until it introduced a strong viral advertising campaign that allowed users to spread word-of-mouth about the brand. Within the first six months of the campaign,

Old Spice’s revenue had grown by 27 percent (Reiss, 2010). Old Spice was able to accomplish this achievement by allowing other people to create content about the brand. Whether the content is positive or negative, the awareness of the brand increases with every person who sees the content. This research will look at how the Old Spice brand lives online through the use of User-Generated Content. Three different areas will be researched. The first area will look at how the brand lives on YouTube, a video sharing website. The second area will look at how the brand lives online through product reviews. Finally, the third area that will be looked at is how the brand lives on social networking sites.

YouTube and User-Generated Videos

YouTube is currently the largest User-Generated Content (UGC) website in the world. The majority of the videos being uploaded to YouTube are from independent producers and consumers that are generating the content on their own.

USA Today writer Mae Anderson (2012) states that, “Strong brand recognition is crucial for a comeback.” Old Spice was almost an extinct brand before Procter and Gamble partnered with an advertising agency, Wieden & Kennedy, to launch a strong, viral advertising campaign in order to revive the brand. The Old Spice advertising campaign hit YouTube, and soon after, parodies of the ads were being posted on a daily basis. It can be argued that Old Spice used a technique Kozinets (2010) describes as the Network Coproduction Model. This model looks at how advertisers seed a product into an established community and uses the members of the community to spread awareness of the product in creative ways using word of mouth marketing (word of mouse). The following sections will look at how UGC of the Old Spice brand lives on YouTube by looking at various criteria.

Methodology

To determine how the Old Spice brand lives on YouTube, five videos were chosen to compare to the original commercial. The original commercial, *The Man Your Man Could Smell Like* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGykVbfgUE>), was selected, since it was the first video to be released during the advertisement campaign for Old Spice. The video introduced Isaiah Mustafa, a shirtless, former NFL player whose words are directed towards a female audience. The video also introduces Old Spice’s new slogan, “Smell Like a Man,” along with a new catchphrase of, “I’m on a Horse” (Wasserman 2011). This video gave a baseline to compare five user-generated videos. The selection of videos was dependent on the (a) relatedness to original video (storyline mirrored that of original commercial), (b) number of comments (video consisting of over 100 comments), (c) creativity of video, and (d) number of views (videos consisting of 100,000 or more views). Videos were searched for by entering ‘*Old Spice Parody*’ into the YouTube search toolbar. Just like other search engines (e.g., *Google, Yahoo, Bing*), content is displayed based on popularity; consequently, only videos on the first two pages were considered. The following five videos were chosen for analysis:

- *Sesame Street: Grover Stars in "Smell Like A Monster."* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zkd5dJIVjgM>)
- *New Spice | Study like a scholar, scholar* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ArIj236UHs>)
- *Old Spice | The Man Your Man Could Smell Like Parody* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDZqjUqpfG>)
- *Hello Zombies! (Old Spice Parody)* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbcMMEnTUDM>)
- *@OhDoctah vs. @OldSpice (cc: @Dove)* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-IHk6FKyeg>)

Positive or Negative Video

The first criterion used to look at how Old Spice lives on the internet was to determine if the brand was portrayed in a positive or negative way. For the sake of this study, the following terms were applied: (a) *positive video* - a video relating to only positive aspects of the product, (b) *negative video* - video displaying the product in a negative way.

Video Type

An additional criterion used to study the videos was whether they were parodies or spoofs. Chatman (2001) defines *parody* as, "a subspecies of satire, the genre of making-fun-of." Chatman goes on to break down the genre of parody into subsets of the original word. Chatman believes that *parody* can be further broken down into “*strict parody, travesty, satiric pastiche, and pure (or nonsatiric) pastiche.*” A *strict parody* follows the original content very closely while substituting only minimal amounts of content. *Travesty*, “modifies the style without modifying the subject.” *Satiric pastiche* describes how the original content is made-fun-of by the parody content in a vulgar, inappropriate way. *Pure pastiche* is the most well-known of the parody subsets. *Pure pastiche* refers to the act of imitating the style of the original content (Chatman 2001). In contrast to a parody, a spoof is a form of anti-brand advertising in that it takes official logos, slogans, or other original content in order to criticize the original content (Parguel, Lunardo, and Chebat 2010).

Themes

This research looked for recurring themes not only in the videos but also in the comments for the videos. Themes that were looked at included brand communities, brand personalities, humor, and whether the producer of the content was actually consuming the content. Solomon (2012) defines *brand community* and *brand personality* as, “a set of consumers who share a set of social relationships based on usage or interest in a product,” and, “a set of traits people attribute to a product as if it were a person” respectively. In the following section, results will be presented along with a discussion based on those results.

Results/Discussion

Video One

Results from the first video (*Sesame Street: Grover Stars in "Smell Like A Monster."*) resulted in 9,450,061 views and 11,109 comments (Table 1). The video displayed a positive aspect of the brand by not construing negative remarks toward the brand. The video mirrored the original almost exactly except for humorous phrases thrown into various parts (strict parody).

