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## **Video Consumption Online**

*The relationship between the sender and receiver of video clips*

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## **Abstract**

Videos online has become an immense part of people's internet consumption, and is bound to become even greater in the next few years. To discover what is affecting the spread of these videos, this study aims to investigate the relationship between the sender and receiver of video clips online. Thus, the research tried to identify what the incentives were for the sender to send video clips and how the emotions of the sender and receiver of video clips were affected. Moreover, from a marketing perspective, the study tries to find out how other aspects (video content, viral videos and brands) affect individuals who send and receive video clips. This was done by using a qualitative research method through interviews to identify the feelings, mindsets and behaviors of the respondents. The findings show that sending and receiving video clips work as an underlying communication tool. Other incentives and effects were the urge for sharing interests and appreciation and that both positive and negative emotions were featured. Additionally, different video content factors, virality and the level of relatedness to brands in video clips were shown to have an emotional effect towards video clips and the behavior afterwards.

**Keywords:** Video consumption, video clips, emotions, video content, viral videos, brands

## Introduction & Background

Internet availability on a global scale and the technical advances which have been made through the current informational society have made consumers spend a considerable larger amount of their day online (Martinez-Lopez, et al., 2014). Pentina and Tarafdar (2014) discuss the significant growth of various channels where information can be distributed, where internet has also had an immense impact on how consumption of both news and information have changed. Moving from a digital society where email has dominated communication (De Bruyn & Lilien 2008) which has expanded to individuals communicating on social media with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram (Dinh et al., 2014; Gunawan & Huarng, 2014), these platforms contribute to establish relations by communicating ideas and influencing each other.

Pantula and Kuppusamy (2018) mention the massive number of videos existing online, which has grown to become a fundamental part of what the internet consists of. According to biteable.com (2019), there is a yearly increase of 100% in terms of video consumption on mobile phones and videos online is predicted to stand for 82% of all traffic online year 2022, a number which is 15 times greater than in 2017. Youtube, which only focus on video, is the second biggest website in the world (Alexa.com, 2020). Live streams on Youtube and Facebook (Horsman, 2018) as well as Instagram are surging, and brands cooperate with the rise of vloggers, as suggested in the section “Show, don’t tell” in the article by Vagramovich Barsegyan (2020). The growing popularity of video applications such as TikTok is now boasting 800 million monthly active users (Tauli, 2020). Also, video marketing will possibly rise as the most essential marketing trend for the next 10 years (Nidhi, 2020).

Moreover, Pinzaru, Zbucnea and Vitelar (2019) exemplifies how companies can create sustainable competitive advantages in the digital transformation and what aspects to think of when adapting to the technology of the world and how to create most benefits of the digital transformation. Nixon (2016) mention that companies nowadays need to be aware of their customers’ activities online on various digital channels in order to transform and create value. Brand management and customer engagement are shifting to digital platforms (Colicev, Malshe & Pauwels, 2018; Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). Also, Reinartz, Wiegand and Imschloss (2019) highlight the focal importance of companies acknowledging the digital changes, while they as soon as possible need to start managing their business model and market position in the new digital ecosystem that is rising.

Companies that are adjusted to this digital climate use several different digital marketing strategies. One of these that has emerged in later years is viral marketing (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). Viral marketing encourages, and facilitates, consumers online to watch, talk about and send messages and content to friends and others (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004). In addition, while viral marketing enables communication between peer-to-peer, the spread of different products can easily reach an audience in an accelerated pace and with a lower cost. While the spread of viral marketing depends on consumers sharing and sending content such as videos online, the phenomenon is considered one form of word-of-mouth (Yang & Wang, 2015). Word-of-mouth (WOM) implies the trade of knowledge and information which affect many aspects of the consumer’s perception regarding specific products (De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008). When this behavior happens online through different platforms it is called electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) (Luís Abrantes et al., 2013). However, the interesting part about both WOM and E-WOM is the affected behavior of the individual. Further, Ho and Dempsey (2010) mean that using E-WOM is an act voluntarily

conducted by users online, while no payments or demands are made to the consumers to pass it along, it becomes interesting to investigate the motives behind the voluntary act of sending.

Previous research cover video content online and viral marketing (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Camarero & San José; 2011; Guadagno et al., 2013; De Bruyn & Lilien, 2008; Dinh et al., 2014). Some researchers have talked about the motives to forward and share content (Ho & Dempsey, 2010; Yang & Wang, 2015). In reference to video consumption and sharing content online with others, the individuals receiving content also becomes of interest. Authors have previously discussed this relationship between individuals, such as how the strength of the ties affect the word-of-mouth communication between two parts (De Bruyn & Lilien 2008; Lee, Lee, & Lee 2009; Leskovec, Adamic, & Huberman 2007). Trust has been a vital factor in intention to send content to others (Corritore, Kracher & Wiedenbeck, 2003; Wu & Tsang, 2007) and Chan and Li (2010) clarified that the social bonds between the sender and the receiver have an effect on forwarding content. Also, other studies have highlighted the position of individuals in social situations in reference to when people are sending and receiving (Bampo et al. 2008; Hinz et al. 2011). Camarero and San José (2011) argued that integration and relationship with a social network, as well as attitudes, are vital factors when sending and receiving messages.

Many studies on viral marketing have been focusing on the quantitative research approach and aspects in sending, where also much of the previous research have focused on the sender's role. Further, few authors have examined the role emotions play in the sharing of video content from a qualitative perspective (Chakrabarti & Berthon, 2012), thus, we want to provide additional findings to the emotions of the sender and receiver in a greater depth. While the receiver has not been getting as much attention as the sender, we wanted to highlight the individual as both the sender and the receiver, as well as to emphasize the importance of the interactivity between sender and receiver. This study aims from a consumer perspective (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Gabriel & Lang, 2015) to contribute to expand the field of viral marketing by getting deeper into what happens with individuals when sending and receiving video content online and what effects do the interactivity between sender and receiver have on the individuals. *The purpose of this study is to gain insight in the relationship of the sender and the receiver of video clips online.* More specifically, following this background, the two research questions are:

*What are the incentives for sending video clips online and how are the emotions of the sender and receiver affected?*

*How does video content, viral videos and brands affect the sender and receiver?*

The authors of this study have chosen a qualitative methodology with interviews, in order to answer the research questions properly. A phenomenological interview-technique has been applied to find out incentives and why people send video clips in the first place, simultaneously as reviewing the effects on the emotions of the sender and receiver. Moreover, the focus will be on video content in short video clips created by companies or individuals. These shorter video clips online could include commercial ads, news reports, events, humoristic and informational content by individuals etc. Also, how individuals are affected by video content, viral videos and brands is of interest to find out, to enable certain managerial implications for organizations.

# Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework consists of five parts. First, how *communication online and interpersonal relations* are managed between individuals is explained. *Video consumption online* is according to previous mentioned researchers the future of the digital landscape, which is why its role is compelling in the theoretical framework. Thereafter, what *social emotions* are affected when two or more individuals are communicating and interacting online, along with the role of the *sender* and the *receiver* is in focus. Lastly, *brand perceptions* are interesting to study in order to gain an understanding of how brands in videos online are perceived.

## Communication online and Interpersonal relations

First, it could be mentioned that a focus on communication online between individuals through different platforms is targeted in this section. With this in mind, researchers have found different incentives where emotions play a role when sending content online. For example, Phelps et al. (2004) state that emotions associated with sending an email or not were connected to when they were experiencing positive emotions, such as connectedness, inspiration and happiness, but also negative when receiving certain content, where emotions such as disappointment and irritation are present. Thus, it could be said that emotions have an impact when dealing with sending and receiving content on other platforms that are relevant today, i.e. Facebook-messenger, Instagram and Snapchat.

When investigating different reasons why certain users send content they deem worthy for others to see, interpersonal communication and the concept of Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) suggested by Schutz (1966) becomes appropriate. FIRO consists of three different parts which include needs of people when communicating interpersonally, where the first need, affection, refers to the need of people wanting to be appreciative and being concerned for others. Also, affection is key to sustain satisfying relations, which correlates with being emotionally involved, intimate and warm in reference to people's behavior. Further, Ho and Dempsey (2010) argue that affection is strongly connected to personal relations, hence, a concern for other people becomes relevant. Thus, the concept of altruism, where selflessness is significant in relationships between people, becomes the very foundation when dealing with the need of affection.

