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Understanding the Social Media Fandom of the Mr. Olympia Bodybuilding Show

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Abstract

The sport of bodybuilding has become one of the leading enterprises in using social media as the headlining avenue of marketing and promoting for the events they host. Social media marketing is used to reach marketing goals ranging from consumer care to advertising to commerce. The problem with this is that there is no knowledge about how the fans interact and engage with certain types of posts that are published throughout the Mr. Olympia show by the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account. This project gathered data on both what was posted through the official Mr. Olympia Instagram account and how fans interacted with these posts for a 3-week time period surrounding the Mr. Olympia competition. The data demonstrated that the engagement of fans changed based on the time of posting in relation to the event and as well as the in relation to the content of the post itself. The Mr. Olympia and other bodybuilding social media accounts should pay attention to the findings for they can create even stronger social media interaction and engagement from fans with the information provided.

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Abstract

The sport of bodybuilding has become one of the leading enterprises in using social media as the headlining avenue of marketing and promoting for the events they host. Social media marketing is used to reach marketing goals ranging from consumer care to advertising to commerce. The problem with this is that there is no knowledge about how the fans interact and engage with certain types of posts that are published throughout the Mr. Olympia show by the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account. This project gathered data on both what was posted through the official Mr. Olympia Instagram account and how fans interacted with these posts for a 3-week time period surrounding the Mr. Olympia competition. The data demonstrated that the engagement of fans changed based on the time of posting in relation to the event and as well as the in relation to the content of the post itself. The Mr. Olympia and other bodybuilding social media accounts should pay attention to the findings for they can create even stronger social media interaction and engagement from fans with the information provided.

Understanding the Social Media Fandom of the Mr. Olympia Bodybuilding Show

The bright stage lights shine down on the top bodybuilders in the world as they showcase the past 365 days of blood, sweat and tears with every pose they hit. Each competitor is different than the other, some have bigger legs, some have bigger arms, some are better conditioned, and some are more polished posers, but one thing holds true in all of them, they all want to hold the Sandow trophy at the end of the night and be crowned Mr. Olympia. With thousands of fans watching in the auditorium and millions watching all over the globe, this is the big moment they all dream about. The question is how all these fans and spectators keep informed on this moment. It is all through marketing on the various social media platforms.

Social media marketing is used to reach marketing goals differing from consumer care to advertising to commerce. This marketing strategy uses social media technologies to develop, spread messages, influence and exchange offers that hold value to both the organization and its stakeholders (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018). This is all used in the advertising and marketing of the Mr. Olympia competition, which is not just a bodybuilding event, but a packaged weekend of entertainment held in Las Vegas becoming a global attraction to all people interested in health and fitness lifestyle (Liokaftos, 2014). It is not clear what the patterns of the marketing campaigns on social media and the interactions of the fans of bodybuilding are when it comes to the Mr. Olympia competition.

Without understanding how social media is used for an event such as Mr. Olympia, sport fitness marketers may fail to fully reach the potential impact of their marketing campaigns that are created for social media. Aside from professional marketers, bodybuilders themselves could also benefit from this knowledge as they market themselves on social media as well. Stakeholders in the organization and the Mr. Olympia competition would also find value in the

findings as the success of the competition is determined by how successful it is marketed and advertised to the fans. Social media outlets and sponsors for the Mr. Olympia competition hold an interest in this knowledge as it will give them the exact way to successfully target, receive engagement, and interact with fans to enhance brand recognition.

Literature Review

Social Media Marketing as a Promotional Tool

Sport and recreation organizations have transitioned into using social media marketing as an avenue for their marketing mix and promotional campaigns (Bayne & Cianfrone, 2013). With 90% of the U.S. population owning a mobile phone and 80% of the phones being smartphones, the mobile phone is now the in-hand internet that allows its users to find information, understand economic behavior and connect with other users socially (Kang, 2015).

> "Unlike traditional advertising, where ad dissemination is done through devising deliberate media mix strategies and purchasing specific media time and space, which come with certain levels of guaranteed reach and frequency, viral/social advertising primarily relies on consumer-to-consumer relationships and interactions for the ad diffusion and effects" (Roy, Huh, Pfeuffer & Srivastava, 2017, p. 269).

This quote explains how social media marketing sometimes a guaranteed reach to the segmented market that does not have is desired to see the advertisement. Fans of sports frequently go to social media to get the latest and the greatest about their favorite sport or athlete, social media creates an easy and hassle-free way for sport organizations to engage with fans (Ristevska-Jovanovska, 2016). With most fans having mobile phones and can be easily reached through these phones, sports organizations have found a new way to market the team and gain support from their fans whether it be through the web, mobile apps, social media or texting them (Kang, 2015). With social media being so accessible to fans and organizations, it has become a very effective way to get fans to interact with content and become engaged in the team, athletes and

organization.

The biggest outcome of social media marketing is getting people to engage; engagement from social media marketing campaigns comes in the form of people's media-interaction from the post and them sharing the content (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018). With sports organizations having an easy and hassle-free way to engage with their fans through social media; this creates a way to reach and access the sports organizations social media outlets and receive information and content within seconds of them opening the application (Ristevska-Jovanovska, 2016). "Social media have revolutionized the ways organizations relate to the marketplace and society, creating a new world of possibilities and challenges for all aspects of the enterprise, from marketing and operations to finance and human resource management" (Aral, Dellarocas & Godes, 2013, p. 3). Fan support and engagement comes from when fans consume motivational sport content, which is any content that gains the attention of the fan because of their fandom and brand identity with the sport, athlete or sport organization (Kang, 2015). "Sports fans use social media as a means of expressing their fandom, often during the broadcasting of sports events but also later when revisiting related contents distributed through various social-media outlets" (Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 17). Building the brand identity and fandom of fans through social media is a great outcome of using social media as a marketing tool because it only encourages more and more engagement from the fans.

