

Studies on Consumers Attitudes toward the Use of Content

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Preference to Snack Cultural Use & Curation Service

According to the Statista¹, the number of smartphone users worldwide in 2016 is forecast to reach 2.08 billion. Consistent with the increase in smartphone users, people in these days are getting more familiar with searching information, using content and enjoying leisure activities in a digital format. South Korea, with the 4th highest smartphone penetration in the world (as of 2015), announces the <Survey of Mobile Internet Use Status>² every year, and according to the survey results announced in 2015, it has been revealed that Korean people spend 1 hours and 54 minutes a day on average in using the mobile Internet, which is only about 20 minutes less than the average time that workers spend for their daily leisure activities, which is 2 hours and 14 minutes. For the main purpose of using the smartphone, 'acquiring data and information' is ranked first (99.8%), followed by 'communication' (99.5%) and 'using streaming services' such as listening to music and watching videos (91%). In addition, the most widely used content service among the people who use the mobile OTT at least once a month (18.4% of the respondents) has turned out to be the VOD service (82.4%).

These survey results show that the most widely performed activities with a smartphone include searching basic content such as information and news, consuming content including videos, music, books and games, and sharing something over the network. Pew Research Center's³ <U.S. Smartphone Use in 2015> also tells generally for what purposes Americans use smartphones. It says social networking, video consumption, and music/podcasts are especially popular with smartphone owners in the United States, which is quite similar to the survey results from Korean respondents.

Then, what are the main factors that affect the use of content with a smartphone? According to Hyein Kim's survey (2013) of media and smart device content producing professionals, they care most about the 'duration', 'easy control' and 'format that is easy to share on the social network' when they create a content for the smartphone. The duration of content is recommended to be 10 to 15 minutes, because smartphone users generally don't exceed 15 minutes when they use their smartphones. The reason why it is important for a content to be easy to share on the social network is

¹ Statistics portal that focuses on introducing statistics related to the various media, Internet and digital technologies.

² Status survey jointly performed by Korea Internet and Security Agency and the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning, whose results are announced ever year.

³ US-based research institute that provides information on social issues, public opinion, and demographic trends shaping the United States and the world. It also conducts public opinion polling, demographic research, media content analysis, and other empirical social science research.

because how many times the content is shared directly affects the awareness of the content.

People's trend of consuming easily accessible digital content in quick hits rather than investing attention in a deeper read has come to be interpreted as a cultural phenomenon, called 'Snack Culture' (Hyein Kim, 2013). The term 'Snack Culture' was first mentioned in WIRED in 2007 to refer to the downsizing of media to let users consume it more quickly and easily. When this term was first introduced, it was generally used for the phenomenon of consuming SPA brands, but currently, it is regarded as a term that is appropriate for explaining the phenomenon of consuming mobile-oriented content. In other words, users prefer a content that is packaged like cookie or chips, in easy to consume bits (that is easy to select, access to, and consume in a shorter timeframe, even in spare time), a communication app that sends brief (up to 140 characters) messages, a bite-size content consumption platform such as YouTube or Pay-per-view service on iPod Nano, and a content with 10 to 15 minutes⁴ of duration that is easy to share and does not bother you even it is disconnected or discontinued.

Such cultural phenomenon of preferring the consumption of snack-like content is expanding into the curation service sector which facilitates users to not only find a content in short, easy to consume bits, but acquire and consume it more quickly and easily. The curation service which helps you select content that fits your preferences and interests in the flood of content is getting more segmented. Pinterest which provides a number of photos and videos existing on the Internet according to the user's preferences to let the user possess and share the photo or video he or she likes, the Huffington Post which curate content from established journalists and social influencers, and BuzzFeed which curates and edits news from various media outlets are the most representative social media curation service providers. They have caught on as they appropriately adapt the categorization technique according to the user-interaction and use blogs that post the coverage of existing media outlets and the discussions of professionals and experts. However, these curation service providers have aroused controversies as they don't attribute the sources or obtain permission from the producer of the original content when they provide the Listicle⁵ service that edits and processes the sources from the existing media outlets.

Their activities, which feature the characteristics of both the producer-generated content (PGC) and the user-generated content (UGC), have caused the controversy about whether they appropriately obtain permission from the producer of the original media content. However, they have been dodging copyright infringement issues, claiming that what they provide is the outcome of editing and reprocessing the content from the existing media outlets. Nevertheless, the problem that these Listicle

⁴ It has been known that users spend 10 to 15 minutes per time on average when they use their smartphones.