Another need discussed by Schutz (1966) is the need of being included. Inclusion involves the notion of people wanting recognition when interacting with others. Here, two different distinctions of inclusions are made. Firstly, the urge of group belonging is of great importance when wanting to achieve inclusion. For example, Baumeister and Leary (1995) mention the importance of people to a certain extent forming relationships with other human beings, where Phelps et al. (2004) also argue for people's need to be able to connect and share content with others are the most crucial aspects in forwarding. This is also confirmed by Flanagin and Meltzer (2001), where digital communication platforms are of advantage when building relationships and socially connecting with others. The other distinction of inclusion is the longing for being different or unique. Here, self-image is of essence, where Chung and Clarke (2006) state that people are more eager to share their experiences with specific products best reflecting their own image, where the product becomes a vessel for the consumer to express to others who oneself is. Dichter (1966) argues for Word-of-mouth (WOM) being one way of specifying their status and getting attention, which will lead to increasement of their self-perception. Furthermore, Sundaram, Mitra and Webster (1998) mention self-enhancement,

which according to the authors is of great importance, while enhancing the image of oneself is a crucial tool of motivation for speaking positively or conducting positive word-of-mouth (WOM) about certain products or content.

The last need highlighted by Schutz (1966) is peoples' urge of wanting control. The need for control is essential for people when wanting to feel accomplished and achieved, but also being able to influence and reach a certain level of competence. Thus, people who are eager to achieve a high degree of control wish to change their social surroundings, where they are in charge of making the change happen. Moreover, Ho and Dempsey (2010) argue for control being much related to personal growth. For example, people who had pursued degrees at universities were much more able to create relationships for their upcoming careers by forwarding certain types of information to their professors. However, the authors further state that people with a high degree of desire to enhance their personal growth are less prone to send content through E-WOM to strengthen their persona. This is contradictory to how the other needs, affection and inclusion, are affected, where both needs are trying to be fulfilled through E-WOM (Ho & Dempsey, 2010).

## **Emotions related to Video Content**

Both Chadha (2018) and American Marketing Association (2017) argue for the fact that video is an excellent tool for brands to spread their message and connect with the public, especially in reference to various platforms on social media. Thus, companies put more and more monetary means into specific videos for marketing purposes in social media. Due to the overwhelming amount of video content online and the barriers in producing video content, marketers need to capture the time of the consumers, hence, shorter video clips are now produced by marketers in promotion and branding purposes to captivate consumers (Liu, Shi & Wedel, 2018).

Influential and promotional videos that are being shared online have increased on a large scale and continue to grow (Liu, Shi & Wedel, 2018). Enjoyable online video content and video advertisement that elicit positive emotions such as pleasure generate more consumers that share the videos (Yang & Wang, 2015). Positive emotions in online video advertisement induce feelings and attitudes that are more positive and favorable towards the brand (Huang, et al., 2013). Low arousing videos and videos that are perceived neutral are less probable to be shared with others in opposition to video clips that felt highly arousing which created a larger intent of sharing emotions (Berger & Milkman, 2012). Cute and funny videos are more likely to be forwarded than disgusting video clips (Guadagno et al., 2013). However, emotions of anger are the least likely to be forwarded out of all the emotions in their research. According to Clayton et al. (2017) emotions of disgust create behavioral avoidance. Feitosa and Botelho (2017) argue that the motivations to send online content to others, are often to provide valuable information as well as show levels of altruism. Berger and Milkman (2012) suggest that the reason people do not send disgusting video content is because they want to be remembered for spreading positive emotions and joy, rather than in a negative manner.

Certain feelings can be mentioned to be of importance when a video becomes viral. Some argue that videos containing emotions related to positiveness are more likely to be forwarded and shared by people online (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Eckler & Bolls, 2011). Furthermore, Nikolinakou and King (2018) argue for the involvement of emotions as crucial in viral marketing along with word of mouth interaction. They add that two specific emotions, affection and awe, play an important role in the creation of a viral video. When defining these

different emotions, awe includes feeling amazed and experiencing a sense of wonder (Schneider, 2009) where affection is more in line with emotions in connection to empathy and warmth (Shiota et al., 2014; Stenberg, 1986).

When individuals watch video clips, it is of interest to examine how these emotions arise. When discussing the details in videos, some components that have an effect on people's perception of the content are the length of the scenes and how many scenes are featured (Liu et al., 2018). Further, they also state that if the videos are consumed in a tempo that is of high pace, the experience could be less satisfying due to the video finishing more quickly than in comparison to a slower video, where the satisfaction becomes greater.

## **Social Emotions**

According to several authors (Tahtinen & Blois, 2011; Chakrabarti & Berthon, 2012), emotions are in fact a social circumstance, where Parkinson (1996) also argue that emotions are not solely on an individual level; emotions also exist on a societal stage. Botha and Reyneke (2013) mention the expression social emotions, which are related to relations between people and the society they live in, where a more extensive process is demanded than other emotions. Also, Bennett and Mathews (2000) imply that social emotions are connected to what people's imaginary or real impression is of oneself. Leary (2004) goes even further, stating that the emotions of social nature not only include the real or imaginary confrontations, but also recalled and anticipated ones.

Moreover, Hareli and Parkinson (2008) have also discussed the phenomenon, where they argue that social emotions trigger people's concerns in regards to their personal sphere, meaning circumstances involving social ranks, norms, importance and position. Furthermore, Bagozzi (2006) argues that these emotions are divided into both negative and positive social emotions, where the negative consists of six different emotions (envy, jealousy, guilt, social anxiety, shame and embarrassment) and the positive four different emotions (empathy, pride, emotional wisdom and attachment). In addition, Chakrabarti and Berthon (2012) develop the social emotions even further. They divide social emotion into two categories, the first one being the self-conscious emotions, where emotions such as embarrassment, guilt and shame are included, and the second one, moral emotions, features feelings such as jealousy, empathy and pride. Furthermore, these emotions can also be characterized in terms of being passive, active, positive or negative (Chakrabarti & Berthon, 2012).

In terms of social emotions with viral videos in social media, Botha and Reyneke (2013) mean experiences can contain different dimensions, such as experiences that can be connected to material items or mental perceptions, but also social and spiritual involvement. The authors further mean, emotions arise when people consume content online, such as viral videos.

## **Sender and Receiver**

There are different degrees of connection between our social sphere (ties), where Granovetter (1973) define two types of ties, weak and strong ties. Weak ties includes the ones people have less or rarely contact with. In contrast, strong ties implies the sphere of people that one are strongly associated with, where both dear friends and family are included, but also other colleagues. Further, Granovetter (1973) means that the strength of the ties are connected to different variables such as how emotionally connected people are, similar interests, how much

time you spend together and how intimate the people are together. Also, Laumann (1966) argues for that people sharing multiple similarities are more prone to interact with ease. Moreover, Rogers (1995) discusses different ties in relation to how they are interpreted by others. They argue that strong ties correlate with having a higher degree of trustworthiness and credibility in comparison to relations where the ties are weaker. However, Granovetter (1973) further states that weak ties could affect the receiver more intensely when having characteristics which differ demographically. The reason for this is people that are not similar to oneself have different skills, understanding and background to oneself. Hence, the information provided by these individuals could be considered to be more treasured than in comparison to individuals more similar.

Miquel-Romero and Adame-Sánchez (2013) state in their article that individuals believe the content gives value to the receiver and when it is relevant to them, the motivations to send the content to others become strong. They also conclude that a need for interpersonal interaction or communication is a huge factor that also increase the likelihood of sending content to others. The positive and negative emotions induced with the content have an impact on the sending and receiving behavior of individuals (Berger & Milkman, 2012). Schulze, Schöler and Skiera's (2014) study argues that it matters what kind of content is consumed due to their findings that individuals use social cues as well as different heuristics to process, filter and organize the information (Aronson et al., 2018). Thus, an effect on the emotions towards the content appears and consequently, the emotions influence the likelihood of sending it to others (Dobele et al., 2007; Texeira et al., 2012; Tucker, 2015). The credibility aspect is strong between the sender and the receiver which have influence on forwarding content to others via E-WOM (Ahrens, Coyle & Strahilevitz, 2013). Luís Abrantes et al. (2013) mention different motivations of using E-WOM such as escapism, social interaction, educational learning as well as mood enhancement. De Bruyn and Lilien (2008) talked about perceptual affinity in the relationship between the sender and the receiver, such as having same thoughts and values, and the impact it has on sending and receiving content between individuals. They also mention the impact of demographic similarities when individuals use word-of-mouth with each other. Phelps et al. (2004) mention entertainment as a strong factor in the motivations to send content to others, as well as personal joy. Chiang and Hsiao (2015) argue for identity satisfaction when talking about why individuals forward videos to others, but also to express personality, display an image and create a reputation. Further, Gurven (2006) mention strengthening a social status in a social group or community as another motivation to send videos. Social pressure (Yang, Hsu & Tan, 2009) and social norms (Park, Jung & Lee, 2011) are also motivations to send video content. Additionally, Park et al. (2011) state self-expression as a motivation to share video content.