Fans who follow an organization on social media are more likely to recognize brand personality than those who don't follow them on social media (Lipsman, Mudd, Rich & Bruich, 2012). The brand awareness is built from people's engagement because they spread the organization's name and promotions for free, which creates a brand awareness to all the people that follow and interact with those people (Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018).

"In the social media environment, where messages are transmitted by sharing and forwarding actions among users, whether and to what extent an individual feels that he or she can trust the person forwarding or sharing a message can have great impact on his or her actions regarding the message" (Roy, Huh, Pfeuffer & Srivastava, 2017, p. 270).

This quote is relevant due to the fact that it is stating that some people may interact and engage with a social media post differently depending on where the post is coming from. In a study performed by Bayne and Cianfrone (2013), a test was to see how effective a social media post was on influencing the subject's awareness of, interest in, and intention to participate in an event. Comparisons between the control and experimental group revealed differences in awareness, but not interest or intention. This means that social media effects the fans awareness but did not impact their interest or intention. In the study conducted by Thompson, Martin, Gee and Geurin (2017), findings determined that social media provided several benefits for a sporting event to build brand relationships, including engagement and conversation, support for promotion and marketing activities. When brand relationships are built through social media with engagement from fans it helps increase the traffic to the social media accounts of the organization, creating a bigger fan base to engage with through social media marketing.

"Social media are fundamentally changing the way we communicate, collaborate, consume, and create. They represent one of the most transformative impacts of information technology on business, both within and outside firm boundaries" (Aral, Dellarocas & Godes, 2013, p. 3). Marketers need to use social media to keep fans up to date on products, events and any changes that may be important to the fans about their sports or athletes to keep them interested and involved (Ristevska-Jovanovska, 2016). Social media has become the greatest place to perform all of this due to the fact that content can be shared and seen by a large amount of people within seconds of it being posted to the media platform. "The potential for connectivity that social-media platforms possess makes it possible to directly observe such communication

exchanges as a form of fan behavior online" (Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 19). Being able to directly observe communication exchanges between fans creates an opportunity for organizations to receive instant feedback about a post and to track to see what type of engagement it is drawing from their followers and fans.

Mr. Olympia and Bodybuilding

Bodybuilding is more than just a sport that involves "picking things up and putting them down", it has been known to be an obsession and a way of life for the people involved in this subculture, where it has its own values and very own vocabulary (Murray, 1984). The first-time bodybuilding was introduced to the United States was in 1893, when Eugene Sandow brought his strongman act to the Americas and performed at the Chicago World's Fair (Murray, 1984). Sandow's popularity spread very quickly among the United States and with that so did the popularity of bodybuilding (Murray, 1984). In 1903, the United States and the sport of bodybuilding saw its first official bodybuilding event, Bernarr Macfadden hosted the "Most Perfectly Developed Man" contest and continued to host it until 1922 with little publicity or press (Murray, 1984). Bodybuilding then saw a giant upraise in the 1930's with many new contests springing up all over the United States (Murray, 1984). In 1965 the first Mr. Olympia was hosted and the very first Sandow trophy was awarded to the winner of the Mr. Olympia competition (Liokaftos, 2014). Since the 1990s, the event has grown outside of its local and national level of spectators and has become a global attraction to all people interested in health and fitness lifestyle (Murray, 1984). The Mr. Olympia contest is the front running factor in the success of the sport of bodybuilding and its growth in popularity over the past fifty years (Dobbins & Schwarzenegger, 1985).

Mr. Olympia is held usually in a mid-month weekend in September and is produced and

promoted through several networks and media outlets that make up the bodybuilding culture

(Liokaftos, 2014). Some of the top media outlets include Twitter, Youtube, Instagram and live

stream entertainment of Amazon.com. The International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness

[IFBB] is the organization that all the athletes who compete in the Mr. Olympia need to belong

to so that they can compete in the contest (IFBB, 2015). The IFBB was created in 1946 by Joe

and Ben Weider, in Montreal (IFBB, 2015) Since then, the IFBB is recognized in 191 nations

and hosts competitions all over the world for athletes in Juniors, Seniors, master's men

bodybuilding, classic bodybuilding, men and women's physique, men and women's fitness, and

Bikini (IFBB, 2015). The IFBB and its' athletes bring their own fan base to the Mr. Olympia

contest that have helped in the growing popularity of the competition.

Unlike other professional sports, where the use of performance enhancing drugs is not

tolerated and leads to banning of an athlete, bodybuilding is quite opposite and encourages

athletes at the professional level to use performance enhancing drugs to improve their physique

(Bateman, 2017). The athletes use performance enhancing drugs to reach the desired look for not

only themselves, but also the fans and judges. The winners of previous Mr. Olympia contests

used PED's as well, but the advancement of the drugs that competitors use now has created more

than enhanced-athletes, they are superhuman, freak-like creatures (Bateman, 2017). The standard

look of the greatest develop man is no longer to look like Arnold Schwarzenegger, because he

does not pass the "freak" or "superhuman" look. This look is best represented by looking at the

current Mr. Olympia reigning champion, Phil Heath, where his arms are as large as fifteen-pound

bowling balls and his legs could out shadow an average sized human being. This creates a

culture that fans admire and desire because they see these athletes on stage looking like comic

book superheroes and this has made the fans of bodybuilding grow in popularity and has

increased the fandom for the Mr. Olympia contest (Bateman, 2017). This is great for the Mr.