⁵ The word is a portmanteau derived from list and article, which is created by BuzzFeed to emphasize the independent value of the coverage that they edit and reprocess.

service providers don't attribute the sources clearly may lead the users who share the content from these service providers through the social network to misunderstanding about the content provider. Particularly, seeing that such Internet media companies providing a curation service show a high level of sharing content via the social network⁶, it would be the time to think about a new paradigm for the access to content that is constantly shared, reproduced and edited through social networking services.

Contents for Sharing: User-Generated Content & prosumer

What has brought another significant change in the use of digital content is the emergence of prosumers⁷ triggered by Youtube, which means that, users who used to collect and consume digital content have become producers of their own digital content, and even more, some of such content is consumed by other user and is used for the production of other content that is created by other user and is also shared on YouTube. UGC can be divided into originally created content, or the outcome of editing the broadcast content, movies and commercial films. In the early stage, UGC caused copyright-related problems as users just reproduced the existing content as it was and uploaded it on the Internet, but various copyright protection technologies recently launched by YouTube are of great help in resolving or reducing such problems. Furthermore, the public's awareness of the copyright has been significantly improved thanks to continuous promotional activities on copyright. Even in these days, some users regard the user-generated content as a vehicle to deliver more objective information than producer-generated content (Harris Rae, 2009; Mosavi & Ghaedi, 2012). Other research has also revealed that popular user-generated content can affect the public's opinion or attitude as much as producer-generated content does (Edwards, 2011; MacKinnon, 2012). Both cases mentioned above demonstrate that the social awareness of the user-generated content has been improved and the users who are not only the consumers but also the producer of digital content show higher understanding of their social-public role and the copyright.

Especially, users who have experience in creating user-generated content show better awareness of the copyright. According to the <2013 Research on Use of Copyrighted Content and Survey on Awareness of Copyright> published in Korea, people who answered 'It is difficult to detect and regulate the illegal reproduction and copyright infringement on the Internet' accounted for 53.8% of the entire respondents, declined by 10% compared to the previous survey results. This figure indicates that people's awareness of the copyright infringement detection on the Internet is improving. For the solution concerning the unauthorized use or infringement of their own creations, 73.8% of the respondents chose 'File a lawsuit if the problem can't be solved through personal negotiations.'

⁶ The Huffington Post and BuzzFeed are ranked 1st and 2nd in the list of most shared websites on Facebook as of December 2015.

⁷ A compound word of 'producer' and 'consumer', which represents the recent phenomenon in which a user also can be a producer.

Particularly, those who have experience in uploading their own content picked this answer more than those who don't. That is, the more experienced in uploading their own content on the Internet, the better awareness of protecting their own copyrights. At the same time, these people also showed higher awareness of the necessity to protect the copyrights of others as well as related information. It can be interpreted that the experience as a content producer has significant effect on the attitude that recognizes the necessity and importance of copyrights as a consumer.

On the other hand, 70% of the respondents answered that although copyright protection should be more strictly applied to the content used for commercial purposes, copyright regulations should be eased for the use of copyrighted content that is for personal use or to be shared on a smaller scale unless the use of such content is for commercial purposes on a large scale, which is wider than the current scope of fair use. The similar results are also observed in the paper, entitled <Copyright and Musicians at the Digital Margins>, written by Tom Phillips & John Street in the United Kingdom⁸ in February 2015. It has been revealed in this research, which includes both successful musicians and other musicians in the scope of analysis and analyzes the both group's awareness of the copyright, that those who insist on the strict application of copyright protection and those who show more flexible attitude towards the application of copyright protection are equally divided. However, even those who support flexible application of the copyright protection agree to the opinion that copyright should be strictly protected for large scale activities for commercial purposes. They also pointed out that too strict regulation on partial borrowing or use of existing content for musicians to express their personal creativity or to try a new attempt may restrict their activities rather than facilitate their creativity.

The digitization in the content production and distribution along with the growing popularity of various sharing platforms made the content producers frustrated. As the persisting illegal downloading and reproduction of content has led the creation industry into a crisis, content producers have been insisting on strengthening the copyright laws. However, as the phenomenon that content users become content producers, and vice versa, intensifies and the social value of 'sharing' is highlighted in the market, a new awareness is emerging with regard to the appropriate flexibility for the application of copyright protection and the necessity to establish new standards for copyrighted content to be protected preferentially. This implies that now is the time to consider a new direction in establishing standards for digital copyright and digitally produced and shared content.

⁸ United Kingdom is the country that enacted the copyright law for the first time in the world.

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