Video Two

The second video (New Spice | Study like a scholar, scholar) yielded 3,054,759 views while accumulating 4,527 comments (Table 1). The video, again, was positive towards the Old Spice brand. However, this video did not use the brand or product within the video; consequently, brand recognition was not as strong (See Table 1: # of comments stating brand, # of comments referring to original video). Travesty was present in this video, due to the imitating of the subject, but with a changing of the style of the video.

Video Three

The third video (Old Spice | the Man Your Man Could Smell like Parody) can be classified as pure pastiche because it mimicked the original video. A younger actor was portrayed as Isaiah Mustafa, deterring minimally from the subject matter of the original video; however, the video was created in a positive light of the original. Additionally, video three had the smallest amount of views and comments with 135,833 and 298 respectively (Table 1).

Video Four

The fourth video (Hello Zombies! (Old Spice Parody)) Consisted of 185,205 views and 422 comments (Table 1). The video did not use the brand or product in the film; thus, there were 0 comments stating, "Old Spice." In the video, the actor is shown killing a zombie by cutting off its head while repeating what the original commercial says. Therefore, this video would be classified as travesty. Additionally, the video did not mention any competing products or brands; thus, the video can be assumed to be positive towards Old Spice.

Video Five

The final video (@OhDoctah vs. @OldSpice (cc: @Dove)) accumulated 260,908 views and 1,163 comments (Table 1). The actor in this video did not use the physical brand or product; however, he did say the brand/product numerous times in comparing it with Dove. This video was portrayed in a negative light of Old Spice; consequently, the actor made fun of the product in the video (satiric pastiche).

Table 1

	Original	Video 1	Video 2	Video 3	Video 4	Video 5
# of comments stating "Old Spice"	3	12	0	6	0	1
# of comments referring to original video	18	22	5	7	9	3
Total number of comments for video	47,381	11,109	4,527	298	422	1,163
Total comments viewed (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number of video views	41,417,978	9,450,061	3,054,759	135,833	185,205	260,908

Comment analysis was also conducted for each video and compared to the original. The original video contained many positive comments towards Isaiah Mustafa's physique and other attributes (Table 2). Video 1 consisted of responses that were more friendly and positive towards the video (Table 2). Video 2 had responses that tied into the school (Brigham Young University) where the video was filmed. This video included a sense of community. Viewers who commented did so in a dialogue. The community did not seem like a YouTube community but more like a BYU community. Video three began accumulating more negative comments. These comments were not directed at the brand but at the actor in the film (Table 2). There was not really a sense of community on this video; however, the producer of this video actually consumed as well by making comments based on other users' comments.

The fourth video showed a strong sense of community by having a dialogue between the producer and consumers of the video (Table 2). By replying to the comments in this video, the producer was also consuming the content. Video 5 consisted of very negative feedback towards the actor in the video. There were very few positive comments unless they pertained to Dove.

Table 2: Video Comments

Original Video	Video 1	Video 2	Video 3	Video 4	Video 5
"This guy is 10 different kinds of boss. I could be 11 if I started using Old Spice." Avatar230594 (YouTube video comment 2012)	"Though this is very kiddishi was laughing soooo hard on this video! I'm on a horse "Moo!".....cow. -old spice theme song plays- L.O.L!" BayBayGirl1274 (YouTube video comment 2012)	"BYU TO THE BONE! BLEED BLUE! LOVE THIS GUY!!" Cassidy Leanne (YouTube video comment 2012)	"you need to slooooooooww down. and hit puberty. butother wise that was pretty awesome." AtticaTay (YouTube video comment 2012)	"Riley, Jory, I loved you both. Then I saw this. Now I love you more XD" SeriousGamer2009 (YouTube video comment 2012)	"he have a big melons bigger than jwow" razasraf1 (YouTube video comment 2012)
"I'd leave my wife for that guy" TheRealSalem216 (YouTube video comment 2012)	"way better then the old spice commercial" TheCrowneJewel (YouTube video comment 2012)	"That guys an amazing actor. BYU seems cool." frealable (YouTube video comment 2012)	"if only you had a deeper voice! :P" daytripperzz (YouTube video comment 2012)	"Riley is PERFECT for this part" kingmatt334 (YouTube video comment 2012)	"..I think I should lend you one of my bras.." Koveena15 (YouTube video comment 2012)

Table 2: Video Comments Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com>

After examining five UGC videos of Old Spice on YouTube, results conclude that the posted UGC videos had a great impact on brand recognition and awareness. However, the video comments rarely state the brand or refer to the original commercial. Instead, the comments play not only as a critique of the video, but also as an attack on the actor of the video in some cases. The fifth video, with the man saying *Dove* is better than Old Spice, is continuously attacked with comments pertaining to his weight. The third video has many comments downgrading the boy because his voice is not the same. Negative comments also plague the second video because of the actor's religion and school he attends. This recurring theme in these video comments is interesting in that the comments are rarely related to the brand or product the movie is made after. Instead, comments are targeted towards the actors of the movies which demonstrates that although viewers recognize the brand, they do not promote or critique the brand in the comments section. Another recurring theme refers to the humor that the videos are made with. The original video was made to be humorous; therefore, all the UGC videos are made in the same context. Not only are the strict parody and pure pastiche videos made humorous, but also the travesty and satiric pastiche videos are made with more humor than the original.