Olympia competition and the promoters of bodybuilding shows across the world; having more

people interested and invested in the sport can only help bodybuilding continue to grow as a

sport and increase the fan population of the sport. The belief being that using PED's is

acceptable and within the boundaries of the competitive nature of the sport has the chance of

bringing bad publicity to the sport in the eyes of those who do not believe the same ideals. This

can also affect the sport and its fans population negatively in the eyes of those who do not

believe performance enhancing drugs should be in bodybuilding.

     Mr. Olympia is the mecca of all bodybuilding competitions, but not only for the men, the

Mr. Olympia became the mecca and championship for the Women's Physique (aka

Bodybuilding) (Klein & Slater, 1985). However, women's bodybuilding has had many

controversies and has not been nearly as popular among the fans of bodybuilding since it was

introduced to the sport (Klein & Slater, 1985). This could have a sizable impact of the popularity

among female athletes and fans of bodybuilding, as they seem to be discriminated against.

However, it is unknown how the Mr. Olympia organization markets Women's Physique or even

how female fans of the sport are choosing to engage with a sport that discriminates against

women.

     The Mr. Olympia event has three components: the entertainment, the EXPO, and the

extra fan activities (Liokaftos, 2014). The entertainment portion involves all the competition.

This includes the prejudging of athletes, lifting and fitness competitions and the finals. This all

takes place over Friday and Saturday of the Mr. Olympia competition (Olympia, 2018). The

EXPO is hosted for two days leading up to the competition of the athletes, which is also Friday

and Saturday of the event. This is where all the sponsors and fitness industry brands set up

booths and have their sponsored athletes engage in a meet and greet with fans. This is used to

promote brands and new supplements to fans not only present at the EXPO but also online

through social media post (Olympia, 2018). The extra fan activities start on Thursday night

before the competition with a Press Conference of the athletes competing for the Sandow trophy.

Fans are welcome to attend the press conference and hear what the competitors are feelings are

towards the competition and how they believe they will perform come show time (Olympia,

2018). The extra activities end on Saturday night with a Mr. Olympia Victory Gala that is hosted

by the Mr. Olympia organization for all the competitors and VIP ticket holders (Olympia, 2018).

This creates many more opportunities for the organization to have content to post and stream to

social media to get more fan engagement. It also helps that Mr. Olympia is hosted in Las Vegas,

because it is one of the most alive cities in the United States. Having a better understanding of

the fans and their tendencies will help determine the proper social media marketing campaign for

the Mr. Olympia competition.

Fans and Fandom

"Fandom is generally expressed through a certain shared sense of group membership"

(Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 17). This is seen greatly in the fans of bodybuilding, as in

has been called its own "subculture" where the feeling of group membership is greatly present

among the fans of the sport. It has been known that bodybuilding has its own subculture

language and ethics for when it comes to things like PED use and desired "perfect" look of the

human body.

In a study conducted by Wann (2003) that focused on fans and their behaviors towards

their favorite sports and teams, fans were surveyed in three different sequences. Part one found

that most fans who consumed all or most games, mostly consumed it indirectly, while the fans

who consumed some or no games, the majority consumed it directly, which means they are in person and seeing the event as it unfolds with no barrier (Wann, 2003). Part two was focused on how long a fan takes to digest an exciting event, with the findings pointing to most of the fans admitting that it takes them between an hour or two or at least a day to fully digest the event, while the minority was spread out between immediately, half a day, two-three days or week to digest the event (Wann, 2003). "Individuals are more likely to identify with a team when it represents favorable attributes, which they assign to their own self-concept" (Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 20). This can attribute to the amount of time certain fans need to fully digest the sporting event. Part three was concerned with how the fan consumes the game, determining if it is alone or with a certain amount of people. The findings found that many fans when consuming event directly, will with one to a few people, while when consumed indirectly, the majority consume the event alone (Wann, 2003).

These findings help to understand how fan behavior can be influenced by the consumption of the event and excitement towards events. "Sports fans choose to convey messages related to their fan identity in their own language or in a language of convenience" (Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 18). This can contribute to the different ways people see and engage with the same social media post because it is in their own language that they are responding to it. "An association can be formed and strengthen over time between an individual and a specific team, building a strong unit relationship due to which fans identify with that team at a personal level" (Gil-Lopez, Ahmed & Taylor, 2017, p. 20).

Purpose Statement

Marketing campaigns have many goals to achieve to be considered successful. One of those goals is to fully understand the consumer and their engagements with various marketing

materials. Due to the fact that the Mr. Olympia and bodybuilding in general is under-researched, we do not yet understand the consumer fully and what they are looking to see in a social media marketing campaign when it comes to the Mr. Olympia contest or a bodybuilding show in general. Therefore the purpose of this research is to explore the pattern of social media interactions before, during and after Mr. Olympia between the Mr. Olympia Instagram account and their followers to better understand the engagement patterns and how they may differ when the variables of the post are changed.

RQ 1: What are the contents of posts from the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account?

RQ 2: What are the fans interactions with Mr. Olympia official Instagram posts?

RQ 3: How do fans engage with posts made by the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account?

RQ 4: How do interactions change based on the variables that are related to the post?

Method

Description of Research

This research was pure as it is looking to make new findings and has sense of curiosity of the patterns of social media interactions of fans and the account of the Mr. Olympia competition (Jones, 2015). It was descriptive in nature as it is attempting to describe the patterns of interactions on social media before, during and after the Mr. Olympia competition (Jones, 2015). The research was also exploratory as this is the first-time research will be done to determine the interactions and engagements of fans and accounts of the Mr. Olympia competition (Jones, 2015). This research can be classified as interpretivist in design because although the research process can be precisely replicated, not all the variables could be the same, and even though the general trends are common, it is interested in the unique interactions and engagements of the fans

and account of the Mr. Olympia competition for the 2018 show (Jones, 2015). The data that was

collected for this research is going to be secondary data, since the information will be collected

from the outside source of Instagram (Jones, 2015). The method of data collection for this

research is content analysis using secondary data since the data was the content of the post,

comments, number of comments and the number of likes received by individual post (Jones,

2015).