## **Brand Perceptions**

Cornwell, Pappu and Spry (2011) define perception of a brand as the illusion of the added value the name or the logo gives to current and potential customers. Organizations can try to create a certain perception of their brand in the mind of consumers, which could be used as a vital marketing strategy as it can induce consumers' readiness to pay high prices (Keller, 1993), which leads to cash flow (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991) and eventually future sales (Jung & Sung, 2008) as well as increased margins and consequently, profitability (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Foroudi et al. (2018) suggest a combination of six perceptual components in brand perception (product quality, brand image and product country image, brand association, brand fondness and brand awareness) that have a great impact on purchase intention and strengthens the loyalty of a particular brand. In their study, these factors of brand perception



are suggested further, as immensely related with one self's beliefs and self-concept. Arvidsson and Caliandro (2016) suggest that consumers use and consume brands to create and boost their identities and self-concepts. Consumers may have different experiences and beliefs; however, they search for genuineness and truth in brands and products (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Furthermore, in their article they add that consumers employ different reasons such as connection and control as well as other virtues in seeking the real and authentic. Authenticity and truthfulness are elements that creates brand fondness (Mody & Hanks, 2020). Genuineness can be served as an expression of an individual's personal identity and a sense of inclusion many times (Beverland, 2005). Furthermore, Araujo (2019) conclude that consumers are more willing to forward branded videos that are more entertaining and informative. Similar to Kjeldgaard and Bode's (2017) study on branding experiences with entertaining social activities where consumers experience feelings of fun and pleasure, branding videos may induce feelings such as joy and happiness, as videos may emerge as the online equivalent to a brandfest for organizations. They mention that brandfests and other special activities where the consumers get extraordinary experiences with the brand helps strengthen the equity of the brand in the long-term. Sharing experiences and knowledge online over different sources of platforms, such as instagram, messenger and snapchat, may be the new and the future way of interacting and socializing with brands.

## **Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to gain insight in the relationship of the sender and the receiver of video clips online. In order to achieve the purpose, we chose to conduct a qualitative study through interviews, which enables an increased depth from the respondents to ensure the respondent's perception of the matter at hand being fully included and investigated, which is suggested by Bryman and Bell (2013). Further, a phenomenological interview technique was taken, which according to Bevan (2014) deals with how individuals are experiencing a certain phenomenon. Fundamental when applying a phenomenological interview technique is to focus on the respondent's lived experience and with this approach the world can be explained by the respondents' mind (Creswell & Poth, 2017). However, the aim was to understand the relationship of the sender and the receiver. With that being said, the goal was not to employ a phenomenological perspective on the study, instead we were inspired of the phenomenological interview techniques to gather information about the respondents lived experiences in order to answer the research questions and purpose.

### ***Prior to Data Collection (Pilot Study)***

The authors of this study wanted to get an early insight on how students interact with their friends and family. Consequently, prior to the main data collection, we started to send content and interact more with our friends and family on online platforms such as instagram, snapchat and messenger, to create a small understanding of the communication that occurs as well as the emotions that arise in the social interaction online. Although we are students ourselves, doing this introductory study made us reflect more over the consumer group that we were to study, hence we got the pre-understanding we wanted, which guided us further in developing interview questions. Furthermore, three interview tests were done, to see if the questions helped us embrace the overall purpose. The interviews were held in person, as if they were the real participants which allowed us to practice having the interviews in the environment we aimed at creating when collecting the main data. Additionally, we were able to focus on trying to move the interview setting from simply questions and answers to a more natural

conversation between two individuals, as mentioned being of importance in phenomenological interview questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014). The process after having the test interview questions, contained reflections and evaluations on the questions, such as how the follow-up questions were perceived by the respondent and how the formulations and construction of the questions were received, which according to Thompson, Locander and Pollio (1989) is of vital essence in phenomenological interviews. Ultimately, by adjusting and modifying, these three initial interviews helped us finalize the interview questions to the participants.

### ***Data Collection and Sampling***

The participants chosen for the interviews were selected via theoretical sampling with some criterias in mind. The respondents that were chosen for the study were 20-27 years of age, students and had at least two hours of daily online activity. These criterias were chosen due to that the phenomenological approach to interviews is focusing on the actual experience and that the emotions are connected to the experience is central (Bevan, 2014), therefore, the goal was to select a group of individuals that were active online and consequently could provide us with relevant information. The respondents were students during the time of data collection, where they could be seen as a group substantially involved in online activities. This goes in line with the sample criterias used by Botha and Reyneke (2013) where they argue for that generation Y (people born between the years 1978-1994) are experienced with technology and other features involving media content. Also, while the age group exist in the overlap between generation Y and Z, Priporas, Stylos and Fotiadis (2017) argue that people born in generation Z (born 1995 or later) have great technological knowledge, hence, similar characteristics in connection to technology as generation Y. Furthermore, millennials are born into the digital era (Bittman et al., 2011) which also establish the younger respondents chosen as valid to this study. Therefore, while students in 2020 are included in both these generations and that the median age of students in Sweden was 25,7 during the academic year of 2018/2019, (Scb.se, 2020) it could be argued for that this sample could provide legitimate answers to the questions. Therefore, for this study, the selection of respondents was conducted from the consisting population currently studying at the School of Business, Economics and Law at Gothenburg University. The respondents were selected by approaching students at the university, where students with immense digital consumption were decided to take part in the study. The gender representation came out six men and four women. The reason this study was represented by these numbers were due to the urge of having both genders reflecting on the questions at hand, simultaneously as we did not want to limit the study by allocating the genders by an even number. Thus, a theoretical sampling selection of people were conducted, where the ones who were a match to participate, were included.

All 10 respondents made a contribution to the findings as they provided us with interesting information regarding the topics. Thus, all the students taking part were included in the analysis, due to everyone being acquainted with the relevant themes.

However, during the course of the interviews, some respondents seemed less involved in sending along video clips than others, which could be assumed to be a limitation in terms of sampling. Nonetheless, these individuals let us know that they send other forms of content instead, such as memes and pictures, which is why it still was interesting to include them in the study. We felt that the sample limitation was overturned by their similar communication patterns and emotions that were affected contributed substantially. In addition, all respondents did receive video clips from various sources which further strengthened our incentives.

Considering the ethics of the interviews, every single participant was given the freedom to withdraw at any time (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The aim of a phenomenological interview technique is to follow a stream of communication as natural as possible to allow the respondent to establish the flow and pace of the conversation, hence the interviews were semi-structured as this lets the interviewee describe emotions and experiences in an open setting (Bryman & Bell, 2013; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). To make it possible for the respondent to describe his or hers feelings without interruption, the semi-structured questions were mostly open-ended (Flick, 2014) and instead of asking questions that make them justify their answers that were given, we used follow-up questions to suggest additional reflections about their experiences in a conversational environment (Bevan, 2014; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). An interview guide was created to ensure the different parts of the research were being discussed, i.e the parts being consumption of digital media, friend groups and community, the role as sender of video clip versus the role as receiver of video clips, and lastly brands and viral campaigns. We used principles such as descriptive questions that were short in nature as backing the respondent and aiming to avoid the word “why?” in the follow-up questions to ensure we are not being invasive or interrupt the interviewee (Bevan, 2014; Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1989). These principles were met with pre-decided themes that were discussed in a semi-structured matter which allowed the conversation to be natural.