Brand Attitude

Coulter and Punj (2007) describe a model called the Dual Interference Model in which a consumer's brand attitude is effected by three variables: (a) positive brand cognition (positive attributes given to a brand), (b) negative brand cognition (negative aspects given to a brand), and (c) idiosyncratic thoughts (non-brand related thoughts). In the Dual Interference Model, a consumer's idiosyncratic thoughts do have an effect on the positive/negative brand cognition. The idiosyncratic thought process takes away from the evaluation of both positive and negative brand cognitions; in turn, a consumer's attitude toward a brand will be affected. In terms of the Old Spice UGC videos on YouTube, viewers of the video, who may watch the video once, possibly will have a lower brand attitude toward Old Spice after reading the comments because their negative brand cognition and idiosyncratic thoughts are overwhelming the positive brand cognition thoughts in these consumers' brains.

Brand Community

Research also found that the YouTube community is broken apart into smaller communities. When looking at the comments left on the Old Spice UGC videos, it can be seen that unless the video was made at a school, or the producer of the video had many colleagues in the YouTube community, the community theme was low to non-existent.

The second video of the man in the Brigham Young University sweater had a BYU brand community. A prodigious amount of the comments were posted in regard to the university and not the product. Another indication that the Old Spice brand community was missing from the website is that although the comments reiterated the dialogue from the original video, they did not talk about the product or brand specifically. Füller, Matzler, and Hoppe (2008) describe a brand community as individuals having a strong interest toward the brand/product and discussing that brand/product among other individuals. The YouTube UGC videos and comments for Old Spice do not show any common themes pertaining to a brand community. The assumption could be made that when Old Spice started their ad campaign they were not looking for loyalty amongst their consumers; instead, they wanted consumers to be aware of the product/brand and be able to recognize the brand.

Section Conclusions

This section has looked at how a brand lives on YouTube through the use of User-Generated Content. Videos were selected based on certain criteria and analyzed looking for themes and patterns to test for brand communities, brand personalities, humor, and whether the producer of the content was also consuming the content. Videos were also analyzed for the type of video and whether the video portrayed the brand in a positive or negative way. There is no doubt that UGC aids in brand recognition and awareness; however, research needs to determine if the brand recognition adds to the positive cognition or negative cognition of the brand.

User-Generated Reviews

The shopping world is currently exhibiting a paradigm shift. Customers are more and more often going to the store to purchase products; instead, these consumers are going to their computers and shopping online (Kaur and Zakhmi, 2010). Reese (2011) explains that, “7 out of 10 internet users are online shoppers.” A Nielson Global Consumer Report (2010) explained how 18% of online purchasers consult product reviews for personal care products before making a purchase. With the new era of online consumption, companies have acknowledged the need to market their products online. Companies usually do not sell their own products online; instead, they drop ship the products to a third party (e.g., Amazon.com, Ebay.com).

Dhar and Chang (2007) explain that User-Generated Content is taking the place of traditional content generators. This is important for companies to recognize in order to monitor what consumers are posting about their products. Companies can no longer offer service to their customers face-to-face; additionally, companies have to now offer the same quality of service in an online environment. Customers have the ability to look at a prodigious amount of reviews from other consumers who share their beliefs and preferences towards products in order to make the decision to buy or not buy. Consumer-Generated reviews, at least in the eyes of viewers, are much more truthful than what a company may post describing their products. The purpose of the following sections is to determine the source, review, and helpfulness of review credibility within User-Generated product reviews for Old Spice body wash.

Methods

A research design was used to see if the User-Generated reviews for Old Spice body wash were credible on three websites: Amazon.com, OldSpice.com, and answers.Yahoo.com. Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com/>) was chosen as a criterion because the website sells the most products online in the world (Jopson, 2011). OldSpice.com (<http://www.oldspice.com/>) was chosen because it is the official website of the product, and it would likely have reviews from consumers as well as from the company. Finally, answers.Yahoo.com (<http://answers.yahoo.com/>) was selected as a criterion because the site allows consumers to post questions about anything they would like to know; therefore, past and present consumers are reviewing the product as they answer the questions.

The phrase, “Old Spice body wash” was typed into the search engine and the topic chosen for review was, “Which do you prefer? Old Spice Red Zone body wash? Or Axe body wash?” A sample was selected from all three websites by (a) looking at reviews for Old Spice Body Wash, (b) looking at the first two pages or first 15 reviews, and (c) viewing the ratings of those reviews. For a review to be explored, a minimum of three words needed to be written in order to test the review. To distinguish the overall credibility of the User-Generated reviews for Old Spice body wash, source credibility, review credibility, and helpfulness of review credibility were the three criteria analyzed. These criteria will be discussed in the following sections.

Source Credibility

Solomon (2011) defines source credibility as, “a communicator’s expertise, objectivity, or trustworthiness. This dimension relates to consumers’ beliefs that this person is competent and that she will provide the necessary information we need when we evaluate competing products.” To measure source credibility, we first had to look at the two key factors related to source credibility, trustworthiness and expertise (Metzger, 2007). Metzger (2007) goes on to acknowledge five criteria that aid in the authentication of a source: accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage. Accuracy is defined as, “the degree to which a Web site is free from errors, whether the information can be verified offline, and the reliability of the information on the site.”

