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Kira Kartceva

THE IMPACT OF USER GENERATED CONTENT ON A SONG  
PERFORMANCE ON YOUTUBE AND ITS BENEFITS TO MUSIC  
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Tikkarinne 9  
80200 JOENSUU  
FINLAND  
(013)260600

Author  
Kira Kartceva

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Abstract

Since digitalization of the music industry, YouTube popularity is growing, and the platform becoming a great promotional tool for musicians and record labels. Based on statistical data analysis, this research investigates the impact of user generated content on music product performance within the YouTube community. The research is based on the case of the song Na Wan Ray released by Dutch record label Walboomers Music by Surinamese artist Sangrafu. The analysis reveals the origins of song popularity, tracks viewership growth and proves the positive impact of such content marketing practices as user-generated content and influencer marketing within YouTube music context.

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Appendix 1 - Detailed pie chart of UGC types and online platforms

# 1 INTRODUCTION

By now it is apparent that social media channels are of great importance for creating brand value and getting exposure for various businesses. With a modern person using social channels regularly and on daily basis, and an average time spent on social channels from 2 hours up to 9 hours per day by teenagers. (SocialMediaToday 2017.) As digital technology keeps developing and social media consumption overpassed the consumption of TV and other traditional media outlets, companies starts to invest into new marketing channels, and now the online content market is an area that keeps constantly growing. (Yang, Ha, Wang & Abuljadail 2015.)

As social channels started to be used mainly as a communication tool, they quickly evolved into entertainment tools as well, changing the way entertainment production and consumption works. Nowadays YouTube – a Google-owned video platform - is a representation of a social network that is standing between social media and entertainment and is an effective medium when it comes to communication, sharing of content and content creation. (Khan, G. F., Sokha, V., 2014.)

Currently, YouTube is a second biggest search engine after Google and comes first in a daily consumption with average 45 minutes spent by an individual per day, followed by Facebook and Snapchat with 35 and 25 minutes consequently (SocialMediaToday 2017.) The numbers are still increasing, reporting around 30% increase in YouTube usage each month starting from October 2017 until January 2018, resulting in 177 million hours views per day, or 5.3 billion hours monthly. (Nielsen Digital Content Ratings 2017.)

Despite the attention from scholar world towards social media Kaplan and Haelein (2010) state that only a few focuses on the business relationships between social media and the music industry. Moreover, an impact on consumers and the means of communication between artists and their fans are underestimated during a planning of promotion of business to consumer (B2C) strategy. (Kaplan and Haelein 2010.) Consequently, it is hard to find an elaborative work applied to some case study for the music product performance on YouTube

and the way it was marketed, as the scholars focus lies mostly on sociological patterns of UGC and fan communities.

The main reason to undertake the following research is based on the assumption made by the company that User Generated Content (UGC) and Influencer Marketing can increase the awareness of the song organically for the particular case study within targeted Korean YouTube community. Therefore, the aim is to understand an effect of User Generated Content on music product in the Korean media market and analyze the process, attitudes and practices of a marketing campaign in the music industry on the example of chosen music product. The author strives to analyze a pattern of the song success within the focus of UGC concepts based on actual statistical data analysis and theory review. The aim of the research is to help the label to understand the progression of the song popularity and give a solid base for any future marketing activities aimed to increase song visibility on the YouTube platform.

The rights of the song analyzed in the following research belong to Walboomers Music record label, therefore some of the statistical information related to the company and the YouTube channel is not included into the following research in regards of keeping it confidential. Nevertheless, information required for proving the research results is presented in the most accurate way mainly via percentage, graphical images screenshots, and tables.

The research tools are limited to YouTube embedded statistics and one external web platform, as research objective is to analyze the viewership dynamic and UGC effect solely based on numerical information available.

Moreover, although it states previously that research is conducted for the Korean market, it does not include specifications on Korean music industry and business practices but rather focus on the case in a universal scale and only via YouTube platform, therefore statistics of song purchases or downloads are not analyzed or considered in any sort of way.

However, analysis of supportive data is heavily dependent on Korean-only language data and the relevant and essential translation is presented in research. The study focuses on dynamics and relationships between UGC and song viewership, identifying the effect various types of

content had on the song. Obtaining of the information is possible because the label did not invest into YouTube promotion of the song.

## 2 ROLE OF YOUTUBE IN MUSIC INDUSTRY

YouTube is the most dominant streaming platform in the worldwide music business. Based on the estimates published in the IFPI's Global Music Report on the year 2018, the video platform was responsible for 46% of all music streaming listening time around the world in the year 2017, excluding China. The following Figure 1 represents a share of worldwide users per country who have accessed YouTube for music listening purposes as of 2017. (IFPI's Global Music Report of 2017, 10-20.)

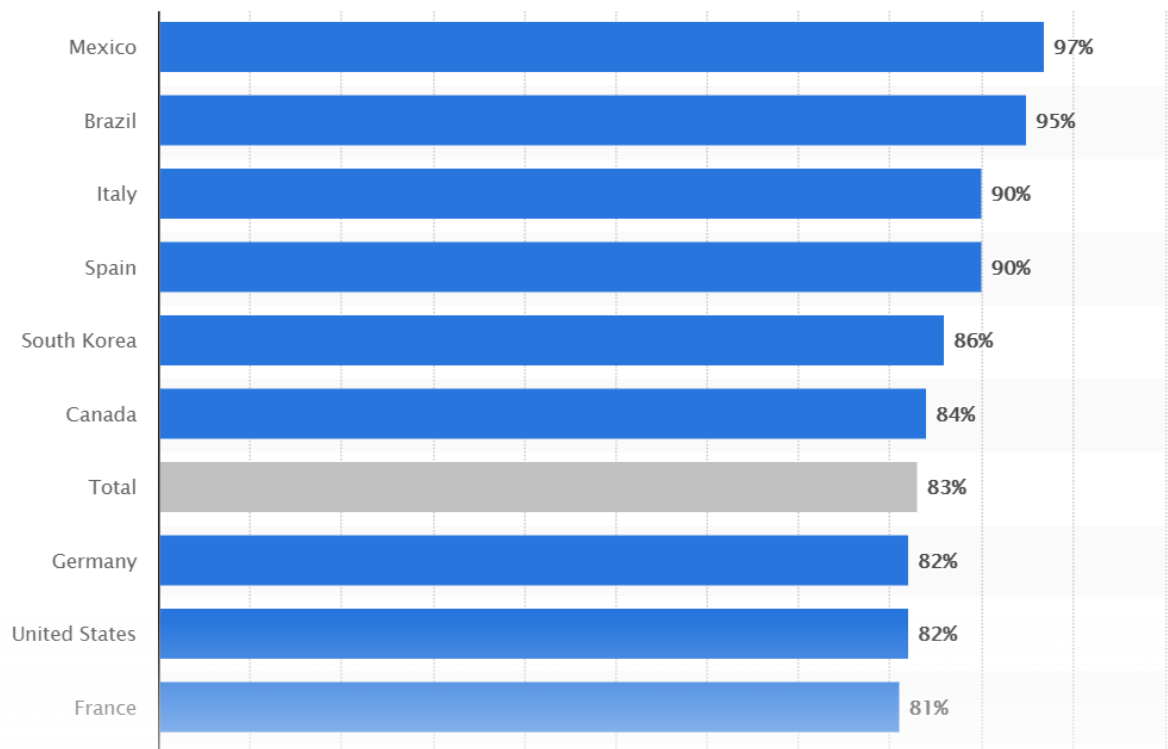


Figure 1. The share of worldwide users who have accessed YouTube to listen to music as of 2017, by country (Statista, 2018)

Notably, South Korea is placed 5th, overpassing results of Canada, Germany and United States by 2-4% retrospectively. In total, based on the IFPI's Global Music Report, 83% of YouTube users use it for on-demand music consumption, with 81% of them listening to music they already know. The number increase for age category of 16-24 with 93% of them using video streaming platform for music.

In 2018, the 95% of the most watched videos were music videos, with currently the most viewed video on YouTube platform is a music video - "Despacito" by Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee that has over 4.7bn views. The previous most viewed video was "Gangnam Style" by PSY - South Korean rapper, which has 1bn views. It took approximately 171 days for music videos to reach 1 billion views, when, in comparison, it took 1841 day to achieve the same result in 2010 (IFPI's Global Music Report, 2017).