Sample Selection

The point of origin for determining the sample of social media posts to evaluate is the

Mr. Olympia official Instagram account. As the focus is on this event in particular, the data

collection period began one month before the event and ended one week after the event. On

those dates, August 13th through September 23rd, all Instagram posts made by the Mr. Olympia

official account will be collected for analyzing. The entire time frame encompassed one month

and was divided into three periods. The first period was prior to the event (August 13, 2018-

September 12, 2018), the second period was during the event (September 13, 2018-September

15, 2018), and the final period was after the event had concluded (September 16, 2018-

September 23, 2018) (Mr. Olympia, 2018). The first objects of study will be the post made by

the Official Instagram account of the Mr. Olympia competition. The second objects of study will

be the all the fan interactions with each post made during the collection period.

Variables and Measures

The first variables collected will be the number of likes, comments and the contents of

the comments. Likes and comments are variables being collected for measurement to better

understand the fan engagement and interactions in result to the other variables of each post.

These are all dependable variables in this study. The comments will be categorized into three

groups, either positive, negative or neutral. Number of likes and comments will be collected in a ratio scale. Independent variables include the time of the post, before, during or after the event. More independent variables include whether the post is a video or image, what the post is an image or video of; either a male athlete, female athlete, show, promotion, general announcement or product announcement. Nominal scales will be used for the variables of time of post, video or image, content of post and tone of comments. There will also be ratio scales being used in the spreadsheet, and the variables that will be using ratio scales include, number of likes, number of comments, and if multi post, how many images/videos posted.

Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

The data collected for this research for the screenshots of each post during the collection period was inputted into an Excel sheet with all the variables labeled across the top row, using the columns to fill in the appropriate coding for each post which will be labeled in the first column (see Appendix Figure 1&2). Coding was used to simplify the entries being made into the spreadsheet. The coding for time of post is as follows, before was represented by a 1, during represented by a 2, and after represented by a 3. Coding for if the post is a video or image was represented by video being a 1 and image being a 2. As for content of the post, the coding was as follows, male athletes represented by a 1, show by a 2, product by a 3, general announcement by a 4, promotion by a 5 and female athletes represent by a 6. The tone of the comments will also be coded, those being represented by positive tone being a 1, negative being a 2 and neutral being a 3. Each comment was coded and entered into the secondary spreadsheet and the majority tone will be entered into the primary spreadsheet for an overall tone of the comments per each post. There was also a re-coding added for the purpose of tracking the engagement patterns of fans interactions with post through number of likes and number of comments. This was coded as

follows for number of likes, minimal number of likes fell between zero and 2,000 was

represented by a 1, low was between 3,000 and 6,000 represented by a 2, moderate fell between

7,000 and 9,000 which was represented by a 3, engaged was represented by a 4 and ranged

between 10,000 and 30,000 while trending was 30,000 or more likes and that was represented by

a 5. The coding for the number of comments was broken down as follows, minimal was between

zero and 10 comments which was represented by a 1, low was between 11 and 30 represented by

a 2, moderate ranged between 31 and 110 coded by a 3, engaged was between 111 and 200

represented by a 4 and trending was 200 plus comments which was coded by a 5.

The process to collect the data was to screenshot each post, tally the total number of likes

and comments, and screenshot and categorize the first ten comments. Then, the data was be

organized into an Excel spreadsheet to help categorize the post content, the number of likes and

comments received and the content of comments each post receives from the fans. Post were also

categorized into an Excel spreadsheet based on the variables described previously. Rows on the

spreadsheet focused on what type of post was published. The columns represented the

engagement and interactions of the fans towards the post that are published. This made it

possible to determine the engagement patterns based on the variables of the research method

used to collect and separate the data.

The data collection process began on August 13th, 2018 and lasted until September 23rd,

2018. The data collection was done through a process on being informed of any post published

by the Official Instagram account of the Mr. Olympia competition, which then an allotted time of

four to eight hours was used as a time period to allow followers to like and comment on the

published post. After the time was given for followers to engage and interact with the post,

screenshots of the post content itself will be taken, number of likes and comments received, and

screenshots of the first ten, English written, comments were taken and uploaded to a database

file. The screenshots were then used to determine the post content (image vs video), time of post

in relation to the event and the depiction of the post, is it an athlete, show, product, etc. Also, the

screenshots were then used to determine the number of likes, comments and content of

comments followers posted in reaction to the post. The collected data was then organized and

filed into appropriate categories labeled inside the Excel spreadsheet to determine the type of

post and the engagements and interactions it received from the fans. Codes were used in the

Excel sheet to represent the data collected. Nominal scales were used for the time of post,

depiction of post, content of post and content of comments. Ratio scales were used for number of

likes and comments.

Data Analysis Plan

The data was analyzed after the spreadsheet was filled out and all the post and comments

were properly labeled. Variables were analyzed to find out the frequencies of content, format and

publishing time used by the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account. For the variables of number

of likes, number of comments, and tone of comments were analyzed in relation to the of the time

of the post (before, during or after), the format of the post (image or video), and the post content

(male athlete, show, product, general announcement, promotion or female athlete) to find any

possible correlations, regressions and differences. There was also a re-coding of the number of

likes and number of comments to better categorize those figures and determine engagement

patterns of fans. This was done by creating categories to file the post into according to the

number of likes and comments received. These were broken down into minimal, low, moderate,

engaged and trending amounts of likes and comments. Multiple test was run including

crosstabulations, correlations, regressions and chi-square difference test to best analyze the data

collected to answer the research questions. This was all done through the analyzing program of

SPSS.