When dealing with the respondents prior to the interview, other different ethical dilemmas were discussed with the participants. First, the respondents were told to share their experiences regarding the phenomenon. It was highlighted that in order to make the respondents feel comfortable, no answers were considered to be wrong. Furthermore, Bryman and Bell (2013) states the importance of confidentiality, which led to initially ensuring the respondents that information regarding their personal life were not to be passed along to others. Also, all names were therefore made up in order to protect the identities and to ensure full anonymity with the respondents. Moreover, Bevan (2014) mention the importance of not using one's own insight when conducting phenomenological interviews, thus, it was crucial for the researchers not to seem to have extensive knowledge about the questions at hand.

As mentioned, 10 interviews were done, where the time frame of the interviews were in between 45 minutes and 1h and 15 minutes. Eight of them were conducted face-to face and the other two were completed through telephone calls. To be able to easier follow the transcribing process, notes were taken during the interviews while the other person were carrying out the interview. Moreover, Swedish was the sole language during the interviews, which was later transcribed and translated into English. Lastly, the interviews conducted were recorded to enable the transcribing, which also the respondents were informed about before the interview started along with the other ethical matters.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Online Activity/day</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Passion/Hobbies</b>
Sebastian	3-4 hours	24	Movies and books
Shaughna	2-3 hours	24	Fitness training and baking
Paige	4 hours	25	Makeup and interior
Rodrigo	2-3 hours	23	Running and doing other sports
Kristina	6 hours	25	Learning french and drinking beer with friends
Finn	5-6 hours	24	Gaming and video games
Luke	4 hours	25	Play soccer and other sports
Callum	2-3 hours	27	Play base in a music band
Carlos	2-3 hours	25	Photography
Siannise	3-4 hours	26	Interior design and meet up friends

### ***Data Analysis Method***

Full and extensive transcribing was done on every interview taken place. When starting the analysis process, we initially took some time to become acquainted with the data collection by thoroughly reading the material through two or three times (Moisander & Valtonen, 2006). The coding process were initiated in a shared Google document, where we went through the data, searching for phrases or sentences that are interesting to further investigate, leaving comments to easy identify situations. In this process, the minds of the researchers had already started to create thoughts that potentially would be incorporated in the analysis. Next step was an attempt to observe visible circumstances that may or may not be perceptible in relation to each other. When identifying and recognizing these situations, it is important in this interpretation part to acknowledge and understand that participants in the interviews could have akin experiences although may use other phrases to express that experience and vice versa (Thompson, Locander & Pollio, 1998). A shared excel sheet were used to observe hidden patterns and meanings between the interviews. Once patterns and meanings were observed, a comparison between the interviews was done to establish different themes (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2015).

### ***Quality of the Research (Trustworthiness)***

When conducting qualitative research, there are a few factors of essence when wanting to ensure that the study reaches a certain level of quality. Firstly, Bryman and Bell (2013) mean that qualitative research has a different road to reaching validity and reliability in comparison to what a quantitative study has. However, Bryman and Bell (2013) mention internal reliability, which implies that the authors conducting the research agrees on the interpretation of the collected data, meaning that they get along with what have been heard or said. Moreover, trustworthiness is an essential factor in qualitative studies, which is divided into four different sections (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Firstly, transferability implies the level of ease the research can be transferred to other environments, despite that qualitative studies are meant to study a specific or unique societal phenomenon. This is achieved in this study due to

that detailed information about the respondents are collected, but also due to the information regarding how long the interviews took and how many that were conducted which enables others to create a similar study from the same structural frame. Thereafter, credibility ensures how believable the study is when descriptions vary in relation to a specific social situation. Thus, credibility can be argued for having been obtained, while a substantial number of interviews have been made to be able to answer the research questions in a matter that could be said makes it evident and truthful. Third, confirmability is where the researchers have excluded their personal opinions and beliefs for the sake of the study, hence, it could be stated that these notions are not reflected in the study due to the documented research process, which is explained throughout this method section. Lastly, dependability refers to the researcher's need to have an examining viewpoint of the whole process, where all steps are documented to enable others to see the level of quality of the process that has been gone through. Therefore, the documentation of the study process in the methodological section also aims to provide this to further strengthen the dependability. In addition to trustworthiness, Bryman and Bell (2013) also mention authenticity as being an important factor in qualitative studies. They mean that a fair image is of essence, meaning that the respondents provide a fair picture of the phenomenon that has been studied. In this study, this was solved by giving the respondents information about what was to come, hence explaining the different categories which were to be discussed.

## **Findings**

In the next section, we will showcase the findings from the interviews conducted and present them in an analytic manner. It starts with a brief review of the respondents' online habits. Furthermore, to enable a clear presentation of the findings, which will lead to answering the purpose of this study, we have divided the findings in two parts. Part one consists of an analysis of three themes in regards to sending and receiving video clips. Part two consists of a discussion on video content, viral videos and the perception of brands in video clips.

Firstly, when asking the respondents how much they use internet every day, the time spent online excluding studying varied between 4-6 hours, where 1-2 hours were spent watching different video clips. The respondents mention that when they watch videos by themselves, they mostly watch videos on Youtube. The interviewees also shared what they found appealing in videos, which involved different vlogs with influencers, but also clips of entertainment, informational videos providing them with inspiration and other videos connected to their interests. Furthermore, in terms of their social groups, their families, girlfriends/boyfriends and close and distant friends were mentioned. Different platforms were used in sending and receiving video clips including Facebook Messenger, Instagram and Snapchat, where Facebook Messenger and Instagram were a majority. Snapchat were used to create video clips of everyday life, and many times trends and news were referred to when recording on Snapchat. Instagram and Facebook Messenger are filled with video content which is why it is easy to forward and share video clips with friends and families. Also, when conversing, both one-on-one chats and group chats were featured. Further, the content that were forwarded included videos but also pictures, memes and written messages.

## Part 1 - Sender and Receiver

Through the thoughts that were given from the respondents, three different themes were found which enables a structural explanation and relation to the findings. The first theme is *communication*, which had a lot to do with communicating, interacting and keeping contact as well as making plans between the sender and the receiver. The second theme that will be implemented is *emotions* in concern to sending and receiving videos. The third theme is *sharing interest and appreciation*. In this theme, interest, inclusion and acknowledgment is discussed, where many respondents revealed confirmation, affirmation and appreciation as reasons to send video clips and responding to a video clip that was received. Furthermore, throughout the analysis the importance of strong and weak ties between the sender and the receiver is also discussed.

### *Communication*

Different findings were found involving the role of the sender of video clips. First, the respondents stated different incentives and feelings that is connected to sending and forwarding. Here, some respondents mentioned that sending videos worked as a tool of communication, where they are able to reach out in a way that was not possible when they only wrote a text message. Thus, respondents aimed to intensify emotions in terms of instead sending an experience (video clip), to spark a conversation. This can be connected to what Baumeister and Leary (1995) state about creating relationships, but also to what Phelps et al. (2004) mention about the sender's motives to stay connected to others. Furthermore, the incentive from the sender was also to provide some entertainment for the recipient, where also a longing for acknowledgement was present. Consequently, the urge of feeling acknowledged by one's peers goes in line with Schutz (1966), where the need of feeling included resonates with wanting to attain some degree of recognition when communicating with others. As one respondent mentioned, for friends that live far from each other, these ways of communication is vital for keeping relationships going.

*“It’s a way of communicating, because only writing in a chat can be somewhat dry, or if you just are writing “hey how are you” and they answer “yeah we are fine, we are studying at uni” but if you send a clip, then you know that it is interaction afterwards... if my friends bring up the video clip, then they will experience something directly and then you can talk about it later, so it becomes some kind of communication... instead of posting something on Instagram to get that like-acknowledgement, you can send something to your friends, and then get laughter as acknowledgement instead...” - Sebastian*

*“I think it is a way of just staying in touch, for example with my best friend, you don’t have to send long messages all the time, you can just send a video clip and then she knows that I am thinking about her, that when I saw that clip I was thinking about you, and that reminds maybe about something in our relationship, so it becomes a way of keeping in touch which is kind of smooth I believe.” - Siannise*

Respondents expected therefore a reaction and some kind of interaction from the recipients when a certain content to their friends had been sent. Thus, if the respondent would not get an answer, a negative effect on the person would occur. This wanted reaction from the respondents included that they wanted laughter, but nothing that they could demand the recipients to have. Others did also have a relaxed attitude towards their peers; where it did not matter too much on what were expected of them. However, the majority of the respondents

had the aim to gain some appreciation and spread happiness to their peers, which will be discussed further later in the findings.