The reason YouTube is being one of the most convenient platforms for music listeners has been demonstrated in the research done by university professors Ingyu Oh and Gil-Sung Park on Korean Popular music (K-Pop) business model. The authors concluded that the "benefits (of YouTube) are apparent, in terms of the number of restrictions fans have to cope with when they seek music entertainment in new media as compared to conventional media" (Oh I. & G.S. Park 2008, 27.)

Table 1. Conventional vs. New Social Media in Music Industry (I. Oh & G. S. Park, 2008)

	Content Distribution Media			
	Concert Tour	TV	CD/DVD	YouTube
Restrictions	Time	Time	Lead time	Sometimes short commercial before video
	Space	Space	Storage/Search	
	Money	Advertisement/Money	Money	
Bundling	Bundled	Unbundled	Bundled	Unbundled
Participation	Active	Passive	Passive	Active
Community	Temporary	None	None	Ongoing

As it can be seen from Table 1, YouTube as a music consumption platform has neither physical nor financial restrictions, such as when it comes to attending a concert, to purchasing a CD or watching a TV show. Furthermore, unlike concerts which enables an opportunity to create short-term ties with attendants, YouTube allows forming an interest-based community that is able to constantly share content, give an opinion and communicate under uploaded videos.

Ultimately, YouTube today is of crucial importance for on-demand music streaming and growing brand presence of celebrity persona.

On March 17, 2018, Google announced the rebranding of the paid subscription service ‘YouTube Red’ into YouTube Premium and YouTube Music, that became available on 22nd of May for some users in New Zealand, Australia, USA, Mexico, and South Korea. YouTube Music is a mobile application for music streaming that emphasizes its strengths on music discovery auto-generated options and the fact that YouTube Music includes not only official versions, but remixes, covers and live recordings, and of course music video. The paid subscription is connected to Google Play Music so that subscribers of it automatically get access to YouTube Music Premium service. The service includes ad-free listening, downloads and “listen in the background options” and cost 9.99\$per month, becoming a direct competitor of Spotify. (In South Korea Google will only be offering a \$9.99 YouTube Music Premium service). Although highly awaited, YouTube Music application has recently received controversial reviews with many pointing out the flaws in music discovery auto-generated process, emphasizing YouTube’s focus on the highly viewed videos of top selling artists that will benefit YouTube more, rather than serve the interest of the user. (MusicAlly, 2018.)

Not only that, in the middle of 2017 YouTube launched a new channel design in an Artist page format, called the Official Artist Channel layout. the new layout enables artist, manager or label organize all songs released on different channels in one place, separate it into rows of albums, music videos, and set promotional trailer. (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

Moreover, the ability to place a card on any UGC featuring an owned asset has been around for just over a year (2017), signifying how YouTube supported User Generated Content campaigns, on which this paper is focusing on. A simple card will appear on the top-right of any UGC videos which, when clicked, will lead viewers to the video where the owned asset originated. (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

### **3 HOW YOUTUBE WORKS**

#### **3.1 YouTube Copyrights**

To navigate copyrights for music content on YouTube and understand who and in which way is allowed to use certain pieces of it, it is essential to understand the copyright laws behind it. There are several key concepts that are vital for understanding the principles under which music content is shared, published and consumed on the YouTube platform.

A video with music contains three copyrights: the video images, the sound recording, and the underlying song composition i.e. music publishing rights. Thus, the sound recording rights usually belong to a producer, performer or engineer, whereas music publishing rights refer to the creators behind lyrics and composition. For example, in a video where an artist is performing a cover song, he or she is in control of the copyrights to the video images and sound recording but not in control of the music publishing copyrights. To use the song composition, an artist is required to negotiate a synchronization license. Nonetheless, if the copyright holder is a label, the copyright ownership might vary due to differences in each countries copyright system. (HFA Harry Fox 2017.)

However, many music publishers have entered into license agreements with YouTube permitting the use of the songs they control in exchange for a percentage of any advertising revenues. Although in certain cases, a publisher may prohibit the use of any song they hold a copyright to. Through the Content ID - “an automated system that scans videos for music rights held by various artists, labels or publishers”, through which a copyright holder can

send a request to take down the video or request to block it from monetization (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

### **3.2 Legal and Ethical Issues within YouTube and Music Industry**

Even though YouTube currently is the biggest music consumption platform, there has been an ongoing argument between the video platform and music industry, particularly rights holders, i.e. record labels. The reasons being music copyright protection and a commercial factor of unreasonable payment.

YouTube is operating on “Fair Use Basis” principle, which is defined by Berkley College of Music professor E. Michael Harrington as: “the use of copyrighted material without asking for permission to it.” There are four important factors to consider when identifying what kind of content goes under Fair Use policies:

- i. Point of Use - any use of copyrighted material for content creation is considered “fair” in case it serves educational or non-profitable purposes only;
- ii. Fictional or factual – fictional material is more likely to be considered a subject of copyright law protection than fact usage, as it is not creative.
- iii. Amount & Substantiality – in the music industry it comes to the lyrics and length of a piece of work used.
- iv. Transformative Value – how much value and transformation were added to the original content. (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

Fair Use Policy is based on 1998’s Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) - one of the milestones in internet content copyright legislation. Established by U.S president Bill Clinton, the DMCA provides safe harbor provisions exempting websites and internet service providers from liability if their users post copyrighted material. (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

Respectively in the case of YouTube, it does not carry any legal responsibility for infringed content uploaded to its platform. Another significant part of DMCA is so-called takedown notice, which means that if the copyright holder found unlawfully distributed content on the website they force it to remove the content immediately. (YouTube Creators Academy 2018.)

In order to monitor copyright infringement and deal with legal pressure YouTube faced, including threat to be sued by Vimeo (2007) and shut down - the same what happened to Napster, YouTube invested around \$60 million on building, as it was mentioned in the YouTube Copyright section of the report, the content ID system, which can track usage and identify copyrighted material, notifying both parties about possible copyright infringement. (Rolling Stones 2016.)

Despite YouTube content ID system is 99% correct in tracking and reporting the consumption of music, many have been arguing inefficiency of the system as there is an enormous amount of content uploaded on a daily basis, which takes an unreasonable number of artists' representatives time for monitoring it. "We had to have a paralegal sit in my office for six hours and send 400 takedowns," says LaPolt, a lawyer of Deadmau5, who found a YouTube channel with video content containing his album songs and live shows. "After that, the channel shut down – and it popped up again two days later. Therefore, according to DMCA and Fair Use operating system of YouTube platform, it can store and distribute content without being obligated to get the direct permission from the artist. (YouTube Copyright 2018.)

To name a few, artists like Paul McCartney, Kings of Leon's Caleb Followill and Taylor Swift had been active voices in Congress for an ability to regulate what music can be streamed on YouTube. (Rolling Stones 2017.)

### **3.3 YouTube Monetization Policy**

In the beginning, YouTube started primarily as a user-generated content distributor website, enabling easy and free video sharing platform. However now YouTube has developed into a platform where any individual can upload content, build a personal brand and turn the

YouTube channel into working place. According to what Kim, J (2012) wrote, "If the pre-Google era of YouTube is characterized by amateur-produced videos in an ad-free environment, the post-Google purchase stage is characterized by professionally generated videos in an ad-friendly environment. Because of YouTube's popularity, industries have shown a deep interest in monetizing it". Retrospectively, Google's main source of income is selling virtual storage space for advertisement on YouTube. (Oh I., Park G.S. 2008.)

So how can a video creator monetize uploaded content and have revenue from it? Recently, in February 2018, YouTube had straightened the monetization policy, putting more regulations and requirements for channels that can be monetized. According to new YouTube policies, the channel must have "At least 4,000 watch hours in previous 12 months and 1,000 subscribers" to be able to apply for monetization. After reaching the threshold, the channel will be automatically reviewed for its' compliance with the YouTube Partner Program Terms and Community Guidelines. As advertisers had to face with many inappropriate or poor-quality content, which started to turn marketers away from the platform, YouTube focused on checking the content uploaded for monetization more thoroughly. Specifically, the one related to politics, especially controversial, anti-government propaganda or politically sensitive; uneducated and sexual children channels, and channels related to gambling, from making money and being monetized. Moreover, Google is working on strengthening video sensors in its Google Preferred program (Monetization Policy Updated 2018.)

