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Abstract: This study examines Tim Rowett's YouTube channel, "Grand Illusions," which captures and maintains positive viewer engagement in the digital domain. Through a comprehensive YouTube channel analysis, this paper identifies key factors contributing to its success, including collaboration and influence, educational impact, legacy and continuity, personal style, and community engagement. Rowett, known for his extensive toy collection and in-depth knowledge of their mechanics and history, employs an educational and engaging presentation style that fosters a positive and inclusive online community. His approach entertains and educates, making him a valuable digital resource that inspires viewers of all ages. This research proposes the CECCE (Collaboration, Education, Continuity, Community Engagement) model as a framework for content creators seeking to replicate the success of "Grand Illusions." The study emphasizes the potential of tailored, passionate content to cultivate healthy digital communities and underscores the significant role of digital content creators in shaping online culture. The proposed framework will guide creators to achieve similar success.

Keywords: social media; content creation; digital communities; Tim Rowett; Grand Illusions; engagement

Introduction

Digital content refers to data that can be presented in any digital format (text, video, audio). The creation and distribution of this data involves various platforms, with YouTube being the most commonly used platform for video content (Gandomi & Haider, 2015). Influencers on these platforms leverage their popularity to create value and generate user content through comments (Munaro et al., 2021). These comments can vary in sentiment, tone, and opinions (Liu et al., 2011; Misirlis et al., 2021; Misirlis & Vlachopoulou, 2019). Objectively neutral content often attracts negative criticism and troll-related comments. It is rare, if not impossible, to find a channel that only receives positive sentiment comments. However, this is not the case for the 'Grand Illusions' YouTube channel and its creator Tim Rowett. Born in 1942, Rowett, often referred to as "Tim the Toyman", is a renowned collector of toys and games. His YouTube channel 'Grand Illusions' features videos where Tim shows and explains the toys, their history, how, when, and where they were purchased their mechanisms, and sometimes the toys' peculiarities and novelties. His deep knowledge of the toys/items of his collection have earned Tim a dedicated audience of more than 2 million subscribers, creating more than 1590 videos with more than 586 million views, since 2008. Tim Rowett's working background in British Telecom (BT) and his love for toys make his presentations both informative and entertaining. When it comes to storage, Tim Rowett keeps his collection in suitcases labeled with the year of purchase. Storing toys in suitcases allows Tim to categorize and compartmentalize his collection systematically. Each suitcase can be dedicated to a particular type or era of toy, making it easier for him to retrieve and showcase specific items during his video presentations.

This organization method also aids in the maintenance of an inventory for his collection, which is paramount considering the extensive volume and variety of items he possesses. Suitcases offer a physical safeguard for the toys, shielding them from dust, light, and potential harm caused by handling or environmental elements. A significant portion of Tim's collection comprises vintage or antique toys, rendering them delicate and prone to wear. The enclosed space provided by a suitcase assists in maintaining a stable environment, thereby minimizing the risk of deterioration over time.

Using suitcases also enhances the accessibility of the collection. Tim can easily transport multiple toys at once, whether for filming, sharing with others, or personal enjoyment. This mobility is particularly useful given that "Grand Illusions" features a wide array of toys, often requiring different sets of items for different video themes or series. The use of suitcases adds a nostalgic and thematic element to the collection. It evokes a sense of travel and discovery, which complements the historical and international aspects of many toys in the collection. Each opening of a suitcase can be seen as unveiling a new world of play and history, adding a dramatic and educational layer to his presentations. Tim's methodical approach to storing his toys in suitcases exemplifies his engineering background and his commitment to the care and sharing of his collection. It's a practical solution that other collectors might find inspirational, especially those dealing with limited space or the need for greater organization in their collections.

Tim maintained a steady flow of content throughout the pandemic, daily. Given the nature of his channel, which focuses on detailed presentations of individual toys, he was well-suited to continue filming within the confines of his home. He actually used a simple laptop camera and a small desk in his kitchen, wearing his headset (to be able to listen to his producers), presenting his toys to his audience. Hendrik Ball and George Auckland, two former BBC tv producers, were in a 3-way video call with Tim during each recording. The two producers were responsible for editing the videos. At this point, it needs to be mentioned that Ball and Auckland are the two producers involved in 'Grand Illusions' channel, together with the presenter, of course. This format naturally complied with social distancing measures and did not require a production crew, making it safer during the pandemic. With many people spending more time at home during lockdowns, there was a demand for online entertaining and educational content. Tim's videos provided a comforting and informative escape for viewers of all ages. He may have also experienced an increase in viewership during this period, as new audiences discovered his channel while looking for engaging content to consume from home. Tim, that period, was partially responsible for the mental wellbeing of his dedicated fans. Tim Rowett's collection is extensive, comprising thousands of toys and novelties. Although the exact number is not frequently specified, it's known that he has gathered these items over many years, each carefully selected for its unique characteristics or historical value. In various interviews and videos, Tim has mentioned that he owns more than 25,000 items. His great collection includes everything from vintage and antique toys to modern puzzles and optical illusions, each with its own story and background.