*“I don’t think so...It is somewhat dull to not get a reaction. An extreme reaction is much more fun, than to just get a “haha”... My sister wrote “oh how cute”. And I replied and talked about other stuff, we got an interaction going due to the puppy. I want a reaction... The videoclip made me happy, and I want to forward that feeling to my friends by sending the video clip to them and hopefully make them happy as well.” - Shaughna*

Moreover, other respondents also declared their need of wanting to express their care to others and thus doing so by watching the clip that was sent to them. This was also directly connected to the respondent answering quickly in order to gain his peers’ respect. This corresponds with what Schutz (1966) mention in regards to affection, where both the composition of relationships and the concern for other individuals are essential factors when dealing with communication on an interpersonal level.

*“...you wanted to show that you care about your friends and in turn react quickly on something, then I watched that video directly due to that I wanted to show my interest towards them, and therefore I checked it right away...” – Rodrigo*

### **Emotions**

*“Video clips brings me more joy than pictures and texts.” - Kristina*

The different videos that were sent by the respondents mostly contained entertaining features with a certain degree of humoristic elements. These video clips contained content that brought *happiness* and *excitement* when forwarding them to their social groups. This is in consonance with what Phelps et al. (2004) state about positive emotions, that emotions where the sender feels good about him or herself, are regarded as a motive to forward content to others.

*“I think of that filmfabriken (humor account on Instagram) clip and it was probably... yeah the interaction after it had been sent was that you laughed... I don’t know, it was a funny thing... you create humor between the ones you know.” - Rodrigo*

One other respondent mentioned that she loved to share happiness with her friends and families online. The connection between the sender and the receiver in this case is giving *joy* to the relationship, once she got a video clip sent to her that made her feel a certain good emotional way, it created a positive circle of sharing that feeling of joy to other friends and potential new friends, as mentioned by Flanagan and Meltzer (2001).

*“I want to get support and some backing that the videoclip is fun and is humoristic and joyful, many times cuteness, as I thought it was. If something me and my friend have been talking about and then I find a video that is directly related to that subject, I want confirmation from the one I am sending to, that they also thought the videoclip was funny. [...] Shared happiness is double happiness. [...] It may be similar to when I give compliments, when the person gets happy, I get happy.” - Shaughna*

When the respondents were asked what emotionally would occur if the recipient would not react as enthusiastically as them on a video clip, some emotions expressed included *disappointment*, but also a degree of *confusion* would arise. Further, when the respondents

were asked to describe a situation where the receiver of the videoclip did not provide an answer of any kind, feelings such as *embarrassment* and *uncomfortability* were present, along with being somewhat self-critical. These emotions arising, when not receiving any response, could be argued for to be included in the self-conscious group of emotions mentioned by Chakrabarti and Berthon (2012). In connection to these emotions which are displayed when the forwarded video is not acknowledged, some respondents also mentioned that they are less prone to send a clip to the same people again. Also, another response was that they would not send the video clip to other group chats.

*“If I send a video clip that I find amazingly funny and all they respond with is “haha”, then you start thinking like “aha okay, you did not find that funny?” ... Maybe disappointment is too big of a word to describe the feelings but in a way some disappointment is present in that moment where they do not find it equally funny.” - Luke*

*“You get a feeling of that I should not have sent it. Uncomfortable and embarrassing. You feel that you do not want to send any more video clips, the reaction is quite important.” - Kristina*

Thus, a handful of the respondents mentioned that not getting any comments or answers is considered not fun at all, at the same time, they stated that the type of relationship mattered as to how their reactions would turn out. When the respondents send video clips and when they did not get any answers or comments on the content, *confusion* could also arise and one respondent were trying to figure out why they did not like it, asking questions to make sense of the absent reactions. One respondent said that it depends on how the interaction in the group is carried away normally. Do the members of the friend circle or in the group chat regularly comment and are very quick to respond to the received content and then ignore the respondent, they would feel very *gloomy* and disappointed, which underlyingly could be related to Bagozzi's (2006) negative emotions such as embarrassment or guilt of sending content that are “perceived” to be wrong or not entertaining. These negative emotions could provoke other negative emotions towards the situation and in some cases of the interviews you could almost feel the mood change while talking about it. For some individuals, the importance of inclusion and belonging as Schutz (1966) talk about may be a factor evoking the negative emotions towards absent comments and responds. Moreover, another respondent eagerly tried to make them watch the video clip and focused on them answering rather than pull away and be dissatisfied with the absent responds, which is argued for by Phelps et al. (2004).

*“Disappointed .. haha yes but somewhat in that way is it after all ... then you get a little questioning: “why don't you do it”, didn't they think it was fun or they just didn't have time?” - Carlos*

In connection to the receiver, other emotions mentioned by Bagozzi (2006) can be linked to statements made by some respondents, where some expressed a degree of *shame* when a reminder was given. Also, others get *irritated* when one gets a reminder to watch a video clip in a serious manner, which is comparable to what Phelps et al. (2004) state. While this is a negative experience for the respondent, it can be turned around as being something positive if it is transparent that the reminder is somewhat ironically stated.

*“There is some kind of stress in it, and then it could also become something negative, you may get a negative picture of that person, that that person is persistent, like come on... if it's*



*ironic, then it's funny if its several exclamation marks and question marks, but if is not, it is stressing, then you get shame and some irritation.” - Sebastian*

Thus, emotions like irritation were noted when individuals get reminded to watch video clips that had been sent to the receiver. One respondent also mentioned, that it was much about the intrusiveness that made him feel that strongly irritated. Schutz (1966) talk about urge for control, and this could be a factor that interfere with the personal space receivers of video clips get when reminded to watch over and over again. Here, the absence of feelings towards belonging in a group and the talk Schutz (1966) has about inclusion were not shown when receivers were reminded to watch a video clip. Feelings of wanting to confirm and show affection towards other individuals, in this case the sender, whether the tie was strong or weak, did not appear when receivers were reminded to watch.

*“I think of a person I hang out with, who sends a damn lot of music videos to me with his type of music taste. I'm not super interested in it, I don't think it's fun to watch music videos, and then it can become disruptive. I usually talk to the person at the same time so he knows it's a little disturbing when he tries to make people listen to his music and such. So sometimes he says: “ah I know it's annoying, can't you just look at this?”. Either I just pretend to be watching, or I say no.” - Finn*

Some respondents did not get any emotions at all if they got reminded to watch a video clip. From this group, the non-important aspect of video clips was shown, whereas if it would have been important content sent such as work information, it would quickly become a sense of *guilt* towards the sender. Here, the strong tie importance can also be mentioned, that many respondents watch fast when their partner sends something, but they wait longer and then watch it later when family members send video clips.

*“Yes, so it depends on what it is, if it is someone you forgot completely and it was important, then there may come some feelings of guilt.” - Carlos*

Moreover, the participants were also asked to share their experiences regarding if they ever had felt obliged to look at a clip that had been sent to them, where some negative emotions were shared in relation to previous encounters. Amongst these feelings which had arose, were that they felt responsible to acknowledge the video that had been sent to give the sender mutual recognition as if the tables were turned. Accordingly, this is in relation to *social anxiety* which Bagozzi (2006) mention in connection to social emotions. Similarly, another respondent felt the need to watch video clips that were sent in order to keep himself updated on the topics of conversation in his group chat with his friends, where he was also enduring some form of social anxiety (Bagozzi, 2006) and did not want to be left out from the group chat, which also can be connected to Schutz (1966) in his talk about inclusion in the form of a group belonging.

*“Especially if you are not many in a group, for example, if I do not watch a video clip in a group of four people, that's 25 % that does not watch, then you do not want to not watch for the sake of the person that sent the video clip. You feel a little more responsibility to confirm him or her and watch because you would want that for yourself.” - Paige*

*“Well if you know that everyone else has seen it, then you know that everyone will start talking about it. [...] So it is probably social pressure where maybe if you know everyone will talk about it later as well... then it may have been good to have seen it...” – Callum*

### ***Sharing interest & Appreciation***

Videos that were sent had one vital factor that involved the receiver and that was the aspect of *shared interests*. Respondents sent videos that contain content of interest that is shared by the receivers, which corresponds with De Bruyn and Lilien's (2008) emphasis on same thoughts and values between the sender and the receiver. This is portrayed by their understanding of their receiver target in the form of a friend, where De Bruyn and Lilien (2008) mention perceptual affinity when sending video clips to others. Thus, respondents consequently sent videos that they believe to a high degree will most certainly be appreciated by the receiver.