### **3.4 Record Labels' income on a song/MV YouTube placement**

According to Digital Music News report from the year 2017, Spotify and YouTube have "the worst" payouts out of all streaming services. An estimated label's income per one Spotify stream is a rate of \$0.0038, with YouTube paying around \$0.0006 per play and artist's income is solely dependent on a deal with a label. As research conducted by Complex – music industry news portal, (November 2017), it takes above 1million views to make \$1000-2000 dollars profit which in addition is shared among third parties. The rates are reportedly slightly higher to the artists that belong to major labels, as their content is being posted on YouTube via Vevo platform. Likewise, there is no visible motivation for

star-level singers and songwriters, as well as their distributors, to participate in the YouTube business model for music and distribute music content freely unless MNEs involved into paying for music video production in the form of royalties, i.e. brand sponsorship contributions. Ultimately, the final buyer of the music is not the audiences but the MNEs whose products the fans eventually end up buying. (Oh, Park 2008.)

Following the arguments towards an inability to determine a profit of record labels from YouTube platform, the MK News (2011) reports that, roughly, digital distributors take 70% of the total ad royalty income, while SM Entertainment, the major record label in Korea, takes the rest 30%. As with many other record labels, YouTube share of the profit with SM is not known as revealing that information is prohibited by the contract. (Oh I., Park G.S. 2008.)

Consequently, placement of the music product on YouTube does not bring any of a compelling financial value for the label or artist from the YouTube pay off itself, however, it is considered as a platform that is "propelling songs to mainstream success and building artists' careers". With examples of Justin Bieber discovery to hip-hop hits such as "Gucci Gang", "The Race", "Watch Me" by Silento, and "the Fox" by Ylvis, who afterward was signed with Warner Bros. Records (Wikipedia 2017.)

Another example that "typifies the site function as paving the way to a wide recognition" - Dutch singer and songwriter Esmee Denters, who uploaded her singing video in 2016 and gained popularity after appearing on several TV shows afterward in April 2007 signing a contract with Justin Timberlake's record company. As Van Dijck J. noticed, "ironically, YouTube fame only counts as fame after it is picked up by traditional mass media – television, movies, newspapers and so on."

As for record labels, "unlike TV and radio, YouTube is the first global mechanism that allows producers to advertise our music while instantly selling it by charging fees either to downloaders or to advertisers" (Young-Min Kim, SM's CEO). Clearly, for marketers and musicians the usage of social media platforms to facilitate self-marketing strategies directly

with the fans is profitable on account of advert placement. But most importantly, it plays a vital part in artist career in terms of getting public exposure. (Oh I., Park G.S. 2008.)

## **4 INFLUENCER MARKETING**

### **4.1 YouTube Influencer Marketing in Music Industry**

As Oh and Park (2012) stated in their research, music-based social networking websites such as YouTube enable users to virally forward music content to other internet users or link the videos to another social network. In doing so, they essentially become the unofficial online marketing team for a respective music artist.

The increased range and volume of entertainment commodities in the music industry (Beaven and Laws, 2007) is constantly being expanded by YouTubers, Instagrammers, Snapchat stars, Twitch streamers, Musers on Musical.ly. Having a large number of followers on the online-video services gave the newly emerged online-celebrities a strong reference power and has provided a new promotional channel: influencer marketing” (Music Ally 2017.)

As Influencer Marketing is not a new concept in content marketing practices, record labels have been hesitant to implement it into their strategies or endorsing online influencers without disclosing they have been paid to promote the sponsored music content. The CEO of Instabrand, Eric Dahan, who claimed that his company has done campaigns for several labels, mentioned that record labels "like to keep it close to the vest" as it is an effective way to drive interest and cut through the noise in today's music industry. One of the successful examples is a single “#Selfie” released by Chainsmokers that “blew up on YouTube, thanks to the music video that was widely promoted by a number of social stars, including Nash Grier, who rose to fame on Vine platform 2013 and by now has 12 million followers” (Max Willens, 2016.) Moreover, labels such as Heard Well (Odesza, Bastile, Capital Cities), Interscope Records (Jason French), Republic Records (Somo) and Photo Finish Records (Marian Hill, Handsome Ghost, Mowglis and MisterWives) has confirmed that they used the services of

Boomopolis, influencer marketing agency, to promote their artists on YouTube. The methods of endorsement can vary as social media influencers get paid by labels with free music access, VIP festival or concert tickets, free merchandise and lastly, financial benefits. (Willens M. 2016.)

#### **4.2 Influencer Marketing on Artist Image & Music Product**

Previously discussed influencer marketing relationships can be separated into artist promotion and music product promotion. In the first case, marketing campaign can focus on following targets: increase recognition of an artist within certain entertainment industry or fan community circles, deliver a message about the artist personality, increase artist brand value. Such a campaign can include but not limited to: artist' promotion on other artists' YouTube channels, interviews and entertainment content that focuses on artist personality rather than music.

In the second case, the campaign is targeted on increasing the reach of a music product without emphasizing an artist. The content can include: acapella, cover, remix, playlist placement, online YouTube radio placement, placement of the song as a background sound.

Lastly, the influencer marketing campaign can function as both artist image and music product promotion. The best example would be a reaction video, where YouTuber reacts on video MV or artist live performance.

An example can be a YouTube channel specialized on hip hop news and reviews, where the channel owner watches the music videos, comments on the musical or video production content and generate an enormous amount of views, create strong ties and influence not only song discovery but an opinion of its audience about one or another music product or artist. Some of the channels, like "theneedledrop", has over 1million subscribers. Not only such channels bring exposure to music, but they might also eventually set up someone's career. A recent example is Rich Chigga, later changed name into Rich Brian, Indonesian comedian whose music video for self-produced track became famous on YouTube in 2016, when hip-

hop review channel 88rising released a video of 21Savage, Goldlink and GhostFace Killah reaction to his music video “Dat Stick”. A few months later the young artist appeared on GhostFaceKillah remix of “Dat Stick”. Later Rich Brian appeared on a track of XXXTENTACION and Keith Ape “Gospel” in 2017, and since then his career has been only developing. Of course, that success didn't come solely from that YouTube review, as the video of “Dat Stick” reached an excessive amount of views before the review video came out, but no doubt it became a significant turning point in Rich Brian’ career. (Wikipedia, 2018.)

Following that example, the importance of YouTube influencers reviewing new or mainstream artist's music is undeniable in its power to gain popularity for an artist and product.

#### **4.3 Ethical questions on Influencer Marketing campaigns in the Music Industry**

As it was mentioned prior in this research, there is an obvious absence of the related topics in the academic literature that would be openly analyzing processes or results of labels investing into advertising campaigns of nature previously discussed. Most of the information found on that topic exists in digital information magazines or industry related blogs, without much references or facts openly speculated.

One of the industry analysts, Max Willens, a reporter of “International Business Times” in Music and Media category assumed that unwillingness of both labels and influencers sharing the information on their marketing plans may have a legal origin.

According to the Federal Trade Commission Act (FTC) that was established by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in the United States in 1914 in order to prevent unfair trade practices. It prohibits deceptive native advertisements, which are defined as messages that "convey to consumers expressly or by implication that they're independent, impartial or from a source other than the sponsoring advertiser (Federal Trade Commission Act, 1914, 10).

Most of the posts, which consist of an influencer lip-syncing to, or dancing along to the songs, could be regarded as examples of product placement, which publishers do not need to disclose. But posts that include links to download stores or any other source that leads to sale conversions can be regarded as endorsements, provided it's determined that the influencer's audience doesn't know that they're looking at an advertisement." (Willens M. 2016.) Representatives for Roc Nation, Rihanna's management, Photo Finish and few other labels Max Willens was interviewing refrained from comments regarding their YouTube influencer marketing campaigns.