Authority is, “noting who authored the site and whether contact information is provided for that person or organization, what the author’s credentials, qualifications, and affiliations are, and whether the Web site is recommended by a trusted source.” Objectivity, “involves identifying the purpose of the site and whether the information provided is fact or opinion, which also includes understanding whether there might be commercial intent or a conflict of interest on the part of the source, as well as the nature of relationships between linked information sources.” Currency is defined as, “whether the information is up to date.” Lastly, coverage is defined as, “the comprehensiveness or depth of the information provided on the site.” For the purpose of this research, objectivity, coverage, and currency were used to examine the User-Generated reviews for Old Spice body wash.

Review Credibility

When measuring the credibility of the review, the amount of spelling and grammatical errors was counted. An additional measure for review credibility was based on research published by Jindal and Liu (2008) pertaining to review spam. Review spam is broken down into three subgroups: Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3. Type 1 spam is untruthful opinions. Type 2 spam is reviews on brands only. Type 3 spam is non-reviews. Jindal and Liu found that copied reviews were the easiest spam seen. For the purpose of this research review, credibility was determined by the amount of copied or similar reviews posted for the product, and also reviews that talked about Old Spice as a brand and not the individual product.

Helpfulness of Review

Most review websites contain an option for users to click on stating if the review was helpful or not. Amazon.com is the only website out of the three tested to encompass this feature. This feature helps show evidence of how many potential consumers may have been influenced by the review of the product, and perhaps made a purchase based on that review. In the following section, the findings from the research into Old Spice body wash User-Generated reviews are discussed.

Section Findings

OldSpice.com

OldSpice.com yielded 14 reviews for the Odor Blocker body wash. 12 of the 14 reviews were positive (Table 3). OldSpice.com also has an age demographic along with a geography demographic connected to the reviews. Reviewers also have the ability to state their interest on the review (Amazon.com). 6 out of 13 reviewers are between the ages of 19-24, 2 out of 13 reviewers are between the ages of 25-34, and 5 out of 13 reviewers are over the age of 35. There were no ratings for the reviews on OldSpice.com; however, OldSpice.com allows customers to purchase the product directly from the website. As mentioned earlier, User-Generated product reviews were analyzed based on source credibility and review credibility.

Table 3: Positive and Negative Reviews of Old Spice Body Wash

Positive	Negative
"The ODOR BLOCKER body wash by Old Spice is by far the best body wash I have ever tried. I used to work in the fast-food industry and could never get the smell off of me. Old Spice ODOR BLOCKER defeated the odor triumphantly and gave me an aroma that my fiancee could not resist for much longer than any other body wash."	"This product is way too watery. Most body washes are more like a gel - this is pure liquid, and it just falls to the bottom of the shower when I try to put it in my hand. Smells good, but the performance is bad - hard to get suds even."
"I have only ONE complaint about this product-you guys need to make it in the LARGER bottles. My husband and I absolutely LOVE this product! There is nothing better that keeps his odors at bay and makes me want him more!!!! Make them in the bigger bottles!!!!!!!!!"	"It blocked odor and all, but it smelled like skunk... It had this horrific-ly strong stingy smell..."

Table 3: OldSpice.com Reviews, Note: From "OldSpice.com."

Source Credibility

In regards to the *objectivity* aspect of source credibility, OldSpice.com is the official website of the product; consequently, the company could be reviewing its own product. However, the way the reviews are written by stating cons and asking questions, makes the reviews seem as though they were written by a credible source. The reviews for the product begin on June 21, 2010 and end on May 5, 2012 showing that the *currency* of the reviews is high because the reviews are up to date (relative to May, 2012) and the website is up to date. The *coverage* of the website and reviews is classified as moderate because the reviews do not go into depth on the product; instead, the reviewers describe the feelings that are associated with the product. However, the website goes into more detail on the products by writing the ingredients and scent of the product. Table 3 shows reviews from the website, and it can be seen that the reviews cover an array of topics ranging from the tangible aspects of the product (how the product feels) to feedback to the company (wish it was in a larger bottle).

Review Credibility

There were no findings in the reviews that suggest Type 1, Type 2, or Type 3 spam. However, since the reviews are based on the company website, reviews could have been planted by company employees. The negative reviews and reviews asking a question strengthen the credibility of the individual reviews.

ask.Yahoo.com

This website (ask.Yahoo.com) answers a question posed by a user. In this case the question was, "Which do you prefer? Old Spice Red Zone body wash? Or Axe body wash?" The website allows users to create a user account in order to respond to the posted question. Reviewers are rated on a scale of 1-7, 7 being the highest. The user graduates levels by displaying quality answers and earning points based on those answers. Out of the 19 comments displayed, 7 of the comments described the pros and cons of Old Spice body wash (Table 4). A competitor (Axe body wash) was mentioned on this thread; consequently, the reviews show positive and negative benefits of each product.