Results

This research sought to explore how those inside the Mr. Olympia organization promoted

their premier event as well as fan engagement with those promotional choices. Referring back to

the original research questions asked for this thesis, the findings include account content, fan

interactions and engagement patterns and how they change in relation to variables measured. The

importance of the findings for these research questions is that it will provide the information

needed for bodybuilding social media accounts, more specifically the Mr. Olympia Instagram

account, to successfully post content that will receive the greatest engagement and fan

interaction.

Descriptive Statistics

The total number of posts made by the official Mr. Olympia Instagram account during the

collection period was eighty-seven posts; 54 happening during the time prior to the event

(62.8%), 11 happening during the event (12.8%), and 21 being posted after the event had

concluded (24.4%). Out of the eighty-seven post that were analyzed, twenty-two of the post

were videos (25.3%) and sixty-five of the post were images (74.7%). Out of the total number of

eighty-seven post, the content of the post broke down to thirty-nine being male athletes (44.8%),

eight being about the show (9.2%), two being about products (2.3%), fourteen being general

announcements (16.1%), five being promotional posts (5.7%) and nineteen being female athletes

(22.8%). For a more complete and easier to read depiction of this information, refer to appendix

table #1 and chart #1.

When the total number of post published was broken down by the amount of likes and

comments received, the minimum number of likes received on all the post was 1,394 and the

maximum of likes received was 75,183. For a complete breakdown of minimum, maximum and

average number of likes received by each type of post format and content, refer to appendix table

#2. For comments the minimum amount of comments was zero and the maximum comments was

380 for all post. For a more complete breakdown of minimum, maximum and average number of

comments received by post of specific formats and contents, refer to appendix table #3. Most of

the overall tones of comments received where positive (n=63), while some post received

negative comments (n=12), others received neutral overall toned comments (n=9) and the

remaining received no comments at all (n=3).

Inferential Statistics

When determining the engagement patterns of fans and how they change when the

variables of the post being published changed, measuring likes and comments was done through

a coding process. This process found that for a post being published by the Mr. Olympia official

Instagram account to have the highest chance of receiving an amount of likes that would be

considered trending (30,000+) for the research being conducted, the post would have to have to

be in the format of an image while depicting the content of a male athlete. A more in-depth

breakdown of how each content and format of posts received likes when split between minimal,

low, moderate, engaged and trending amounts can be found in appendix table #4. Referring to

chart #2 in the appendix will also further the understanding of how post content impacts the

number of likes received by each post. When looking at comments, this process found that if the

Mr. Olympia official Instagram account wants the highest chance for a post to receive an amount

of comments in the trending amount (200+) for this research project, the post would have to be in

the format of an image while presenting a content of a male athlete. These findings are broken

down in more depth of how each format and content of posh published received comments when divided into minimal, low, moderate, engaged and trending amounts of comments by referring to appendix table #5.

When analyzing how the post content affected the engagement variable of overall tone of comments, it was found that male athletes received the greatest amount of positive comments (38.7%), while female athletes followed closely behind for positive comments (27.4%). The post content that received the most negatively toned comments was those of male athletes (92.3%). A more detailed breakdown of how content affected overall tones of comments can be found by referring to appendix table #6.

Content of the post published to Instagram was significantly correlated with the number of likes received, r= -.346, and the number of comments received, r= -.323 (both significant p<.05). There was a significant negative relationship between the content of the post on Instagram and the overall tone of comments (r= -.233, p<.01). When the post was published in relation to the event was significant when related to the number of likes (r= .489, p<.05) and number of comments (r=.254, p<.01).

A one-way AVOVA of content of post on Instagram yielded a significant different for pattern of likes received (F=54.992) and pattern of comments received (F=46.866) (all significant p<.05). This AVOVA also found overall tone of comments to have a significant differences F=29.391, p<.01. A one-way analysis found a different between post format and number of likes received, F=15.482, p<.05. This analysis also found a significant difference between publishing time and pattern of likes received (F=29.592) and overall tone of comments (F=31.681), all significant at p<.05.

Discussion

To acquire a knowledge baseline, it was first important to understand the content of the

Mr. Olympia posts. Of the six categories, postings of male athletes made up the largest

percentage (44.8%) with female athletes the next most common (22.8%). The only other

challenging category was general announcement post (16.1%). To continue with the knowledge

baseline, an important variable to understand is the format of the Mr. Olympia post. Of the two

possible formatting options for post published to Instagram, the Mr. Olympia account will post in

the format of an image for a majority of the time (74.7%). Increasing the baseline knowledge, a

finding involving the variable of time of the post being published. Of the three collection periods

for when the post was published from the Mr. Olympia account, the majority of post will be

published in the time prior to the event (62.8%). With the next closest period being those

published in the after portion of the event (24.4%). With this new knowledge gathered, it is safe

to anticipate that during a social media marketing campaign of the Mr. Olympia Bodybuilding

show, the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account will publish post with the majority depicting a

male or female athlete in the format of an image. The next closest post could be predicted to be

one that's content was of the general announcement nature. The new findings allow the ability to

anticipate that a post being published by the Mr. Olympia account during a campaign for the Mr.

Olympia show, that the majority will be published in the prior to the event time period. This

follows the thought proposed by Lipsman, Mudd, Rich and Bruich, that if the Mr. Olympia

wants to target fans of bodybuilding with this campaign by publishing post of a majority of male

athletes, this would be depicting the brand personality, which engaged fans will recognize

(2012).