That statement was supported by one of the anonymous major label interviewees of research in the discussion, who mentioned that licensing and rights issues are holding back the labels from involving themselves more into User/Community driven marketing strategies. However, mentioning that most of the labels may be more involved in these practices than they tend to admit. (Willens M. 2016.)

Notably, ethical questions also arise not only regarding labels investments in experimental marketing campaigns of a nature mentioned above, but the YouTube algorithm itself might also cause a certain controversy. As suggested, YouTube users are steered towards a video by means of coded mechanisms which heavily rely on promotion and ranking tactics, such as the measuring of downloads and the promotion of popular favorites. The site's users indeed serve as providers and arbiters of content, but rankings and ratings are processed with the help of algorithms, the technical details of which remain undisclosed. (Van Dijck J. 2009.)

## **5 USER GENERATED CONTENT**

User Generated Content (UGC) or sometimes referred to as a User Created Content (UCC) - is a two-way media, also known as consumer-generated media, or participatory media "created or produced by the general public rather than by paid professionals" (Daugherty, Eastin, Bright, 2008.) Being a part of Content Marketing, the aspect that differentiates UGC from content marketing it is essentially any sort of content that is produced by unpaid users

on a free willingness. Considered as a part of Web 2.0 - second generation internet services. The term Web 2.0 was firstly used by O'Reilly Media in 2004 and referred to social media services, communication blogs, wikis, and other applications, that, among all other factors, can be characterized with participatory culture, rather than isolated information sources. The following list is a type of UGC content (Daugherty, Eastin, Bright, 2008.)

- Social Commerce
- Questions & Answers
- Blogs / Conversations
- Comments
- Pictures
- Live casting
- Wikis
- Virtual Worlds
- Music
- Events
- Documents
- Video
- Location
- Reviews & Ratings
- Live streaming (see Appendix 1)

Unlike the examples of hits stated previously, there are slightly different phenomena that took place with the following music, that was either released by major artists or simply discovered by the public. A few examples are Haarlem Shake by Baauer, Rae Sremmurd's "Black Beatles" that was a track for Mannequin Challenge, Drake's "In My Feelings" or "Hotline Bling", where the dance move of the singer generated a massive response from online community resulting in content that included resampling of the music video or imitating the dance by many other social media users. The response generated from the community brought all mentioned songs to top charts and made them go viral.

The significant impact of UGC on sales was statistically proven by analysis conducted by Stephan Seiler, Song Yao and Wenbo Wang (2017) that analyzed an impact of 3 days blockage of user-generated content on Chinese platform Weibo due to political scandal to TV shows ratings. According to the research, the ratings of the shows in 24 mainland China cities where the UGC was blocked had suffered the fluctuations for roughly 20%, with shows of a normally heavy Weibo presence taking the biggest hit. As the experiment was held under natural circumstances, Song Yao (2017), concludes that regardless of the product, having better monitors of user-generated content and sentiment can help marketing efforts and firms should think of the ways to encourage UGC.

Nevertheless, given other circumstances, during the discussion about the positive impact of UGC content on the success of upcoming new season of Game of Thrones Mr. Yao proposed that strategically it is very difficult to test the impact of microblogging, as attributing success to traditional advertisement versus user-generated content can be problematic.

In music industry context, social media users connect available materials in creative ways to pay tribute to the music or stars they like, while seeking attention and recognition in retrospective fandoms and online communities through their content, which might eventually serve their personal interests such as finding a job, earning revenue or building personal online brand. (Dhar V., Chang E. 2007.) During this research, core YouTube UGC was classified as:

1. Music video review;
2. Edited video clip;
3. Video in an article format;
4. Parody;
5. Criticism;
6. Playlist;
7. Music cover

The research conducted in New York University School Leonard N. Stern School of Business focused on the analysis of an effect of user-generated content on music sales. The research that had been taken four weeks before and after album releases concluded that "the most significant variable is blog chatter or the volume of blog posts on an album, with higher numbers of posts corresponding to higher sales" (Dhar V., Chang E. 2007.) Although the authors pointed out that the quality of the content is being a major factor, followed by other variables, they emphasized the importance of general users reviews as "it takes a considerable amount of effort to write a review or produce another form of content", meaning that authors feel passionate enough about the topic. Secondly, some user-generated content has more authority than others because "reputation helps them to attract traffic that is in turn influenced by their content". In YouTube community it refers to channels with a higher number of followers, meaning reference power – an ability to influence consumers decisions.

When conducting research on user-centric marketing decisions from the music industry J. Gamble, M. Brennan and R. Mcadam (2018) found out that, “The majority of the themes in relation to positive effects on artist marketing strategies are derived from artist-initiated schemes for fans to become involved through the marketing process itself”. Notably, such user interactions vary in terms of degree of involvement and control from the consumers (J. Gamble, M. Brennan and R. Mcadam 2018.) Some of the typical examples of such UGC marketing campaign are when the band is asking fans to post a certain type of content related to their song with a hashtag for them to find and later use some of it in its music videos or intro in their shows. To conclude, “the UGC market increasingly relates to the professional Hollywood market as stock options relate to shares and bonds” (Van Dijck 2009.)

In short, User Generated Content is a powerful content marketing instrument that, if planned, can be turned into an effective user-generated content campaign. Therefore, in relation to user-centric marketing and management decision within the music industry, such a concept as sponsored user-generated content branding, viral marketing, and influencer marketing developed. (Gamble J., Gilmore A., 2013).

UGC or User-Created Content has been originally investigated from a point of humanity studies. Many early studies prior to 2000 had been focusing on analyzing psychological and social aspect, i.e. Nowak, A., Szamrejand, J., and Latane, B. (1990), or celebrity endorsements phenomena, Erdogan, Z. B. (1999). Afterward, such scholars as Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright (2008) explored factors of content generating intentions.

The conclusion of that research underlines the importance of ego-defensive and social functional sources, which “are serving as strong contributors towards attitudes formulated for creating UGC”. Daugherty, Eastin, and Bright (2008) define an ego-defensive function as a recognition of people self-doubting and, therefore, the desire of human to minimize it, whereas a social function refers to an initial instinct of connecting with the community. Shao (2009), argued that intentions to create a content lie within self-expression and self-actualization.

As self-expression values have been increasing through last decades, especially within the younger population, Orehek, J.Human (2017, 60-70), the internet and social media became a predominant platform for self-expression, which can be clearly seen from previously mentioned statistics on time spent on social media communication tools. The ideology and support for free speech, access to previously limited information exchange and technological development that enables internet users to create written, audio, video and any other form of self-expression and unite into online communities based on personal interests, political or social views.

However, despite the presented availability and opportunities, it is wrong to consider all social media users as an active content generator. The research conducted in the US identified that only 13% of users are an actual "active creators, – people actually producing and uploading content such as web blogs, videos or photos. Just under 19 percent qualify as 'critics', which means they provide ratings or evaluations." Van Dijck J. (2009.) A more generalized view on a percentage of active content creators can be seen from European Union statistics between the year 2008 – 2017, that shows a stable increase in social media content-creation activity that almost doubles within a period of 9 years.