Table 4: Old Spice Body Wash vs. Axe Body Wash Pros and Cons

Pros	Cons
Old Spice! It smells amazing.	Personally, Old Spice Red Zone reminds me of a granny or something, please don't ask me why. I think it's ultra sexy with Axe. I feel like getting really lovey-dovey with my guy when he wears that stuff. Yummy!
Old Spice smells great.	axe. yummmmi can almost smell it now

Table 4: ask.Yahoo.com Reviews

Note: From "ask.Yahoo.com."

Source Credibility

The reviews found on ask.Yahoo.com are based on opinion. This can be seen by the reviewers answering the question posted. The verbiage used in the context of this website deters from the thought that the company is writing on the question/answer website. The reviewers of the question posed were analyzed to see how their ratings were on the website. Results show that out of the 19 comments, 9 of the reviewers were rated level 3 or higher. Unfortunately, no information is posted pertaining to the demographics of the reviewers.

Review Credibility

The reviews show no sign of Type 1, Type 2, or Type 3 spam indicating that the reviews are credible. Since the website is a question/answer website, however, reviews could be placed on the thread by users who have not ever used the product.

Amazon.com

Amazon.com rendered 360 results, and the first 15 comments were looked at. 14 of the 15 comments were four stars or five stars (five star scale) and the one negative comment described the scent of the body wash as not being as strong (Table 5). Consumers found that 17 of the reviews were helpful, and 4 found that they were not.

Table 5: Four and Five Star Reviews for Old Spice Body Wash

Five Stars	Four Stars
I absolutely love the smell of Old Spice Original and while my partner and I can't find it locally anymore, I insisted we order it. I love the smell of my OS Original man. As usual, Amazon's service was excellent.	We have been having trouble finding the original scent and glad we could get it online. It was decently priced, not less but not more than in stores. I don't understand why retailers are not carrying this anymore, but it has disappeared from all shelves near us. The new scents are awful, perfume laden and horrible. Glad Amazon could save the day.
I love the classic scent of Old Spice body wash. It is so refreshing to smell. It's not so overpowering that it makes you sick and never want to smell it again. It's just a good smell.	Love this stuff, but I wish it had the "8 hour scent technology" of the newer Old Spice body washes. If it had that, it would be perfect. The clean manly scent and clean feeling are great. I have gotten quite a few compliments from the ladies on the scent, but only within an hour or so of showering. It seems to fade after a couple hours.

Table 5: Amazon.com Reviews

Note: From "Amazon.com"

Source Credibility

Amazon.com monitors its website and the reviewers of products on the website; therefore, difficulties would arise if the Old Spice Company was posting positive reviews of their products. The comments were posted from March, 2011 to September, 2012. Some reviewers went into more depth on the product by describing the specific scents and textures of the body wash (Table 5). In addition, Amazon.com pays close attention to reviewers of the website and ranks them by the content of the reviews written. For Old Spice body wash, the majority of the reviewers were in the hundred thousand mark which is not bad considering the size of Amazon.com. However, there was one "top 1,000" reviewer for the product which makes readers of the reviews more confident in the credibility of the source. Adding even more to the credibility of the source is the open information posted about the source (names, ages, pictures, etc.)

Review Credibility

Analysis did not find any results of the three types of spam; however, a few reviews mentioned other products and used Procter and Gamble more than speaking about the body wash specifically; therefore, spam was present in the reviews.

Section Discussion

Reviews written for Old Spice body wash on Amazon.com, OldSpice.com, and ask.Yahoo.com show credibility among the review itself and the source of the review. The research shows that User-Generated product review websites create a feeling of brand community. Solomon (2011) defines *brand community* as, "a group of consumers who share a set of social relationships based on usage or interest in a product." On all three websites, reviewers of Old Spice body wash explained pros and cons of the product in regards to texture and scent. Reviews related directly to the product in most cases with a couple of exceptions when referring to the brand. On ask.Yahoo.com, reviewers of the product talked in a dialogue stating the pros and cons along with additional thoughts and comments. User-Generated product reviews invite a community of users to discuss the product specifically unlike some User-Generated videos that emphasize the video more than the product.

Although these Old Spice product reviews are credible in regards to the source and the review, there are many implications that factor into the credibility in the minds of consumers. First, the way the consumer perceives the product is an important characteristic to how he or she will see the credibility of the review. Second, the level of consumer involvement plays a key role in determining whether a review will be seen as credible or not.

Last, consumers place more emphasis on the credibility of a review if the review was written by someone with the same thinking process.

Section Conclusion

This section looked at how the Old Spice brand lives online through the use of User-Generated product reviews. Reviews were chosen by looking at the first two pages or first 15 reviews for Old Spice body wash and also looking at the comments on those reviews. It was found that reviews for Old Spice body wash were credible in the categories of source credibility and review credibility by looking at the reviews for objectivity, authority, and accuracy. User-Generated product reviews are a valuable source of information for consumers.

Consumers believe that product reviews by a third party are more trustworthy than reviews from the company and are more willing to purchase a product based on the third party reviews if they feel equivalent to the third party. Additional research is needed to determine how consumers perceive the product in regards to experience versus search goods. The distorted line between the two types of goods needs to be brought into a clearer context.