Tim Rowett's appeal lies not only in the toys he presents but also in his storytelling ability and the depth of information he provides about each item. Tim has a talent for uncovering the unique and unusual in the world of toys, often showcasing items that viewers may never have seen or heard of before. Tim's study background in engineering contributed to his mechanical aptitude and understanding of how things work—a skill that is evident in his explanations of the toys' mechanisms. His journey to YouTube began when he started sharing his collection online, captivating viewers with his enthusiasm and vast knowledge. Tim Rowett's collection is not solely about nostalgia; it also serves as an educational tool, demonstrating principles of physics, engineering, and creativity (Misirlis, 2023). In his YouTube channel, he has gained a unique audience that includes children, parents, educators, and collectors. His contribution to online education and entertainment is an example of the natural and universal appeal of play and curiosity, making him a beloved figure among fans of all ages. Beyond his work with Grand Illusions, Tim Rowett is an inspirational figure for many, demonstrating how a passion can evolve into a platform for education and entertainment.

Tim Rowett's case is not strictly related to digital creators and influencers in social media. His content incorporates components of collaborations, influencer marketing, and has an educational, societal, and psychological impact on the followers. Tim Rowett's work on Grand Illusions is more

than just a showcase of toys; it's a testament to the power of passion and curiosity. To the best of the authors' knowledge, this channel is the only one in YouTube that contains only positive comments and 100% positive sentiment. To the following paragraphs, an extensive analysis of the content will prove the aforementioned claim.

This study will analyze these factors concerning the use of social media and content creation. The article is structured as follows: Over the next paragraph, the various components that ensure Tim Rowett channel success, are analyzed. As a result, a framework/guideline for other content creators will be created.

Components' analysis

Collaboration and influence

While renowned for his individual work on Grand Illusions, Tim has also established collaborative relationships with other creators and made appearances on multiple platforms. These collaborations serve as a means for him to share his extensive knowledge and passion for toys, uniting enthusiasts from different generations and introducing the joy of physical toys and games to a digital audience. Tim consistently invites collectors worldwide to share their experiences, thus inspiring many to initiate their own collections or approach toys and games from a fresh perspective. Furthermore, his influence extends to makers and inventors who admire the intricate mechanics and boundless creativity behind toys (Dittes & Smolnik, 2019; Georgescu & Popescul, 2015).

Educational Impact, creativity and curiosity

A notable aspect of Tim's toy showcases is the incorporation of scientific, technological, engineering, and mathematical (STEM) principles. By providing explanations of how these toys function, he indirectly fosters a favorable environment for engaging and accessible STEM learning. There are several videos of showing Tim exploring the possibilities of a toy by fixing it holding his screwdriver or explaining the use of electricity and speed. Furthermore, Tim even explores metaphysical and philosophical aspects, as demonstrated in his episode on combs from 15 years ago (Gogia, 2016; Gulzar et al., 2022; Shubina & Kulakli, 2019).

Legacy and Continuity

Tim's videos serve as invaluable archives for a wide range of toys and games, including rare or discontinued items. Through his work, he provides an indispensable resource for individuals interested in understanding the history and evolution of toys. Tim's passion and knowledge inspire future generations to appreciate the joy and fascination inherent in toys. Undoubtedly, his legacy will encourage others to explore, collect, and create, thereby ensuring the enduring captivation and educational value of toys (Christian, 2012; DeWitt et al., 2013).

Personal style

Tim's presentation style is characterized by warmth, engagement, and an authentic passion for his collection. His infectious enthusiasm has the ability to make even the most ordinary toy seem captivating. The straightforward and unadorned video production allows the toys and their stories to take center stage, providing easily accessible content (Biel et al., 2011; Biel et al., 2013; Marwick, 2015).

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Community engagement

"Grand Illusions" has gained a significant following, with millions of subscribers and 586 million views on its videos. This demonstrates the wide appeal of Tim's collection and his ability to connect with a diverse audience. The channel has created a community of toy lovers, collectors, and individuals who long for their childhood toys. The comments section is often filled with viewers sharing their toy-related memories, asking questions, or expressing appreciation for the educational content (Cunningham & Craig, 2017; Khan, 2017; Savage, 2015; Smith, 2014).

The case study of Tim Rowett's "Grand Illusions" YouTube channel presents a strong model for other content creators to follow in order to replicate his success. This model emphasizes important elements such as collaboration, educational impact, legacy and continuity, and community engagement. By incorporating these elements into their own channels, content creators can improve the quality and appeal of their content, resulting in a more engaged audience, with absolute zero negative sentiments. By implementing this framework, other YouTube channel owners can create a unique brand of content that captivates and educates, while also building an honest community of real passions and positivity. This approach not only leads to increased viewership and subscriber growth but also fosters a positive online environment, similar to the success of "Grand Illusions."

Figure 1. The CECCE model for content creation.

Conclusion

The case study of Tim Rowett's "Grand Illusions" YouTube channel illustrates how niche content, delivered with passion and a deep understanding of the subject, can transcend digital boundaries and foster a vibrant, absolute positive community. Rowett's approach combines education, nostalgia, and interaction, attracting viewers and transforming them into active participants and contributors to the channel's legacy. This research highlights the effectiveness of the CECCE framework in creating content that deeply resonates with audiences, suggesting that collaboration, educational value, continuity, and community engagement are vital for digital creators aiming to make a lasting impact in the ever-changing landscape of social media. By adopting this model, other content creators can leverage these elements to build similarly successful platforms,

contributing to the broader goal of cultivating informative and wholesome digital environments.

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