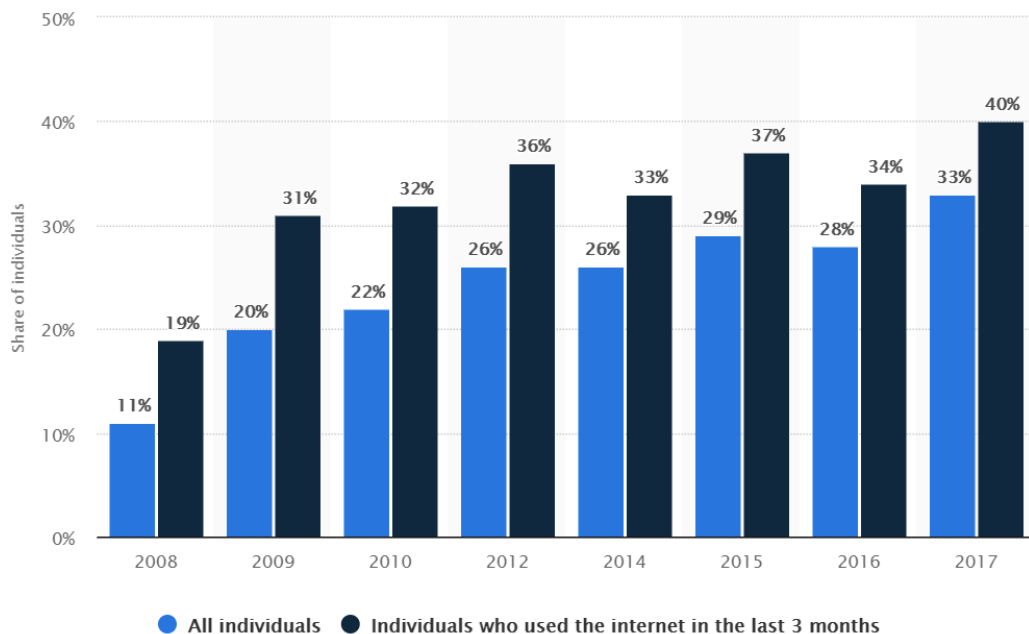


Figure 2. A share of individuals who upload self-created content to any website to be shared in the European Union (EU 28) from 2008 to 2017. (Statista, 2018)

As consumption of social media is in no doubt tremendously increasing, the main reason to it can be defined as a fulfillment of entertainment and information purposes while supporting online communities and developing social interactions, which often correlates with a form of self-expression.

The effect this trend has on marketing is that customers rely more on information generated by other users in the social media and networks than traditional forms of advertisement such as celebrity endorsement. Because consumers believe UGC does not imply any commercial benefit for a creator, it is proven to be more trustworthy, useful and unbiased. (Buttle 1998.) However, an idea of sponsored User-Created content may contradict that statement, which leads to ethical questions and supposedly negative attitudes of a certain group of users towards such practices. Notably, the level of negativity and ethical questions is believed to vary by industry. For instance, subscribers of beauty channels can support a beauty blogger whose videos were sponsored by cosmetic brands, expressing happiness for a blogger when they get free products for a trial and reviewing. Meanwhile, such support is hardly likely to be seen in any other industries, where the content creator makes sponsorship less visible to the public.

To conclude, the main factors behind content-creators motivation can be defined as:

- Freedom of speech
- Self-Expression
- Entertainment and Information Exchange
- Community Engagement

## 6 METHODOLOGY

The following chapter explains the methods and analysis implied in the research paper. The thesis makes use of the mixed methodology in order to achieve a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than if the single method was chosen. By supporting quantitative findings with qualitative data, the understanding of multiple perspectives and unbiased conclusion can be drawn.

For conducting the research, a deductive approach was chosen to test the following statement: “UGC has a positive impact on a music product performance on social media, i.e. YouTube”. The objective is to measure and prove the statement in a given circumstance, using a case study of “Na Wan Ray” song in Korean YouTube market.

Consequently, the primary data of research is YouTube channel statistics gathered and analyzed through YouTube management platform VidIQ, that is currently utilized by the record label. The platform provides an overall overview of the channel within the whole period and a selected period of time, as well as a total viewership and a viewership of the top 10 most viewed videos. Among others, the tool offers valuable insights on a metrics of YouTube channel that includes gender and geographical distribution of viewers, the URL of the sites that lead to the link of the song, and the most popular search engine keywords. Therefore, the viewership statistics per each month starting from November 6, 2015 (the earliest data available for analysis) was separately measured and showcased in a table in order to track the visibility of the song, aiming to identify the dynamics and trends, that will help to track the origination, i.e. where the views come from and how the song was discovered by the Korean public. As the periods of fluctuations in viewership were identified, the top 10 Korean URL addresses leading to views were listed and checked individually, to find out the exact content that most likely has been the cause of the sharp increase.

Moreover, related keywords on YouTube search engine and other websites that brought viewers were tracked for any supportive or related content that helped to create a clear picture of possible causes in viewership rise.

Despite the efficiency of data used in research, it may lack contextual details, i.e. the nature of statistical figures, as it is found to be complicated to analyze the data of one piece of content, therefore the supportive qualitative data was evaluated.

Consequently, YouTube comments under the video have been chosen as supportive data. Therefore, the qualitative data was analyzed via content and narrative analysis, where content analysis refers to the process of categorizing written commentary and summarizing it, whilst narrative method involves the reformulation and revision of previously collected data.

The YouTube commentary data was scanned for words, phrases and thematizing method was performed in order to classify the engagement. In order to gain the clear representation of general viewers' listening intentions, the comment section is scoped with an orientation towards comparably high comment engagement that consists of likes, generation of further discussion and the resemblance of the message behind the comment to other comments that have less engagement rate.

The sampling rate is random, covering the time period starting from 2 years ago and towards recent commentary.

## **7 DATA OBSERVATION**

The song on which the case study is based was released 8 years ago by a Surinamese band Sangrafu under Walboomers Music Record Label. It was uploaded to YouTube on Jul 25, 2012, under a standard YouTube license in the Music category. The song is not supported by the music video and is in a form of sound and cover photo, the total length of the video is 8

min 42sec. Uploaded on KondreSranan YouTube channel – one of the label's channels that focuses on Surinamese music and is specific to Surinamese and Dutch audience. The channel has 10,23 million views and 1,092 videos uploaded, 31,650 likes and 3,060 comments. The playlist of the group Sangrafu consists of 38 videos and up to date has 2,40million views, followed by a playlist of Kankantrie, that consist of 44 videos and has 1,88million views.



Picture 1. Screenshot of the YouTube video Na Wan Ray on 08.04.18

Most of the supplementary content that relates to the song in any form was released 1-2 years ago, the trend can be also clearly seen in the comment section under the video, with Korean comments starting to appear excessively in 2016 - 2017. There are 3 main ways through which the song was possibly discovered by Korean audiences:

- 1) The song was placed by TV channel KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) in Korean drama series – “Chief Kim” that was aired on 01-25-2017 to 03-30-2017, in episode eight (8) for about 45 seconds.

- 2) The song was placed in a cooking TV show “맛있는 녀석들”(Tasty Guys), episode 49, where a part of it was played and discussed by the cast of the show, calling the song a ringtone “while waiting for the food in a restaurant”. The part of the episode was posted on official YouTube channel of the show on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. c);
- 3) One of the most popular Korean gamers of LOL (League of Legends) worldwide - Faker was listening to the song when the video was recorded and published on YouTube on 19-06-16 on SKT T1 YouTube channel with a commentary “When someone wants to meet Faker in Rank game, he listens to this song [Na wan ray - Sangrafu]. (Korean hears those lyrics like “Jebal” (Please,) “Nawara” (Come out).
- 4) Song placement in a famous comedy TV show “Running Man” episode 421, October 8, 2018. The show is considered one of the most popular and famous in Korea, keeping a position of top 5 TV shows in Korea in terms of viewership and ratings.

As a proof that the song is getting public exposure in South Korea, Walboomers Music was contacted by a representative of a Korean hair growth product in November 2017, and were asked for synchronization rights - a permission to use a part of the song in TV and Radio commercial, however the request was declined afterward, as the brand representatives have made a decision to use another song.

The reason behind the song popularity specifically in South Korea is in its lyrics. Surinamese lyrics Na Wan Ray have a sound resemblance with Korean words that means “come to me” (나와라), giving the song a luck attraction nature and humorous meaning. That statement is proved by three main factors of song popularity stated above, as in TV placement episode (1) the main character played the song in the working place with the intention to attract the attention of his co-workers to his way of protesting corporate culture. In the second case (2) the cast of the food-related show was waiting for a dish in the restaurant and played the song on the phone, discussing in a humorous manner how the song should play every time they order food. Lastly, the third (3) video shows League of Legend player Faker listening to the

song saying that "someone I met in the game said this song brings luck as they listened to it and were able to meet me online".

As the first two cases represent traditional TV-film product placement, the 3<sup>rd</sup> factor can be described as an influencer marketing. Other than a UGC, as Faker is a known figure in the gaming industry and has a lot of followers and fans, him listening to the song and the video of it appearing on YouTube means he unintentionally became an influencer for the song. That can be seen on the extensive amount of gaming-related comments and UGC where the song is used in gaming playlists or as background music (see details in appendix).