User-Generated Content on Social Networking Sites

In 2006, *Time* designated 'You' as the person of the year (Van Dijck, 2009). Media users are classified into two categories (1) passive recipients: those who use old media such as television and (2) active participants: those who use new media such as social networking sites to add information and insight to current content, or to create brand new content. More users are going towards the use of social networking sites. In 2007, Facebook had approximately 175 million users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2009); however, that number has grown exponentially to over 901 million users in 2012 (facebook.com). Twitter also registers more than 140 million users (twitter.com). These numbers show the shift from users being passive recipients to active participants.

Methods

Two of the largest social networking sites were chosen to conduct the research on the Old Spice brand. Facebook (facebook.com) was chosen because it is the largest social networking site in the world, and has users from all across the world. Twitter (twitter.com) was the second site chosen because it differs from Facebook in that it limits the amount of characters a user can type; consequently, making users limit the word choice used. Twitter allows users to take the original post from Old Spice and "re-tweet" that post on the users' Twitter page. These two websites were also the main social networking sites that Old Spice targeted during its viral marketing campaign. As mentioned previously, three criteria will be analyzed, (1) focus of comments, (2) interaction among users, and (3) existence of a brand community. The last three months of comments and tweets were chosen for analysis.

Focus of Comments

This research looked at comments on the Old Spice page for Facebook and Twitter to identify what the focus of those comments were. Comments were analyzed to determine if they pertained to the brand or mentioned a competitor. Comments were also analyzed to establish if they pertained to an experience the user had while obtaining or using the product. Finally, comments were viewed to decide if they said something new about the product, or if they stated something from the commercials.

Interaction among Users

The Facebook and Twitter pages of Old Spice have many "fans" and "followers;" in turn, these pages have a prodigious amount of dialogue in the form of tweets and comments posted on the walls of the two pages. These comments were looked at to decide if there was a dialogue between fans or followers of Old Spice. In order to determine if comments were of a dialogue form, we looked at the number of comments placed under the main wall post, and also looked at if the main wall post was placed on the wall by Old Spice or by an individual user.

Brand Community

A community as defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary is "a unified body of individuals, unified by interests, location, occupation, common history, or political and economic concerns." To go further, Solomon and Tuten (2013) define online communities as "a group of people who come together for a specific purpose, who are guided by community policies, and who are supported by Internet access that enables virtual communication." Facebook and Twitter pride themselves as being online communities where users can partake in dialogue with other users as well as a company or organization.

To determine if brand communities, a set of consumers who share a set of social relationships based on usage or interest in a product (Solomon, 2012), exist within these online communities, wall posts, comments, and tweets were analyzed to decide if the dialogue consisted of users discussing various features of the brand with each other.

Findings

Facebook.com

The Old Spice page on Facebook.com had 2,170,066 likes. The Old Spice page has a link to the store which allows fans of the webpage to go directly to the online store for Old Spice.

The page has all the videos that were produced by Old Spice as part of its marketing campaign. Old Spice created a very welcoming page with bright colors and consistent posts to its wall.

Focus of Comments

The comments on Old Spice’s Facebook page rarely talk about the actual brand or characteristics of the brand. Instead, the comments focus on the message of the wall post that was written by Old Spice. Table 6 shows an example of comments associated with a wall post from Old Spice. As Table 6 illustrates, the original wall post has some congruity with the marketing method Old Spice uses; however, the comments do not specify specific attributes of the brand. Instead, the replies to the original wall post are correlated to the subject matter of the wall post. Also visible in Table 6 is the frustration of some users towards Old Spice and its advertising strategy which leads to the mentioning of Axe, a competitor.

Table 6: Example Wall Post and Comments from Facebook

<p>Parent Post: Fantasy football, like regular football, would be much more fun if you could draft fire-breathing dragons.</p>
<p>Replies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think the Old Spice marketing team might need to switch to decaf... Why not fire-breathing kittens The best statuses ever come from Old Spice I think the goofy, hyperbolic method of Old Spice advertising has jumped the ship. Most Axe is horrible, but i'm starting to like their method of advertising better.

Table 6: Example Wall Post and Comments from Facebook
 Note: Retrieved from <http://www.facebook.com/OldSpice?filter=1>

Interaction among Users

There was an enormous amount of interaction among users on the Old Spice Facebook page. After looking at the posts over a three month period, it was found that an average of over 80 comments were posted under the original wall post, and an even larger amount of users “liked” the original wall post. Also, a dialogue was seen to be present among a few users (Table 7). Names of users were changed in order to adhere to privacy.