Continuing to acquire baseline knowledge, it is important to understand how fans interact

with specific post made by the Mr. Olympia account. Of the six content categories, the contents

that received the highest average amount of likes were post of male athletes (16,925), followed

by post related to the show (10,170). The only other content that was close to these two for

number of average likes received was those of female athletes (8,106). Of these same six

categories, the content of post that receive the highest amount of average comments per post was

male athletes (96), followed closely by post depicting promotional items (82). The next closest

content category was post depicting the show (41). When it came to the two formats the post

could be published as, on average, videos (13,214) received more likes per post than images

(5,629) did. When it came to the average number of comments received, the roles reversed and

images (70) received more comments than videos (45). With this knowledge, it can be said that

fans of the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account are likely to interact mostly with post that

depict content related to male athletes and the show itself. This is important for the Mr. Olympia

account to understand that if they want the post to have a higher number of likes and comments,

they need to publish a post with the content of male athletes or of the show itself. The new

knowledge gave an insight into the understanding that the formatting of the post can impact the

interactions of fans as well, however images receives fewer average likes and more average

comments than videos, while videos receive more average likes and less comments per post than

images. This is important as the Mr. Olympia can publish a post in either format and expect

interactions from fans.

Knowledge that becomes of high importance relates to the engagement trends in likes and

comments by fans on the Mr. Olympia post. Of the three publishing periods for post made by the

Mr. Olympia account, the most amount of post receiving trending numbers of likes was found in

the after-publishing period (5). The during period was the only other category that had post that

received a trending number of likes (2). When focusing on the same three publishing periods, the

amount of post that received trending amounts of comments where the prior to the event (3) and after the event (3) publishing periods. With this knowledge gained from this research, one can predict that more followers will engage with post published after the event through the action of liking the post. It can also be predicted that post published in the prior and after period are more likely to receive more fan engagements through comments. This is important to for the Mr. Olympia account to understand as fans engagements will trend differently based on when the post is published in relation to the time of the event.

Of the six categories for the content of the post being published, the content that received the highest number of post receiving likes in the trending amount was those depicting male athletes (6). The only other category to receive a trending number of likes was post related to the content of the show (1). These same six categories of content had certain contents that received trending amount of comments as well. The highest amount of post published that received trending amounts of comments was those related to the content of male athletes (5), while content related to promotional items (1) and general announcements (1) also received trending amounts of comments. With this knowledge gathered, it can be assumed that post relating to the content of male athletes will have the highest chance of a post published by the Mr. Olympia account to receive trending amounts of likes and comments. This is important for the Mr. Olympia account to understand, for if they are attempting to have the maximum amount of post to receive trending numbers of likes and comments, they need to know what content and formats of post will provide the best chance to accomplish this and also what content leads to the minimal or low amount of likes and comments received.

When it comes to overall tone of comments received by the post made by the Mr. Olympia official Instagram account, care should be taken to attend to the time of the post in

comparison to the event itself. Posts published prior to the event and after the event received more positive comments than negative. However, this was reversed during the competition itself. It is possible that posting during the event is more likely to receive negative feedback because fans are watching the results of show and may have stronger emotions towards what they are seeing in a negative feeling instead of a positive. Those in charge of the social media account can use this information to prepare for fan interactions that might arise during the event and perhaps post more frequently in the time periods they are likely to receive positive interactions. Of the three categories for overall tone of comments, the content that received the highest overall positive tone of comments was male athletes (24), followed closely by female athletes (17). The content that received the highest amount of negative overall toned comments was male athletes (12). Female athletes post received no overall negative toned comments. The Mr. Olympia account can use this information to predict the emotions fans will have towards each content published by the account.

      With the information provided, it can be determined that fans of the Mr. Olympia account will engage with post published by the Mr. Olympia account based off the variables of publishing time, format of post and content of post. It can be determined that a post published in the after-publishing period, in the format of an image depicting a male athlete for content, has the highest chance for fans to not only engage with the post, but to engage in a positive manner with the post. On the opposite, a post published in the prior to event publishing period, in the format of a video depicting the content of a product, has the lowest chance of receiving fan engagement. These findings conclude on how fans engage with posts made by the Mr. Olympia account.

      The engagement of fans can be seen to change when variables of the post change. When the publishing time changes between before the event, to during and then to after, we see the

amount of likes and comments received by post in general are affected. The number of likes overall increases as the publishing time goes from before to during, and then again increases from during to after the event. For the number of comments, they start at the highest peak in the before period, drop to their lowest amount in the during period and then rises again to their highest amounts in the after the event period. As for the variable of post content as measured by fan engage of likes and comments, it was found that post of male athletes will receive the highest amounts of likes, but when content is changed to any of the other five categories, the number of likes drop immensely. As for comments, the same pattern can be seen for the content of the post being published. The variable of formatting of the post saw the pattern of post that were published in image format will receive more overall likes and comments, but when changed to the format of a video, these likes, and comments will drop considerably. These findings present how the interactions of fans change based on the variables of the post being published changes.

Limitation Section

This research saw some threats to validity when it came to the overall tone of comments. Some situations that put threats on this were the setup of Instagram and how the most liked comments go to the top of the feed, eliminating the factor of a timeline. Also, there was some disputes between the Iran bodybuilding team and the United States of America not allowing visas for athletes to compete, which brought on a significant amount of negative comments on certain post. The only other threat could have been the subject error of collecting data between four and eight hours, instead of picking a firm amount of time after the post is published to collect the data.

A flaw in the data analysis used was when running correlations with male athletes as the leading factor skewed the results to read a significant negative relation between other variables,

when truly is should have been positive. A flaw for the selection of samples was the amount of comments collected was too small for the amounts of comments post were receiving. This was a smaller selection though because of the time restraint of the project.

Another limitation would be the time allotted to conduct this research. As if the time was two years, the data could have been collected for two separate shows to have stronger findings.