## 7.1 Statistical Analysis

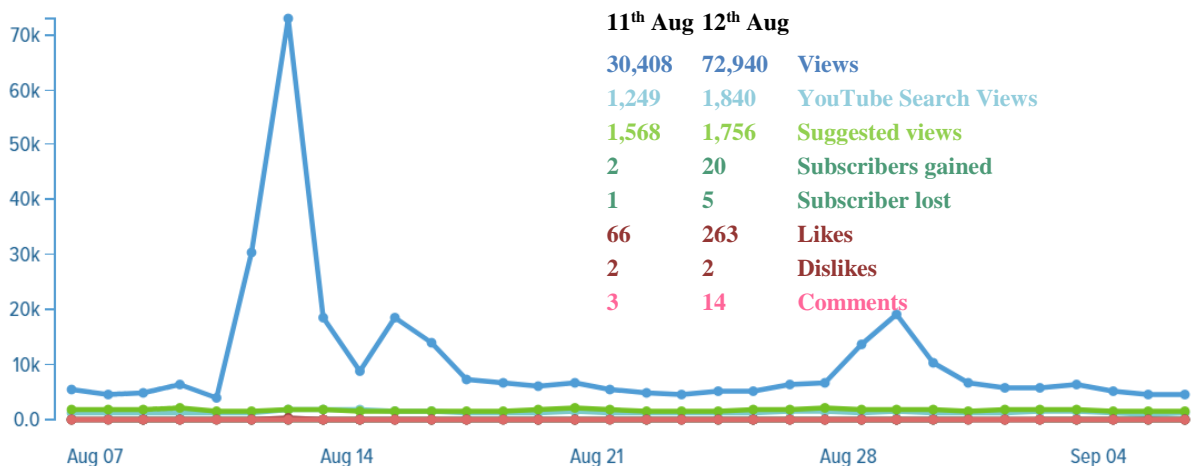
Based on assumptions made in a previous chapter, the following analysis focus on statistical data and strives to identify the impact of mentioned factors on a song viewership. In order to understand the dynamic of the music product, online YouTube analytical platform VidIQ is used. As for 06/07/18, the video has 1.90million views and 7,198 likes, which is 0,38% of likes/views and 2,416 comments; 0,13% comments/views. On 06/10/18 the video has 1.95 million views, 7568 likes, 0,39% of likes/views, 2490 comments and 0,13% comments/views. Notably, those numbers show that the song brings up to 20% (1,95/10,23million views) of the whole channel viewership. The following table represents the number of views per each month within the period of 06/11/15 – 06/08/18, where the view is considered a click on the video and watching it over a half and viewing time, where it means the number of minutes the video has been watched.

Table 2. VidIQ data of views & viewership time per month from 6 November 2015 to 6 August 2018

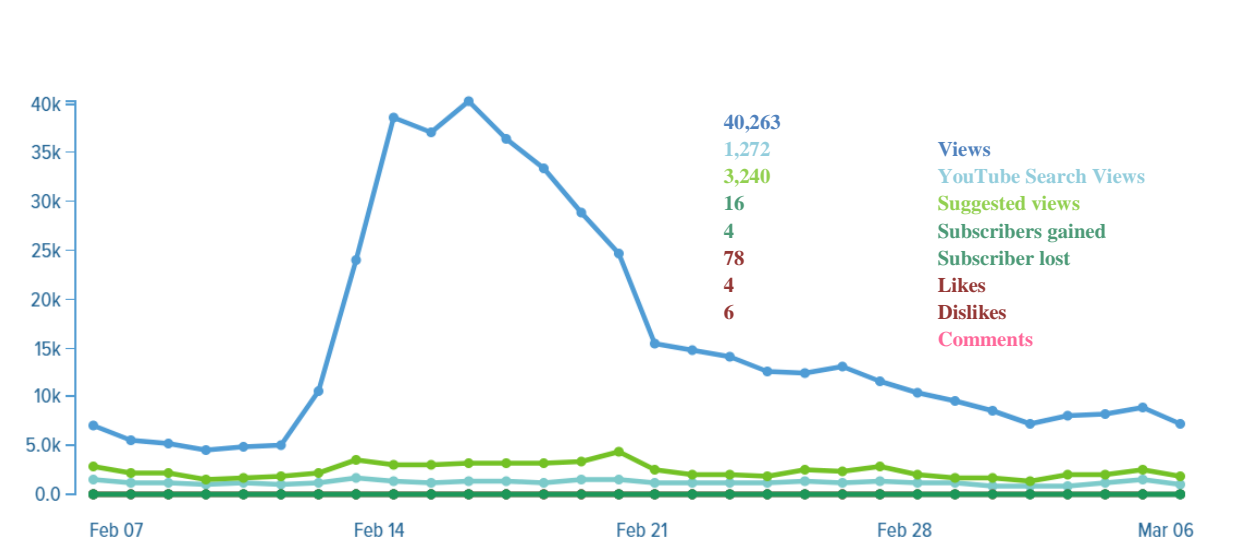
TIME PERIOD	VIEWS	VIEWING TIME
06/11/15- 06/12/15	18613	50,486
06/12/15- 06/01/16	19415	51,057
06/01/16- 06/02/16	43468	80,495
<b>06/02/16- 06/03/16</b>	<b>334171</b>	<b>370,341</b>
06/03/16- 06/04/16	85021	107,538
06/04/16- 06/05/16	46363	72,787

06/05/16- 06/06/16	31849	55,359
06/06/16- 06/07/16	34899	54,641
06/07/16- 06/08/16	28537	60,065
<b>06/08/16- 06/09/16</b>	<b>216804</b>	<b>215,255</b>
06/09/16- 06/10/16	29960	70,338
06/10/16- 06/11/16	23574	50,653
06/11/16- 06/12/16	27245	53,382
06/12/16- 06/01/17	26555	57,562
06/01/17- 06/02/17	24567	57,185
06/02/17- 06/03/17	31277	64,611
06/03/17- 06/04/17	20812	48,817
06/04/17- 06/05/17	22923	53,365
06/05/17- 06/06/17	21822	44,120
06/06/17- 06/07/17	16567	35,503
06/07/17- 06/08/17	22105	56,021
06/08/17- 06/09/17	25268	61,969
06/09/17- 06/10/17	20882	49,388
06/10/17- 06/11/17	20044	45,187
06/11/17- 06/12/17	18590	39,539
06/12/17- 06/01/18	33337	63,329
06/01/18- 06/02/18	32922	61,406
06/02/18- 06/03/18	30322	61,395
06/03/18- 06/04/18	44529	60,298
06/04/18- 06/05/18	25293	44,661
06/05/18- 06/06/18	19747	38,567
<b>06/06/18- 06/07/18</b>	<b>18147</b>	<b>34,526</b>
06/07/18- 06/08/18	20693	38,050

Based on the table above, the average viewership range fluctuates between 18,147 views to 44,529. Notably, the viewership time shows stronger fluctuations ranging between 34,526 – 70,338 and does not correlate with the number of views respectively. The peak in the views is clearly seen during August 2016 with 216,804 number of views and 215,255 minutes the video was watched. The following Graph 3 represents views of the video during August 2016.



Graph 3. Viewership of the channel during 06/08/16-06/09/16 (VidIQ)



Graph 4. Viewership of the channel during 06/02/16 – 06/03/16 (VidIQ)

There are two visible sharp fluctuations, the first one starts on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and lasts until February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016, with its pick on Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> reaching 40,263 views, which is 8 times more than the average amount of views on a daily basis during this month. The second rapid growth starts on Thu, Aug 11, 2016, and is at its pick on Aug 12, 2016, and comes back to the average after Mon, Aug 14. Notably, the first fluctuation lasts a total 9 days, whereas the one in August takes place roughly 3 days. More than that, according to the Graph 3, the fluctuation in August has more of a short-term effect, with views stabilized back to an average amount before August 11<sup>th</sup>, whilst the sharp increase during February 12<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> (Graph 4) has more of a long-term effect, with the number of views increased by around 40%.

