

# Gratification Theory

Uses and gratifications theory attempts to explain the uses and functions of the media for individuals, groups, and society in general.

The theoretical foundation of this theory lies in the social origin of need. I use the media with an active approach, and it is tough to spend time watching television, so usually, I search news online through YouTube, Twitter or blogs or typing the topic into Google and look for the various results.

I do sometimes read important international newspapers on my iPad, but then I always try to verify the news from other sources.

I admit it is becoming pretty confusing. Bloggers and YouTube do their best to broadcast news with an opposite point of view of the national press and television reporters. However, both national newspapers and television newsrooms do not broadcast opinions. They can only broadcast substantiated facts.

Sometimes the alternative media can make sense, but there are times when it appears there is a conspiracy of the Lobbies and the government for each topic or item that exists on the earth, from the milk to the toothbrush.

Apparently, the effort of providing contrary information to what the Big channels broadcast is becoming the unique selling point for those small bloggers and YouTube Journalists. And it looks like the success of those independent forms of media is directly proportional to the conspiracy theories they can discover or to the capacity to entirely differ from the original news generated from the known channels.

This attempt as we discussed last week is very valuable and gives excellent potential concerning freedom to this generation, but then other issues surface. If the only way to

get noticed is to be entirely different from the original news, we risk that the information will be distorted and twisted just to satisfy their private agenda.

The only way I encourage others in my field to use and interact with media outlets is to send them links from the various sources. Some of my employees are older, and it's difficult to explain and convince them of the importance to communicate through or take advantage of the new media.

Also, I feel there are time restraint factors, and we cannot force other parties that are engaged in business relationships with us to communicate through new mediums, even when is not the most efficient form of communication. Our need for gratification cannot lead us to be abusive and disrespectful towards other people needs. Sometimes a phone call or an email can do the work without the necessity of getting too fancy about simple communications. People have different needs. I satisfy my cognitive need by participating in online courses, forums, and blogs. My diversion need is gratified on YouTube listening to music or other topics that can distract me.

Personal relationship and Personal integrative needs in my case are not that strong I would guess probably are satisfied using LinkedIn, but I need to admit that my personality and characteristics do not really meet the gratification criteria through social media about that particular need.

The need for recognition and self-esteem is satisfied in my private life, and I am happy I don't feel like interacting with social media, for example through Facebook, to give out personal information.

I will report a sentence I read during my research that connects with the example that Dr.Braddock did in her Lecture of

*Facebook is like giving somebody a stage and an audience and that's one way it can bring out and magnify narcissism," (*

*Dr. Elias N. Aboujaoude, a Stanford psychiatrist)*

For example, my Facebook page is managed by some of my employees, and I sometimes log in, so I don't miss the ability to analyze the phenomena. I could use it eventually for business purposes, but it's really annoying for me to have my life displayed on it. It seems that I do not belong to myself anymore. The issue here is that I notice not only that Facebook users tend to satisfy their narcissism, but they just engage with profiles that exhibit similar behavior. If I only write about business or other economic topics, people get bored and don't engage, so my Facebook profile is not successful. To attract users, I need to copy their style and their behavior. So I will think about posting pictures of my Ferrari, of my yacht, of all the places I regularly visit around the world, and all the cool stuff I do. This is the only way to build a consistent number of followers from which I can eventually use for business purposes

An excellent example of the gratification theory comes from the Harlem video. Viewers thought at the onset that the videos were products of individuals for entertainment purposes. In the end, they discovered that the video was the creation of YouTube and Twitter for self-promotion.

George Miller created phenomena when he filmed himself and his friends performing a dance he called the "Harlem Shake" when in fact it was not the Harlem Shake at all. This inspired others from Florida and Australia to make their own versions and post them on YouTube with limited success. Actual record labels and professional disk jockeys took up the gauntlet and made, even more, versions, showed them on YouTube and promoted them with their Twitter accounts.

The use of YouTube and Twitter by corporations to push the "Harlem Shake" videos propel into the viral sphere is a prime example of the Uses and Gratifications PR theory. Corporate

executives saw the potential for these mediums to fill specific entertainment needs and thus grow profits exponentially. Everyone bought into the action which made the video the sensation that it became.

“Harlem Shakes” took a different route to fame than other videos. Generally, videos are made by studio professionals, and then students make their own versions and parodies. In this instance, the students made the videos first and then Google investors, Marker Studios and the Mad Decent record label jumped on the bandwagon and reaped the rewards of the “Harlem Shale’s” viral success.



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## Scan Me Reputation Management

This week all our studies were concentrated on online reputation and its effect on every aspect of a career and business, but also its effect on personal lives.

I have not been very active on the Web. I am an investor, and I usually find deals around the world buying shares in companies and installing new management that can produce profits.

For me, the Web is not all that beneficial. People want to make me a permanent resident of one country or another so they

can claim I owe taxes to them. I do not need to build a specific reputation to attract business or to try to be presentable for a job application.

I, therefore, do not have an active presence on the Web. There is very little published about me, and I am pleased.

I am present on social media a lot; I usually post some motivational sentences and some information that is helpful as business advice. I use social media to remain in touch with different people or groups, and I usually join business discussions in which my input is highly appreciated.

My companies are on social media, and I do make sure that all are present on the web and have a friendly interface. Since I started this course, I am continually reminding all of my CEO's of the importance of the internet, the importance of presence and interaction with the users. It's new territory for many of them, and everybody confirms the importance of leveraging such tools. However, few really have the tools and the capacity to implement a serious, effective strategy. This course will give all of us the opportunity to develop a significant advantage in this new age business world.

What I also noticed is that there are many people with my name around the world, from America to South America to Europe.

Usually to search for a person who is not a very famous we need to add either the name of the business or the city.

For example, in my case, I can add Miami next to my name in the search, and many more mentions come up.

Most of the results are for my blog and all my sentences on social media, from Facebook, Slide Share, Twitter, etc.

So as we learned, social media can play a significant role in driving traffic and building a reputation. Social media can be an efficient way to build a reputation and engage with clients

and business networks.

People will know who you are, what you do and look into your values and interests. This will help to create an idea about a person. Right or wrong, the first impression counts.

I have a new blog on which I am working, and I post few Real estate notes. The blog is new and has not indeed been launched yet because I want to make more professional graphics.

The blog will be an excellent tool for reputation, and I can apply all the theories learned in this course from SEO optimization and tags words to Google analytics to evaluate traffic.

Honestly, my blog will be only to inspire other people to invest wisely and find the financial freedom I found at very young age. I will also add something about charity. I don't intend to raise funds, but I want to donate money to real people that have a need and leverage social media to spread the news. This may create a trend among friends to help the poorest. This helps reputation but also creates something good for society.

Google Alert will help to keep track of the progress and alert me on my name and how it is mentioned.

I found the notes I took during the Lecture particularly helpful, and I went on socialmention.com and wrote my name.

From it, I could evaluate the ratio of the positive comments, which was quite high 17 to 1, and also the positives of my name on the search engines which was measured with 95%.

The influence on the Web was apparently meager, so from those key performance indicators, I can see what was already known to me: my reputation is exceptional, but I am not really known on the web.

I will be more present on the Web as I learn how to leverage

all the tools at which we are learning.