Table 7: Dialogue between Facebook Users

<p>John: I hole-hardedly agree, but allow me to play doubles advocate here for a moment. For all intensive purposes I think you are wrong. In an age where false morals are a diamond dozen, true virtues are a blessing in the skies. We often put our false morality on a petal stool like a bunch of pre-Madonnas, but you all seem to be taking something very valuable for granite. So I ask of you to mustard up all the strength you can because it is a doggy dog world out there. Although there is some merit to what you are saying it seems like you have a huge ship on your shoulder. In your argument you seem to throw everything in but the kids Nsync, and even though you are having a feel day with this I am here to bring you back into reality. I have a sick sense when it comes to these types of things. It is almost spooky, because I cannot turn a blonde eye to these glaring flaws in your rhetoric. I have zero taller ants when it comes to people spouting out hate in the name of moral righteousness. You just need to remember what comes around is all around, and when supply and command fails you will be the first to go. Make my words, when you get down to brass stacks it doesn't take rocket appliances to get two birds stoned at once. It's clear who makes the pants in this relationship, and sometimes you just have to swallow your prize and accept the facts. You might have to come to this conclusion through denial and error but I swear on my mother's mating name that when you put the petal to the medal you will pass with flying carpets like it's a peach of cake.</p> <p>Neil: John you're an idiot</p> <p>Paul: It would be a over load of awesome, football for the time being is awesome enough, other things though could use a fire-breathing dragons</p>
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Table 7: Dialogue between Facebook Users
 Note: Retrieved from <http://www.facebook.com/OldSpice?filter=1>

Table 7 shows John presenting a statement that is moving away from the original post. Neil comments back directly to John about his post. Finally, Paul comes in to acknowledge John's comment before bringing the posts back to the original subject matter.

Brand Community

The Old Spice Facebook page seems to display a brand community. Users are all members of the Old Spice page which assumes they have feelings towards the brand. The members participate on the page while interacting with other users. What is being commented about, however, rarely has to do with the actual Old Spice brand; instead, the comments pertain to the original wall post from Old Spice and infrequently mention the actual brand name or attributes.

Twitter.com

Twitter showed that 215,667 users were following the Old Spice Twitter page. The site also showed that there had been 2,937 tweets on the page. Almost 100 comments had been posted on the page in the last 3 months, and over half of the comments were posted by Old Spice.

Focus of Comments

The comments on the Old Spice Twitter page focused on the "manliness" aspect of the Old Spice advertising campaign strategy. These comments never mentioned a competing product or brand; however, the comments minimally talked about the actual Old Spice brand. Table 8 shows some of the comments from the Twitter page.

Table 8: Comments from Old Spice Twitter Page

<p>With Old Spice Danger Zone you'll smell like volcano powered motorcycles and ninja punching I'll be liquidizing lightning bolts and free-scaling the Eiffel Tower...while sleeping this weekend I am going to move the Chinese Wall 10 meters up north, stone by stone. Then catching dragons to fly. Prepping for a big weekend of dinosaur taming, space travel and swan dives. You? Please refrain from celebrating Paul Bunyan Day by clear-cutting entire redwood forests with a pocket knife.</p>
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Table 8: Comments from Old Spice Twitter Page
Note: Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/OldSpice>

Most comments in Table 8 say nothing about the Old Spice brand; consequently, if an outsider who was unfamiliar of the marketing strategy by Old Spice were to see these comments, he or she would not be able to make a correlation between the comments and the Old Spice brand.

Interaction among Users

Unlike Facebook, the users on the Old Spice Twitter page did not show as much interaction among other users. Instead, the users would retweet or share the original Twitter comment on their own pages. Users would also post a comment on the Old Spice page; however, other users did not usually comment back. Table 9 shows user interaction on a tweet by Old Spice.

Table 9: Interaction of Old Spice Twitter Followers

<p>Original Post: Prepping for a big weekend of dinosaur taming, space travel and swan dives. You?</p> <p>Comments to Original Post: I'm taking Pegasus to find Amelia Earheart - we're having tea, then flying over some active volcanoes. finally found a meat locker to train in, got too pumped, super punched a hole in space-time continuum, now BBQ'n w/ Abe Lincoln We're playing the largest free alternative music festival in Southeast Asia,</p>
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Table 9: Interaction of Old Spice Twitter Followers
Note: Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/OldSpice>

This post shows interaction present between users; however, the interaction does not mention Old Spice. However, all but one of these users are familiar with the advertising strategy Old Spice is using, and they are commenting on the brand without actually saying the brand name or characteristics of the brand.

Brand Community

Members of the Old Spice Twitter page tweet an enormous amount of comments. These comments, unfortunately, are single, one-time comments that do not gain very many replies.

A community seems to exist with users posting comments; however, little interaction exists among the users. The many followers of Old Spice's Twitter page do not talk to each other or share information between other users. Product and brand attributes are never mentioned in the tweets by users or by Old Spice.

Section Discussion

The comments analyzed on Facebook.com and Twitter.com show that communities exist on these social networking sites, but difficulties arise establishing whether these communities are brand communities. Van Dijck (2009) explains that a brand community helps users pass knowledge or acquire knowledge about a specific brand. Users feel a strong calling to share information in an online community; consequently, User-Generated Content has grown immensely over the years. Solomon and Tuten (2013) explain a theory called the Social Object Theory which states that communities that have strong relationships within them among users and objects make social networking sites much more powerful. An *object* is defined as "something of common interest and its primary function is to mediate the interactions between people." Facebook is a very powerful website because it allows users to share videos, friends, comments, and other objects among a vast amount of users.