## 7.2 YouTube Analysis

Based on the above statistical analysis, YouTube was analyzed in order to find out what kind of activity may have been a possible boost for song viewership. Graph 4 represents the

growth that most likely happened due to the “Tasty Guy” show music product placement (previously stated reason 2), as the date of the show release matches the result on the table (6). Moreover, after looking into YouTube information, the channel named “구빠” has published a lyric video for the song in the Korean language on January 30<sup>th</sup> 2016. The video currently has 360,550 views and 990 likes. Following that, on February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the song was published on a channel named “How Choi” without any changes to original video and gained 27,519 views and 138 comments.

Another channel “황황인혁” also published a video on Mar 24, 2015, without any changes to the original version, the upload has 622,667 views and 1,311 views. Although statistically, it was impossible to track the viewership of the song during this period via available tools, that upload might have a significant impact on song discovery. The oldest video found on YouTube was published on May 26, 2014, on a channel called “서든어택”(Sudden Attack) that currently has 202,515 subscribers, whilst the video has 20,426 views. The exact same video that was posted on this channel was reposted by another channel on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and has 6,811 views. The video edit showcases a gamer playing some game while listening to the song, eventually getting a good score and getting surprised, calling it a “magic” song. Consequently, these two videos can be considered an initial booster for long exposure, at least on the YouTube platform.

Although it was possible to track the relation of UGC on YouTube and some of the statistical fluctuations, it was noticeable that some of the content had a more visible impact than the other. For instance, unlike it was expected, the placement of the song in TV drama episode does not show any visible increase on YouTube viewership, as well as some supportive content does not represent the same impact as another, despite channel followers’ amount or another supportive factor. For example, the lyric video and slight sound edit uploaded by "comic studio channel" on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, that has 13,151 did not have any visible impact on viewership count of the original video.

That observation led to an opinion that not only YouTube, but other supportive local platforms may have played a vital role exposure as well.

### 7.3 Non-YouTube sources

The following table shows top 5 URL-addresses where Korean views came from within the period of January 2016 to July 2018, with websites being an information and entertainment platforms. Although it was hard to track the information more precisely due to the language barrier, some of the websites refer to gaming categories (Inven.co.kr) or has a humorous orientation – (todayhumor.co.kr, dogdrip.net). Some of the related posts were published as early as 2015, and the song on those websites is discussed in gaming blogs as background music. On both blogs and YouTube, it often goes together with such keywords as:

- BMG - background music;
- 게임 할 때 듣기 좋은 노래 - good song to listen to while playing the game;
- 아이템 뽑을때 들으면 좋은 노래 – a song to listen to while picking an “item”;
- 방송 – gaming background music.

Table 3. VidiQ analysis of the top 5 URL addresses from which Korean viewers came

URL - ADDRESS	VIEWS	VIEWING TIME (min)
ilbe.com	35190	25,778
todayhumor.co.kr	18895	12,660
inven.co.kr	8651	9,769
apeat.net	14722	9,375
dogdrip.net	11382	7,570

Moreover, while analyzing Korean search engine Naver, music category, the remix of the song was found. The uploader goes by MYCATMADEIT and the track was published on 27.04.2017 titles “제발 나와라 이제 – (feat Kanye, Sway).

To conclude, the statistical data from VidIQ and YouTube Insight analysis, when analyzed together and, most importantly, on time, can show a clear picture of the flows in User Generated Content and how various types of it can shift the viewership. Although some of the relations described above could be analyzed and explained logically with the utilized tools, some of the viewership fluctuations could not be connected to any certain user-created content, even though the numbers and graph clearly show that some sort of content has been a catalysator for a views sharp increase. Moreover, TV placements, despite the expectation to have a significant impact, does create exposure for the song, based on the comment mentions and statistical figures, however, do not directly result in higher viewership in a short-term, but rather support the continuity of it and bring further recognition.

Based on the research conducted, it appears clear that user-generated content from the gaming industry, although not the one that can be considered of a high quality, that was initiated in 2015 had a valuable impact on the song exposure not only on YouTube, but also on other Korean entertainment platforms, that led to the organic viewership growth and song recognition across the country, resulting in creation of song remix, advertisement offers and finally, TV show and drama series placements.

#### 7.4 Qualitative Data Classification

In order to support statistical finding commentary data has been analyzed commentary data has been viewed, analyzed and thematized into 3 categories:1) Gaming 2) Humorous comments 3) Other

Table 4. Random sampling commentary translation (YouTube)

Gaming Theme	Humorous Comments	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Korean gamers like this song – 1 year ago</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>남친아 재발 나와라..태어나긴한거니..- boyfriend please come out, I was</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>몰ponsored 이노래 틀었더니 부모님이 나오셨습니다.. - I listened to that song while hiding</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 배그에서 어떤애가 건물에 숨어 있길래 이노래 틀었는데 나옴 – Whoever is hiding in the building in "Battleground" you listen to this song and they come out – (116 likes, 6 replies, 11 months ago)</li> <li>• 우레좀 나오게 해주세요 – “name of Battleground gaming character” please come out</li> <li>• 감사합니다 덕분에 24 팩 3 전설 1 황전뒀습니다 – thank you. Because of you 24 packs and 3 legends opened (1 year ago, 3 likes)</li> <li>• 전설스킨 뜨게 해주십셔 나와라 – legend skin open my eyes and come out (142 likes, 7 comments, 1 year ago)</li> <li>• 이 노래때문에 무기 계속 터진다 듣지마 – do not listen to the song weapons are always popping up (65 likes, 5 comments, 2 years ago)</li> <li>• 이 노래 듣고 ssr 뿔었습니다. 。 믿습니다 나와라송 – listen to the song and ssr came out. I believe in na wan ray song</li> <li>• Korean gamers like this song. (1 year ago, 23 likes)</li> <li>• 제발 하스 전설좀 나오게 해주세요 – Please make the Hass Legend come out (18 likes, 2 years ago)</li> </ul>	<p>born and what have you done... (1day ago, 10 likes, 3 comments)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 변비 때문에 이 노래 틀고 볼일을 보러 갔는데 바로 나왔습니다 - Played this song because of constipation and went to see, it all came out (640 likes, 40 comments; 2 years ago)</li> <li>• 화장실에 들어간사람이 안나올때 트는 음악 – this song is for people who are going to the toilet to listen (73 likes, 1 year ago)</li> <li>• 제발 여자친구 생길수있도록 나오게 해주세요 – please find me a girlfriend</li> </ul>	<p>my phone and my parents came... (101 likes - 1 year ago)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many Korean love this song. because this song`s pronunciation is similar to Korean pronunciation "please show up" they wish to get something good. this song is good at wishing something good turn up</li> <li>• 외국 노랜데 댓글은 죄다 한국인이여 ㅋㅋㅋ – it`s a foreign song but sounds like Korean</li> <li>• 김과장보고왔음 ㅇㅈ? – Who is here from Manager Kim drama? (45 likes, 2 comments)</li> <li>• Na wan ray~ is heard like 'I want you to come out' as Korean pronunciation to Korean</li> <li>• 이번 기말고사 점수 전과목 100 점 나와라 – this final exam result please be straight 100point</li> <li>• 메시뜨게해주세요 – open Messi`s eyes</li> <li>• Many Korean listen to this song when they are in a restroom for No.2</li> <li>• 촛불 문화제때 사용하면 딱좋겠네요 – it would be good if they used it for candlelight cultural festival (98 likes, 9 comments, 2 years ago)</li> <li>• 진짜 의미가 궁금하네요ㅋㅋ 곧 시험인데 제가 아는 문제만 나와라 나와라 나와라이요 제발 나와라 ㅋㅋㅋ성지순례합니다 – oh I really want to know the lyrics! This exam please come out only those questions that I know (21hours ago)</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>이 노래 끝까지 들을테니 제발 몸이 다시 건강해져서 예전에 하던 일들 다시 시작하게끔 해주세요!!! 더 이상 아프기 싫어요 – I have listened to this song until the end please my body be healthy again, let me do the jobs I planned to do, I hate being sick even more (posted a few hours ago)</li> </ul>
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The table above consist of total 25 comments different by publication date and amount of activity generated. The comments represent the main topics users discussed or commented on. As it can be seen from the table, around 50% of the total comments (2,741) on 10/12/18 consist of gaming language slang and terminology, making it a significant group as it was stated previously in the research. Notably, comments often relate to wishing for good exam results or finding a girlfriend or boyfriend. The vast majority of YouTube commentary is just citing the lyrics in Korean and expressing surprise by the lyric's resemblance to the Korean Language.