*"Mostly I send video clips to my boyfriend, my sister, cousin, and that is probably because they know me the best and therefore it gets easier to send something you think you know they would appreciate. I went to Oktoberfest with some friends, I like hotdogs and I saw one clip about hotdogs on Oktoberfest so I sent it to them and said that this is what we should be eating next Oktoberfest." - Paige*

Many of the respondents wanted to have some form of *confirmation*, an affirmation of oneself and many of the respondents felt satisfied and happy to share funny videos and jokes. One respondent liked to joke about events and his funny character had a vital factor in his circle of friends. As a consequence of this, when his friends respond and comment that it was hilarious, he felt a warm sense of *appreciation* as he continues to send video clips and writes in the group chat for communication aspects at the same time as living up to the comedian character he prides himself with, as discussed by Phelps et al. (2004).

*"I like to slightly joke a little and to make fun of things in a nice way, it is often to be fun, it means something to me. In a way, it is also sort of a social thing that you want to communicate within your group of friends in order to maintain the mood. For the group chat to continue it is required that you write, otherwise the group is dead. So somehow it is to stay in touch with people. Social contact and have fun simply." - Finn*

When dealing with the participant's underlying *expectations* of being or acting a certain way, the respondents did believe it differed in terms of how well they knew the other individuals in their respective chat groups, where the sent content is a factor when trying to fit into a certain social group. Some respondents felt that there were some expectations on the people they did not know as well as the ones they had strong ties with, where one respondent mentioned that she yearned for people of weaker ties' approval more than her closer friends.

*"It depends a little on how many you are in a group or how close you feel you are, for example if I sent that hot dog videoclip and no one answered I would not care that much... But if we would not know each other that much and lived a little further away from each other, then I would have felt a little offended by them not answering. Did I do something, was it weird to have sent that video clip? I would question myself a little more I think." - Paige*

At the same time, one respondent did not care or expected any reactions at all and kept sending video clips despite the absent responds, however, if an individual whom the respondent considered to have a strong tie with responds, happiness would surge. The respondent felt different towards group chats with individuals of strong ties between them, where the respondent felt an expectation to send relevant content to the group chat. One respondent felt that there was an underlying expectation on him being a boy within the group chat that only contained boys that work or study with a certain kind of talk and jokes.

*“...it has a lot to do with how well you know the friends in the group [...] there is a little dressing room atmosphere, a little harder atmosphere there. At the same time, the harshness can become a little tiring, sometimes you feel like being a little like that, but sometimes you do not feel to be and then it only gets tiring.” - Finn*

As stated, some respondents highlighted the importance of feeling appreciated for the content that they were sending. In relation to this, the emotion of *affinity* is revealed as another factor which plays a role when sending content, thus a longing for feeling a connection to others is seemingly of importance to enable a creation of a bond. These feelings correlate with what both Schultz (1966) mention in association to affection; where the managing of relations is essential, but also to what De Bruyn and Lilien (2008) state about affinity where the individuals share thoughts and values. In addition, the respondent's search for confirmation when they have sent a clip was also evident. Another respondent mentions the urge for confirmation from his friends more than thinking of the communication of the group as a whole, sending video clips to fulfil his affirmation claims, which is in line with Schutz (1966).

*“The feelings of us still being together, a feeling of affinity or fellowship emerge, everyone can relate, and everyone feels like it is a good memory, that feels nice. When it is like that, when it feels like a memory, then you feel sensitive and vulnerable for the answer and responses. You want to have a confirmation of that they also remembered the experience as a good memory, that they also enjoyed it and thought it was fun. You may would feel a little sad if they did not confirm that.” - Paige*

*“But it is a lot of confirmation I think ... it is kind of like that ... that you wave a little and say that you are here and alive type of thing.” - Callum*

Additionally, a strong tie became the subject for some respondents, seeing that if they understand the interaction in the group chat and know their friends by heart, it did not matter if they did not answer. Understanding of the different lives that are happening and at times individuals do not have time to watch and comment or simply just forget. A weak tie mattered differently for respondents, some suggested that if they did not know the person as well as another one of their close friends they did not care if they answered whereas some respondents became disappointed with an absent comment on their videoclip if they did not know them that much. These different levels of ties in a relationship online is in line with Granovetter (1973). They felt that, in order to create a strong tie relationship with someone, both have to endeavor in order for the relationship to grow and the least one could do is to watch and comment which is argued for in Flanagin and Meltzer's (2001) research.

*“A little bit disappointed, it is not much to ask to give a little response, like an emoji, so it has a little effect on me, maybe you develop an aggression towards the person... I have stopped sending to this girl on Snapchat because she does not answer and I think she doesn't want to know what I do anyways...” - Siannise*

Furthermore, in relation to the discussion of being the receiver, some interviewees also mentioned that, how close of a relationship the sender had with the receiver played a significant role. When receiving content from individuals with strong ties to themselves, they felt they could wait longer to watch the clip in comparison to people where the ties were weaker. The reasons for this was amongst one of the respondent, curiosity.

*“If any person that I don’t know or have seen before I would be more curious and like what? At first thinking of it, I would think that I would not care to watch, but because it is so unexpected, I get curious.” - Shaughna*

Three of the respondents pointed at the strong ties between them and their boyfriend or girlfriend, where all of them watched video clips that was sent to them quickly and responded fast to show their partner appreciation. This shows that between a couple, the relationship displays a very strong tie which make them wanting to confirm the other and vice versa, which is in line with Ho and Dempsey’s (2010) take on affection and appreciation. Furthermore, strong ties which include close family were also discussed by the interviewees, where they stated that they could wait longer to watch something sent by a member of their family. This scenario is the opposite to when a partner sends a video clip where many respondents wanted to confirm their partner faster than family members.

*“I would’ve been very happy if he sends a video clip... because, for me that is a way to show that he thinks about me, and this is something that I will think is funny, or that it reminds of us or something, so if he would send something, I would be really happy.” - Siannise*

*“My mom has destroyed the whole thing with sending video clips, because she sends so many that you don’t have the time to open it and watch it. She sends a lot of music, X-factor, performances, and those are long clips also, so that is not something you watch in passing [...] When she sends it, I open it rarely.” - Siannise*

Another respondent felt the need to confirm his friends and really understand what he feels when he is being confirmed or appreciated. By watching the video clip that is being sent to him he is providing the sender with the same confirmation he gets. This behavior suggests what Ho and Dempsey (2010) mention in their article about altruism being the fundamental aspect of relationships between individuals, thus, the respondent may hope to create a good circle of giving affection back and forth in the long-term.

*“If you are really interested in confirming the person you are writing with or that group, then I prioritize them more than usual, then I will really look at it, even if the videoclip is extremely long.” - Finn*

Some of the interviewees even mentioned that they said, many of the times, that they have watched the video clip and then commented on it even though they did not watch it, just to show appreciation to their friends, correlating with Ho and Dempsey’s (2010) talk on the importance of affection in personal relationships which stems from the feelings that concerns for others.

*“Sometimes I pretend that I've been watching... I write: “hahaha”... then I haven't looked at it... I don't cope...” - Callum*

Some respondents stated that it also depends on the length of the clip, that she would save it for later if it was too long and watch it when received if the length was appropriate. Further, another individual revealed that it also could depend on what type of content the video seemingly contained, where entertainment content was saved for later.

*“It depends on where I am, I can't watch a long lasting video clip with sound on, I need to take time for that. If it is just something short to watch, then I always watch it, but if there is some story or topic to understand then I need to take time to watch it, maybe at home. And it has happened that I sometimes send “haha” without have been watching it.” – Paige*

## **Part 2 – Video content, Viral videos & Brand perceptions in video clips**

In this part, video content, viral videos and brands perceptions is discussed. Ultimately, content in video clips containing humoristic, entertaining and inspirational aspects are considered important. Also, in terms of viral videos, affinity, group belonging, expressing beliefs and feeling updated is of essence. Moreover, relatedness and inspiration are key factors in reference to brands.