Further Research

Future research for the research that was conducted for this project would have to include running this process again for the next Mr. Olympia show in 2019. This data would either confirm the findings gathered in this research or would challenge them. The things that would be suggested to change for the research include increasing the number of comments gathered per post to analyze for overall tone of comments, run the data collect period for a large portion of time after the event, have a definite amount of time that needs to pass before collecting the data, not just a range and to conduct more test to have stronger findings involving the variables. Changing these suggestions would give the findings a stronger value and more in depth look at how fans are truly engaging and reacting to the post published by the Mr. Olympia account for the campaign of the Mr. Olympia show.

Conclusion

The importance of the findings found in this research come to great value for the bodybuilding subculture as a whole, but in more general to the Mr. Olympia marketing team. This research can be used to give the marketing team a complete breakdown of the content they are posting during the campaign for the Mr. Olympia show, while always measuring the interactions and engagement patterns of fans in relation to said content. These findings can then be used to better construct a marketing campaign for Instagram and the Mr. Olympia show to

receive the engagements and interactions the account managers desire the most from what they are publishing. These findings can also give insight to the account managers on content they may not being using so efficiently that could add more value to the campaign as a whole if was used in a better manner.

As for the bodybuilding community as a whole, the findings can help individuals or other organizations in the subculture of bodybuilding to better tweak and manage their campaigns to best reflect the content that receives the highest and most positive fan engagement and interactions.

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Appendix

Figure # 1

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Post #	Comment #1	Comment #2	Comment #3	Comment #4	Comment #5	Comment #6	Comment #7	Comment #8	Comment #9	Comment #10
2	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-
3	2	1	3	3	1	1	3	3	2	3	3
4	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	3
5	4	1	1	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	1
6	5	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	3
7	6	2	3	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	1
8	7	1	3	3	1	1	1	3	1	3	1
9	8	3	3	1	1	2	1	1	1	3	3
10	9	3	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1

Figure # 2

	Date	Time	File #/Images	Before/During/After	Image/Video	Post Content	# of Likes	# of Comments	Overall Content of Comments(Tone)	Hours after Post (4-8)
1										
2	16-Aug	18:24	#001/2	1	2	3	2321	7	1	6
3	16-Aug	18:25	#002/3	1	2	1	12543	72	3	4
4	19-Aug	14:47	#003/3	1	2	1	3941	12	1	4
5	20-Aug	10:54	#004/4	1	1	1	3479	11	1	5
6	20-Aug	19:35	#005/3	1	2	2	4354	29	1	6
7	21-Aug	16:20	#006/4	1	1	1	7406	102	3	4
8	21-Aug	23:30	#007/3	1	2	1	9388	28	1	8
9	22-Aug	4:03	#008/3	1	2	1	8409	33	1	6
10	22-Aug	15:25	#009/3	1	2	4	2972	97	1	6

Table # 1

Content Elements of Mr. Olympia Posts

	Time of Posting			
	Prior	During	After	Total
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia				
Male athlete	22	4	12	38
Female athlete	12	2	5	19
Show	5	3	0	8
Product	1	0	1	2
Promotion	5	0	0	5
General Announcement	9	2	3	14
Media in Post by Mr. Olympia				
Image	38	7	19	64
Video	16	4	2	22

Note. Table values indicate the frequency of the specific content type.

Table # 2

Fan Engagement by Liking Mr. Olympia Posts

	Number of Likes			
	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Total
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia				
Male athlete	1755	75183	16925	38
Female athlete	2313	21868	8106	19
Show	1886	31021	10170	8
Product	1394	2321	1857	2
Promotion	1988	23155	3934	5
General Announcement	1782	18044	6438	14
Media in Post by Mr. Olympia				
Image	1394	75183	5629	64
Video	1755	18468	13214	22

Note: Outlier was not included in these figures. Outlier was a image of a male athlete, receiving 93,820 likes.

Table # 3

Fan Engagement by Commenting on Mr. Olympia Posts

		Number of Comments		
	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Total
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia				
Male athlete	7	380	96	38
Female athlete	0	62	27	19
Show	0	133	41	8
Product	3	7	5	2
Promotion	7	347	82	5
General Announcement	7	250	39	14
Media in Post by Mr. Olympia				
Image	0	380	70	64
Video	2	126	45	22

Note: Outlier was not included in these figures. Outlier was an image of a male athlete, receiving 1,388 comments.

Table # 4
Engagement Trends in Likes By Fans based on Mr. Olympia Posts

| | | Pattern of Likes | | |
	Minimum	Low	Moderate	Engaged	Trending
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia					
Male athlete	1	5	10	16	6
Female athlete	3	6	5	5	0
Show	3	2	0	2	1
Product	2	0	0	0	0
Promotion	4	0	0	1	0
General Announcement	11	1	1	1	0
Media in Post by Mr. Olympia					
Image	18	5	13	21	7
Video	6	9	3	4	0

Note: Outlier not included. Outlier was an image of a male athlete.

Table # 5

Engagement Trends in Comments By Fans based on Mr. Olympia Posts

	Pattern of Comments				
	Minimum	Low	Moderate	Engaged	Trending
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia					
Male athlete	1	5	21	6	5
Female athlete	3	8	8	0	0
Show	2	3	2	1	0
Product	2	0	0	0	0
Promotion	1	3	0	0	1
General Announcement	2	9	2	0	1
Media in Post by Mr. Olympia					
Image	9	19	24	5	7
Video	2	9	9	2	0

Note: Outlier not included. Outlier was an image of a male athlete.