However, Old Spice does not share its branded products on Facebook or Twitter; instead, Old Spice shares a "storyline" with its users. It shares the manliness essence of the brand. Although Old Spice rarely states its specific brand on these social networking sites, it does share its branded story which could be thought of as a product. Users reiterate the storyline; consequently, a brand community could be inferred from the websites.

Old Spice participates in what is called a User-Generated Content campaign (Solomon and Tuten, 2013) where a brand invites users to create shareable content and interact with other users. Old Spice released its commercials for its new advertising campaign, and when the commercials first hit the internet, many users began creating their own content to mirror the commercials. This technique created awareness for the Old Spice brand. Old Spice used this newly found awareness to aid in strengthening its brand equity.

Safdar and Englin (2010) found that the amount of "likes" a company or organization had on Facebook was directly correlated to the amount of revenue the company accumulated. If a company was receiving increasing numbers of "likes," more users were becoming aware of the products or services the company was offering. Setting a direct link to the store also aided in the increasing amounts of revenue. If users became aware of a product, and a link to the store was on the page as well, more users would visit the store page. Old Spice has a store link on its Facebook page, and the link is situated at the top of the page where users can see it easily. Van Dickj (2009) explains that over 80% of online users are passive recipients, which mean they look at the online content, but they do not add to the content or change the content in any way.

In contrast, approximately 13% of online users of User-Generated Content actively create new content, and 19% are critics of the content being placed online. This shows that if an Old Spice brand community exists on Facebook and Twitter, the community is a small community. Old Spice, by having a presence on Facebook and Twitter, allows users to feel equivalent to what other users are posting. Stated a different way, users can rely and trust what others are placing on the site because they are able to go to users' profiles and see the age, gender, likes, dislikes, and a number of other demographics and psychographics about the user; therefore, determining if they are equivalent to each other.

An additional way to talk about a brand community is to say that users on a particular website are familiar enough with other users of the website that they make a virtual brand community into somewhat of a real life community. O'Murchu, Breslin and Decker (2004) discuss how users become addicted to some websites. Facebook and Twitter have users that spend an enormous amount of time on these websites, and the websites make users addicted to them. Users begin to "Facebook stalk" other users who are posting on the Old Spice wall. This means that a user will go to another user's Facebook page where he or she is able to begin talking to that person on a one-to-one dialogue. This creates a community of members that can speak more openly about the Old Spice brand because they feel more comfortable around the other members.

Section Conclusion

Facebook and Twitter have been able to create pages that allow them to friendvertise. Friendvertising means that a brand uses social media to build media value (Solomon and Tuten, 2013). This friendvertising technique allows Old Spice to make users more aware of the brand and use word-of-mouth techniques to reach a larger population.

The focus of comments, the interaction among users, and the identification of a brand community were analyzed to determine how the Old Spice brand lives on social networking sites. Additional research is needed to specify if Old Spice has a brand community on social networking sites, or if the brand is part of an online community only.

Overall Conclusions

By looking at User-Generated Content for the Old Spice brand on social networking sites, reviews, and videos, it was found that Old Spice has a very prevalent presence in the online environment. The majority of UGC for Old Spice is accurate in the presentation of the brand. However, brand communities were most common in the UGC product reviews. The UGC reviews also presented the most widespread discussion on brand attributes. In contrast, the UGC videos and UGC on social networking sites mainly focused on the commercials from the original advertising campaign. The UGC in these two arenas rarely talked about the feel, smell, or other attributes of the brand. The most common theme across all three arenas of UGC was the storyline of the Old Spice brand; the manliness aspect of Old Spice.

This storytelling technique from Old Spice made consumers extremely aware of the brand, and allowed for these consumers to remember the brand. Consumers are able to tie emotions to the advertising campaign and use those emotions to remember the brand. This technique aids in the brand equity of Old Spice by planting a storyline in consumers' minds that not only keeps the consumers from forgetting, but also gives content creators a very creative way to supply User-Generated Content for other people. Old Spice used to be thought of as a brand that dad wore; however, through the use of User-Generated Content, Old Spice has repositioned itself into a strong competitor in the market. Old Spice was able to accomplish this task by creating a fun, creative advertising technique that permitted users to infuse their creativity with the provided storyline in order to create even more fun, creative advertisements to spread word-of-mouth.

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Appendix

- The Man Your Man Could Smell Like* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGykVbfgUE>)
- Sesame Street: Grover Stars in "Smell Like A Monster."* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zkd5dJIVjgM>)
- New Spice | Study like a scholar, scholar* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ArIj236UHs>)
- Old Spice | The Man Your Man Could Smell Like Parody* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDZqiUqupfg>)
- Hello Zombies! (Old Spice Parody)* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbcMMEnTUDM>)
- @OhDoctah vs. @OldSpice (cc: @Dove)* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-IHk6FKyeg>)
- <http://www.oldspice.com/products/by-type/body-wash/>
- <http://www.amazon.com/Old-Spice-High-Endurance-Sport/dp/B000GR9OIQ>
- <http://voices.yahoo.com/review-old-spice-odor-blocker-body-wash-6329830.html>
- <http://www.amazon.com/Old-Spice-Blocker-Sport-10-Ounce/dp/B003F8JIF2>
- <http://www.facebook.com/>
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