### ***Video content***

Some respondents thought it was very important to give some content of *value* to the receivers of the video clips, otherwise they would not consider sending it. One could argue that value can be created in the form of positive emotions, or negative, which then influence the likelihood of sending. This could be one form of trying to communicate with others about the emotions that emerged, Luís Abrantes et al. (2013) mention social interaction as one motivation to use electronic word-of-mouth as well as mood enhancement which can be further noted in every example of the respondents as some form of emotion emerging when watching the video content.

When the interviewees were asked if they were more willing to forward a viral video they felt strongly for, some mentioned what kind of content that was featured mattered; viral videos providing others with information and other value adding content were prioritized, which goes in line with what Feitosa and Botelho (2017) state about valuable information being a great motivation, where altruism could be considered to be a contributor. Further, viral videos with humoristic elements, the respondents were less prone to forward. This goes against what Berger and Milkman (2012) mention regarding videos providing arousal are more prone to be forwarded, however the reason for this could be that the focus in this case were on the forwarding of viral videos, which could affect the respondent's willingness to send to others if entertainment was featured. However, the situation is different with videos that not yet have become viral, which will be discussed later (in *viral videos*).

When discussing brands in video content (branded content), when the participants were asked if a brand was included in a clip that mean a lot, made them more inclined to send it, factors playing a role were that the video content were of more importance than the brand. One respondent felt that she does not necessarily send video clips with a certain brand in it just because she likes the brand, she focuses only on the content as other respondents. The content needs to be great or funny for her to send a video clip along to other friends.

*“If I'm going to send it along it has to be very funny or important, spread a certain knowledge or awareness about something. I think it is a high threshold for me to send along something that is produced such as Krav (sustainability brand)... it feels more... it doesn't come as spontaneous as a funny clip with lucas simonsson (influencer)....” - Siannise*

The thoughts of where the brand logo is located may have an effect on the respondents' emotions towards the video clip. The essence of a message being presented in a video clip is

crucial according to the respondents, the brand logo should rather be in the end of the video commercial instead of in the beginning, as they are aware that the brand behind the video clip are trying to capture your thoughts and emotions. Moreover, a more detailed part of brands in video clip will follow later in the findings (*brand perceptions*).

*“I think that a strong brand strengthens the commercial and the brand does not need to be in focus in a way. If you start to reflect or think of something other than the commercial, then it creates more positivity towards the brand. I like when the commercial runs and then the brand logo comes after, Nike for example have great commercials where the story comes first and then the brand logo comes after. My tendency to forward the commercial to my friends will increase more than if the brand logo would come in the beginning.” - Kristina*

It is important to note the interactivity between the role of the sender and the role of the receiver, i.e. the individual is first a receiver and then a sender. A receiver of video clips from friends and families, is at the same time also a sender when forwarding to other friends, which make interactivity significant in the understanding of the online sending and receiving behavior. When individuals receive video content of entertaining, informational or inspirational content that affects, immediately the mind starts to create images of sending this to other friends and families. Friends with shared interest are approached via a sending of video clip that gave him or her an added value in the form of inspiration in hobbies, valuable information or simply entertainment.

### ***Viral videos***

Videos that became viral were considered to touch emotions of different kinds depending on the video content they contained and respondents suggest that viral videos are affectionate many times due to a good produced video with great content. Video content that consists of entertaining features are giving some form of value to the respondents, where Araujo (2019) mention that entertaining videos are more likely to be sent to others, which could be a reason for entertaining videos eventually becoming viral. Viral videos such as “Harlem Shake”, where exhortations are affecting because everyone upload or send videos of new dances others possibly want to try as well, which could be connected to Kjeldgaard and Bode’s (2017) article about social activities and experiences inducing fun and joy. This could arguably be the case, due to individuals viewing a social phenomenon, such as a viral video could be, as something creating involvement amongst people to do something the general public is currently doing and is considered to be fashionable and fun. Nevertheless, when the video has reached viral status, the research conducted in this study means, that people could be less prone to send it. The reason for this could be that it has become too mainstream, which could have an effect on the sending behavior.

When the interviewees were asked to explain what it means for them to be part of a success story in terms of viral videos, one respondent stated that *affinity* is of essence; as the values presented in the video also will represent the individual’s own values, which goes in line with what Foroudi et al. (2018) state regarding consumers’ self-image and beliefs expressed through brands. This is also connected to what the respondent would forward, that while sending this to others they are able to communicate their standpoint and believes. Further, one respondent also brings up that it is also a part in her own branding process.

*“It makes me feel a feeling of affinity, like I have also seen this and posted or sent it and you stand for that message. If I would post the Dove commercial, it would say: this is my values*

*and this is what I think, you show who you are, what you think etc. People that I don't know can get a feeling of which kind of person I am by see the things I have posted. For example, a lot of video clips of environmental stuff, they probably think I care a lot for the environment.*" - Paige

The majority of the respondents felt that being a part of a viral video made them feel more *updated* on what is happening in their society. It felt good to be comfortable talking about the news in the world and be aware of the topics that are discussed in their social group, which is in line with Baumeister and Leary (1995). Although, many of the interviewees seemed more accustomed to being a part of viral videos due to *inclusion* matters in the form of a group belonging, one respondent mentioned that he did not seek the same awareness of what is going on in the world, he rather focused on how the viral video in itself made him feel and did so for himself only. This is connected to the suggestions by Chung and Clarke (2006) on the other distinction of inclusion which is rather about the self-image of an individual to be different and unique.

*"It becomes a subject everyone talk about, it becomes... it gives something that many close to you talk about, and then you want to have seen the video to be able to participate in the conversation, I think. It is affecting, then you watch and talk about it a lot."* - Siannise

The meaning of being first and at the forefront with trends stood out in some answers. Individuals jump on new things quickly to try to live up to their norm and standards. Viral videos were used to show oneself's beliefs and display yourself in a society, to be a part of viral trends where individuals' identities were boosted by brands in viral video clips which is in line with Arvidsson and Caliandro (2016). Inclusion matters seemed to be a reason for sending viral video clips along with boosting one's identity in the friend circle.

*"Ah maybe, if it has gone viral then chances are that someone has already seen it, and then maybe you would not want to send because you do not want to double-post about something everyone have already seen, but you might have written and discuss about it. At the same time, it can be cool to be the one who first find it, you were present and found something before it became big, that feeling has happened before, being first in certain such situations. It's a positive feeling, a bit hipster-ish and that you are first before it gets cool as well."* - Finn

### ***Brand perceptions***

The majority of the respondents mentioned many examples of video clips containing brands that they had a certain connection to and *relatedness* to, as suggested in brand perceptual factors in brand perceptions (Foroudi et al., 2018). The personal connection towards the brands seemed very emphasized and argued for, and *inspirational* videos that made a strong impression were one other aspect in liking and remembering video clips with brands in. Also, one respondent mentioned the personal connection he had towards a video and a brand, and saw that personal connection as the main catalyst for the emotions to be affected by a viral video, which is in line with Beverland and Farrelly (2010).

*"I'm thinking about ICA, they do commercial videos which you can relate to, and that's funny videos, and they have such a long history. You have seen these ICA videos for 20 years and you like the things that you could relate to [...] I shop at ICA too, so, that maybe plays a role..."* - Siannise

*“I think directly about Volvo trucks with Jean Claude Van Damme, that video clip positively affected me, I thought it was cool actually. Also, that it is a company from our area (Gothenburg), there is some local patriotism thoughts that arise... it is cool that we can do this, that they managed to make a video that became so big.” - Finn*

Respondents also stated that brands should make you feel comfortable, which consequently leads to a certain image of the brand being created. This could be connected to what Foroudi et al. (2018) mention in reference to brand image being important in connection to the perceptions of brands.

Two respondents mentioned that they were not likely to send a video clip only due to that a brand was featured in it, however, one of them mentioned that funny videos and cat videos were the types of videos she sends online, even if the video containing a brand, influenced the respondent. The other respondent that said that he did not send videos due to them containing different brands, later gave us an example where he sent a Pepsi commercial video with professional footballers that he found very funny, which interlinks with Berger & Milkman's (2012) argument that positive emotions towards the content of a video influence the sending behavior. Their argument is also shown in the other respondent that are more accustomed to send funny videos of cats.