Table # 6

Engagement Trends in Content affecting Overall Tone of Comments

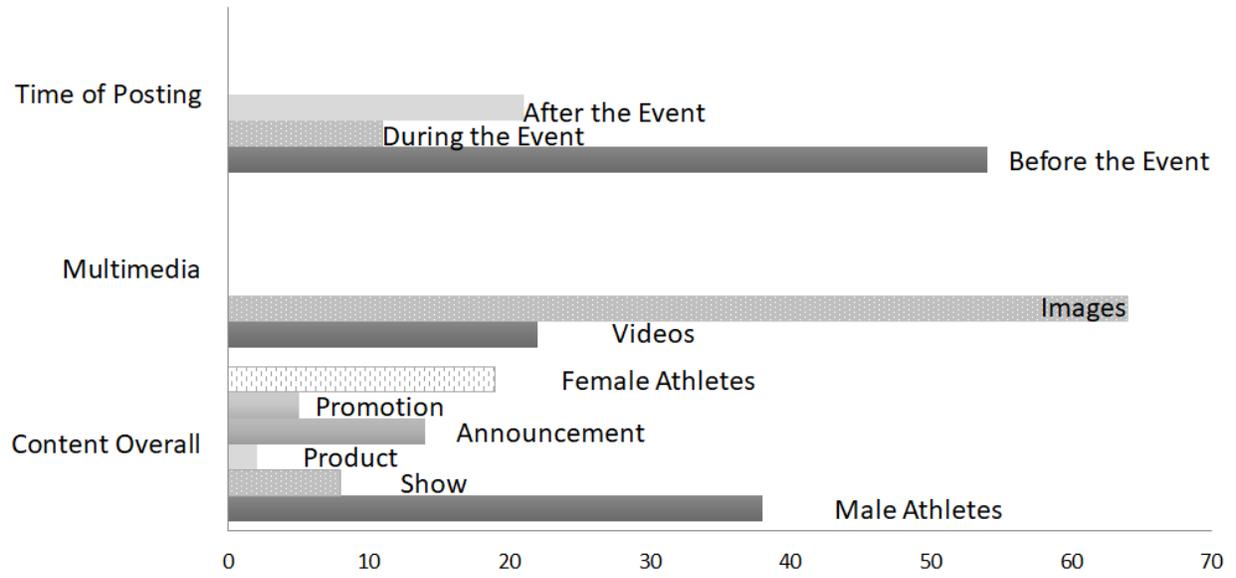| | Tone of Comments | | | |
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	None
Content of Post by Mr. Olympia				
Male athlete	24	11	3	0
Female athlete	17	0	0	2
Show	5	0	2	1
Product	2	0	0	0
Promotion	3	0	2	0
General Announcement	11	1	2	0

Chart # 1

Content of Mr. Olympia

Chart # 2

Pattern of Likes Based on Post Content
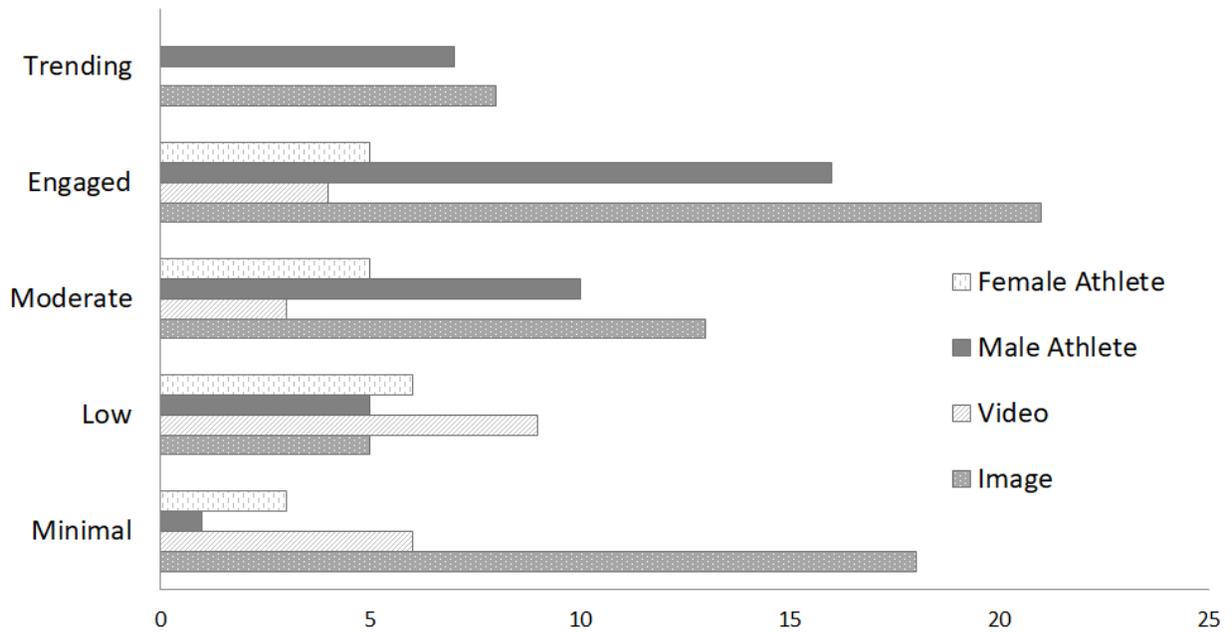
Table # 7
Correlation between Audience Engagement and Posting

	Number of Likes	Number of Comments	Overall Tone of Comments
Content of the Post on Instagram	-.346**	-.323**	-.233*
Post inclusion of Picture or Video	.246*	.040	-.155
When the Post went live	.489**	.254*	-.040
How quickly audience engaged with post	.092	.054	.002

* Indicates p<.05; ** indicates p<.01

Table # 8
Differences between Audience Engagement and Posting

	Pattern of Likes	Pattern of Comments	Overall Tone of Comments
Content of the Post on Instagram	54.992**	46.866**	29.391*
Post inclusion of Picture or Video	15.482**	3.807	2.837
When the Post went live	29.592**	18.912*	31.681**

* Indicates p<.05; ** indicates p<.01