It is also worth mentioning that throughout the entire period starting from the first comments, there has not been a significant change in commentary nature, and an only little percentage of comments were indicating which source they came from, which were repetitive to some extent.

Based on the nature of comments it also becomes clear that majority of the active listeners are male in their 20s, university age.

## 7.5 Case Analysis with the Product Life Cycle Theory

Finally, the position of the Na Wan Ray song in Korean market can be also classified by the classical theory of the international product life cycle (IPLC). The theory is defined by Investopedia dictionary as follows: “The product life cycle describes the period of time

over which an item is developed, brought to market and eventually removed from the market. The cycle is broken into four stages: introduction, growth, maturity, and decline (Investopedia, 2017) To put it into music industry perspective, the song can be classified as a stage of maturity when it has already been introduced to a market and showed stable growth without a sign of decreasing trend.

There are 2 possible ways of future song performance. Firstly, it can move towards stage 4 - decline. As the song was already in the market for more than a year, it can become an “outdated joke” and decrease in use among social cycles. That effect is similar to the songs which are played so often they become annoying for listeners. Secondly, it can restart a product cycle, i.e. in a form of another version of the song, cover or remix, which would expand beyond current humorous state or change in its nature.

To conclude, the main factor that distinguishes the analyzed song from many others is the fact of language resemblance, which is the most significant reason for the song's success specifically on the Korean market and not any other.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

The presented research was aimed at studying the impact of User Generated Content on a song performance on YouTube in order to help the labels to understand how to benefit from UGC marketing campaign. The theoretical part of research includes the thorough analysis of the YouTube platform in connection with the music industry. The findings of the current paper underline the importance of viewing YouTube placement as a promotional mechanism for artists, with the main objective to get exposure and visibility, rather than a financial benefit.

The statistical analysis provided a clear picture on the process of the song discovery on YouTube as well as proved the significance of UGC on the YouTube platform, specifically reuploaded, lyric-generating, and edited content. However, on the contrary to prior

assumptions, the product placement in TV drama had less impact on generating YouTube activity than a shorter placement in TV shows, although both had implied a humorous origin of the song.

Within around 9 months period of analyzing the viewership statistics and song exposure on YouTube platform and in Korean entertainment industry, it was possible to examine the natural way of song getting recognition and appearing on a traditional media sources such as TV channels, and on top pages in humorous blogs of Korean search engine Naver. As a result of the examination and findings gathered whilst the research was conducted, the song naturally gained popularity due to the positive effect of UGC. As a conclusion, the investment of Walboomers record label in UGC campaign is not a necessity and therefore it is not recommended. The presented research is suggested to be used as guidance for a future project of the same nature.

Lastly, the research process has shown that analysis of social accounts on a weekly or even daily basis can bring an inevitable value and provide a label with knowledge and possibility to act in a timely manner to enhance and coordinate trends in YouTube viewership.

The technological incapacity and one platform orientation can be considered as a main weak point of the research and would be recommended for analysis in the future related studies.

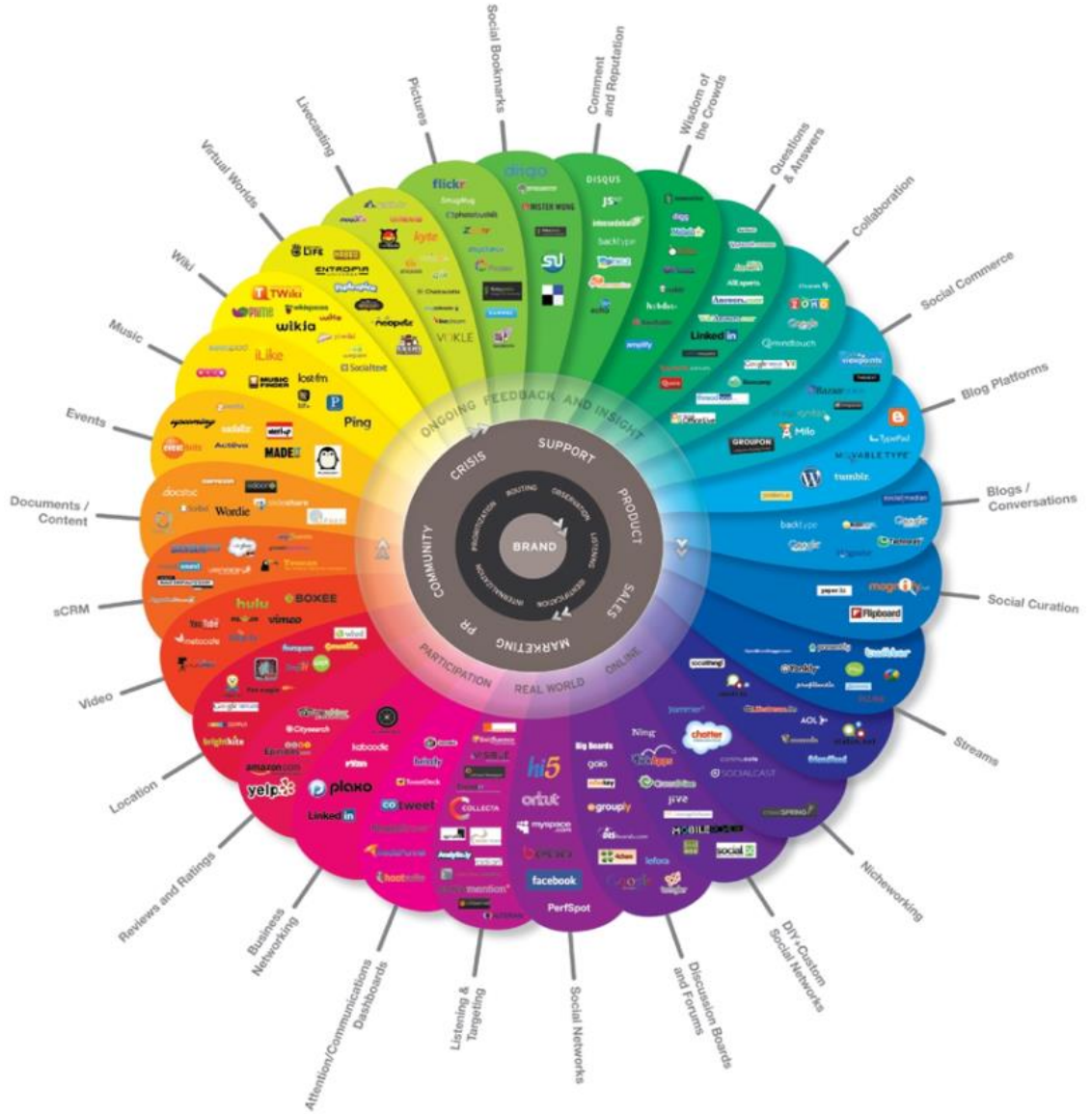
One platform VidIQ and free statistical data on YouTube, despite providing valuable information, lack the audit tools for external mentions of the song. Taking into account the late timing of the analysis, it appeared impossible to efficiently track the origins of many sources. Moreover, language barrier and the unfamiliar Asian websites systems made a process complicated. In order to get a deeper understanding, it is advised to use more advanced software that would enable wider collection of data.

In addition, the following researchers could focus on combining the analysis of one platform (YouTube) with sales-oriented platforms, such as Google or apple music sales for the song, or the platform that is more relatable to a certain country/ region of conducted analysis. That data would enable to draw a correlation between viewership and it' impact on sales.

Another interesting area for future research can be to find a song that gained popularity due to a lyrics resemblance to some foreign language. Understanding the resemblance of the sounds and public behavior can provide music producers with a deeper perspective on audience' listening experience.

APPENDIX 1.

CONVERSATION PRISM. 2008. SOLIS B., JESS3



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