Timing seems to be of essence when individuals are exposed to video clips with brands and video commercials. The emotional state of the consumer can be a factor affecting the feelings towards the video clip, where respondents mentioned that video advertising had a comforting feeling when they were in a good mood and consequently, positive attitude towards video advertising and branded videos. The duration time seems better off kept short, as the consumer thinks they have the time to last through the video clip and often they had a positive feeling towards both the video commercial and the brand (Liu et al., 2018). In contrast, negative emotions towards the video clip may emerge in accordance with the mood state and the timing. Brands that appear in produced or sponsored video clips are vulnerable in these matters, as the video clip could have a great amount of entertainment or informational content aspects whereas the receiver may not be susceptible.

*“Brands, for example in vlogs and similar,.. can become more disruptive, kind of like “Ahh now Square Space is here again and advertising their websites”. I know like, this is not what I want to see, but if they do it in a funny way then it's ok as well [...] But ah, I would say in vlogs and everyday purposes brands can ruin a little, but in videos otherwise, it can be nice with advertising.” - Carlos*

In opposite to focusing on the content in the video clip, another respondent needed connection to the brand itself and did not care that much about the video clip. He normally did not send video clips of brands, but the personal connection to them were important to even consider sending it. Further, if he felt loyalty to the brand, he would watch the video clip no matter what, as suggested by Cornwell, Pappu and Spry (2011), and consequently probably send it to one or two friends, although not in a large group chat due to the sender wanting to send something specific to certain individuals. Thus, if connecting brands with the sender and receiver, it could be argued for that when receiving video content, the motivation for passing it further along is that one is eager to share content based on the receiver's needs, which consequently means that the sender wants to provide others with encouragement.



## Conclusion

The ambition of this study was to gain insight in the relationship of the sender and the receiver of video clips online. To enable to achieve this, two research questions were constructed, which were: *What are the incentives for sending video clips online and how are the emotions of the sender and receiver affected* and *How does video content, viral videos and brands affect the sender and receiver?*

When it comes to the *sender* of video clips, it is evident that sharing of joy and happiness drive the incentives to send video clips to friends and families i.e. strong ties. Strong ties between the sender and the receiver create an expectation on the sender to give some form of value to the receiver and the video clip needs to be relevant. *Perceptual affinity*, creates value between the sender and receiver. Being able to give value to a receiver with a strong tie can emerge with the sending of funny videos. *Communication* is a fundamental incentive to send video clips to friends and families. When communicating online with funny video clips, phrases such as “Hi, how are you?” were replaced by the video clip sent. Maintaining strong ties and relationships with friends either living far away or not, sending funny video clips creates relevance because communication and interaction often emerge after the video clip is responded to.

*Appreciation* needs as well as *confirmation* needs are present at a large scale within the mind of the sender, where the absence of responds after the video clip is sent establish confusion as well as self-criticism and disappointment. A weak tie relationship between the sender and the receiver makes this troublesome, whereas a strong tie between the sender and receiver creates a neutral sense towards the absent respond. The expectations from the sender are high on the receiver when sending video clips to a person with a weak tie relationship, which may be because of the urge of creating a potential new strong tie relationship. Underlying expectations differed and are interlinked with whether a strong or weak tie is present in the relationship between the sender and the receiver. Confirmation needs, in regards to content that is sent to the receiver, the sender wants to have some form of confirmation or appreciation that the content provides value to the receiver.

From the *receivers'* point of view, time, length and place matters when video content is consumed, where different activities during the day plays a part in consuming it on a later occasion. Further, showing appreciation to its peers is crucial for recipients, regardless if they actually have viewed the content or not. Here, it could be argued for, that such counterfeit behavior could work in short term, however, in the long run it could be a catalyst for the confirmation bubble consumers are both seeking and trying to live in accordance to.

Also, when receivers encounter *reminders* to view the video content that had been provided to them, emotions such as shame and embarrassment do occur. In addition, irritation is also present when recipients are reminded, due to the feeling of control in terms of the receiver's personal space is interrupted, which consequently leads to the urge for inclusion and affection decreases. Thus, a desperate attempt from the sender is done to try and achieve their longing for confirmation, which arguably has a negative effect on the recipient.

When watching video clips that contain *brands*, the sense of relatedness to the brand is of great importance when remembering a video clip and to increase fondness towards the video clip. Further, video clips that made a strong impression and gave inspiration to the individuals

were vital factors in liking and remembering video clips where brands were included. The sending behavior when brands are included depends on various factors. New and trendy video clips are more likely to be sent than old video clips, whether the video clip contains a brand or not. Also, the actual *video content* in a video clip is at least equally important as the brand itself when deciding whether to send the video clip or not. Further, video content needed to give value to the receiver. Video content which included inspiration made the sender more likely to forward it to people. Additionally, videos consisting of entertainment and humor were also forwarded, which is interlinked with Berger and Milkman (2012) that positive emotions towards the content of videos influence the sending behavior, which also were apparent in other examples where funny videos were sent to friends and families, whether or not a brand were included.

When watching a video that has reached *viral success*, affinity is important, where wanting to express oneself and show others what oneself stands for, is one objective for sending the video to friends and families. Also, feeling updated in what goes around in the world, where people achieve inclusion by feeling that they do in fact belong in their respective social group is of essence. When it comes to viral video clips, informational videos with value adding content are sent to others, where humoristic viral video clips were not forwarded as much.

### *Implications*

We have highlighted not only the sender of video content, but also the receiver and how their relationship unfolds. Furthermore, the focus on emotions elicited from video clips are an addition to the field of digital marketing and viral marketing as well as content marketing and video marketing. The emotions that arise online highlights both positive and negative aspects of the digital landscape and the future. Also, previous studies have had a focus on digital platforms which today could be considered not to be the main platform for sending and receiving content, e.g. email. Therefore, through this study, a more updated digital landscape with platforms used in a higher degree has been applied, to enable to see how emotions are affected on crucial platforms in this day and age. Furthermore, this study also provides an insight on how people perceive brands in different commercial contexts, where people's approach towards brands in videos is discussed. Consequently, brands are intertwined with the sender and receiver's role, while it is also explained what factors matter for people to forward and receive content when brands are present. Practically, this paper could be a great addition for marketers in organizations that want to get an insight into the mind of consumers and their video consumption patterns. Thus, content marketing and video content production could benefit from this study, due to given knowledge about the emotions that emerge from different video clips and how to position the brand in accordance. Moreover, information regarding brands' placement in ads and in other kinds of video content can be taken from this study, which could be an indicator on how visible brands should be and where to position them to enable the best possible reaction.

### *Limitations*

In terms of limitations, it should be stated that the respondents only consisted of students from the same university. Thus, people of other occupations and other schools were not included and could have different approaches towards communication on online platforms and video consumption. Moreover, the age group consists of people between the ages 20-27, making other ages and generations other than Y and Z excluded, where other age groups could have different perceptions. For example, it would be interesting to study an older generation and make a comparison with our chosen age group. Also, the respondents were exclusively from Sweden, making other nationalities not a part of the study. Consequently, all these factors could be argued for to be demographically limiting, along with the generalization of the study also being somewhat affected. Lastly, the time aspect should be considered as a limitation of this study, which prevents an extension of the research.

### *Future research*

Within the field of video consumption online, there are future studies which would be of interest to further investigate. *Firstly*, considering the receiver's side has not yet been substantially featured in other researches, a greater understanding of the receiver's perspective in the relationship between the sender and the receiver would be intriguing to explore. Furthermore, due to this study being one of few papers investigating the sending and receiving of video content online through qualitative interviews, it is encouraged for others to pursue additional in-depth data to enable additional knowledge on how people act and feel when sending and receiving videos. For example, comparisons between generations is of interest, while people of older age may spend less hours online and may have different activity patterns. Additionally, individuals of other nationalities and other occupations would be appealing to investigate in terms of sending and receiving video clips. *Secondly*, from a marketing perspective, it would be of interest to acquire an even greater understanding of how brands affect people's sending habits and how it impacts individual's perception of videos when brands are present. It may be of interest to focus future studies on communication on one specific or a few digital communication platforms, aiming to understand the interactions in regards to both brands and individuals. *Lastly*, in our findings we saw tendencies of an impact from influencers in videos and while influencers are making a greater impact on today's consumption environment, it could be interesting to study the behavior of the sender and the receiver when influencers and brands cooperate in videos with commercial purposes.

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