

Providing Value to the Reader in Successful Beauty Blogs

Maija Haka



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| Author Maija Haka | |
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| <p>Blogs are a form of user-generated content online used to share information about a variety of topics. The value provided by blog content can be related to either improving work, learning/life performance or engaging in fun and entertainment. This thesis focuses on blogs that discuss cosmetic products, skincare, hair and makeup, something commonly known as beauty blogs. They have become an important source for consumers who are looking for information about beauty products online.</p> <p>The primary objective of this thesis was to identify the different types of content appearing in beauty blogs and provide detailed descriptions of each. The secondary objective was to explore the different values that readers find in beauty blogs, and thus gain a more comprehensive understanding of beauty blog content. The text and photo content of 50 blog posts from four successful beauty blogs was analysed, leading to research material consisting of 200 blog posts. The analysed posts were published between January and March 2018; the data were collected in April 2018.</p> <p>A qualitative content analysis was performed on the research material to address the primary thesis objective. A coding frame that consisted of categories representing different elements of content in beauty blogs was created, and the research material was segmented into short units that were coded under the categories of the coding frame. Eventually, this generated information about how the different content elements were combined in blog posts. Through analysing frequently appearing combinations of categories, 15 different beauty blog content types were identified. These include sharing beauty-related information and advice, descriptions of the blogger's beauty habits and discussion about beauty products.</p> <p>The value provided by beauty blog content was examined by reflecting on the identified content types with regard to previous research on blog content value. The main discoveries were that beauty blogs enable more effortless purchasing of cosmetic products, reduce the risk of unsuccessful purchases and solve problems related to skincare, haircare, makeup application and hair styling. In addition, they offer inspiration for experimenting with new products and creating different makeup looks and hairstyles.</p> <p>The results of this study can be useful for cosmetic companies and marketing agencies advertising on beauty blogs by supporting the efficient planning and implementation of marketing campaigns. Beauty bloggers can utilise the findings in planning and possibly improving their content.</p> | |
| Keywords Beauty blogs, qualitative content analysis, content value | |

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1 Introduction

Through the rise of user-generated content online, blogs have become a remarkable channel for sharing information. Blogs are a communication tool that anyone can use to discuss any topic they like or demonstrate their expertise in a certain field. In comparison to traditional media, such as newspapers, magazines and television, blogs offer rapid and real-time updates, interaction between the blogger and the readers and a personal touch, as bloggers frequently let their personality show in their content. Bloggers have also gained importance as intermediaries between consumers and businesses as they have influence over a wide audience that finds them relatable and trustworthy, which companies working with bloggers aim to utilise in their marketing. Building a popular and successful blog typically is a long-term project and requires high-quality content that is valuable to the readers. (Aller Media & Kopla 2014; Courtenay-Smith 2016, 36 & 39; Du & Wagner 2006, 10–11; Forbes 2016, 79–80; Hsu & Lin 2008, 65–66 & 72; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 14)

Beauty blogs are blogs that focus on discussing cosmetic products, sharing beauty advice and makeup tips as well as featuring photos of different makeup looks. They have become an important source for consumers who are looking for product recommendations and information about beauty products online. (Bianchi 2016; Daniluk 2016, 9; Kauraniemi 2017, 9 & 23–24; Kroll 2015, 18 & 75) The primary motivation for this study was to explore in more detail how beauty products are discussed and knowledge about beauty-related topics is shared online. Typical beauty bloggers are ordinary consumers enthusiastic about makeup and skincare, but also numerous professional makeup artists have started their own beauty blogs. Both types of beauty bloggers have vast amounts of expertise to share with their readers, so the secondary motivation for this study was to learn how readers can benefit from reading beauty blogs.

User-generated content about beauty and cosmetics is a topical phenomenon, as creators producing makeup tutorials, photos of makeup looks and product reviews have grown wide audiences especially on YouTube and Instagram. For example, professional makeup artists publishing popular beauty-related videos on YouTube include Wayne Goss, Sam and Nic Chapman and Lisa Eldridge, who have around 3,71, 2,16 and 1,95 million subscribers on YouTube respectively (Chapman & Chapman n.d.; Eldridge n.d.; Goss n.d.). These content creators are disrupting both traditional media and advertising, as they have gained influence over the behaviour, opinions and purchase decisions of a large number of consumers.

Beauty blogs are part of this phenomenon, even though individual beauty bloggers typically are not as visible as YouTube or Instagram personalities. Additionally, the popularity of blogs is more difficult to measure than simply looking at numbers of followers on different social media platforms. However, a large number of well-established beauty blogs that loyal readers rely on when looking for advice, inspiration or product reviews exist. The combination of text and photos on blogs, as well as the possibility to include video content, forms a medium particularly suitable for sharing in-depth information about various topics, including product reviews and makeup tutorials. This offers a lot of possibilities for providing value to the reader, which supported the decision to focus this study on beauty blogs. However, a similar analysis could be implemented on beauty-related YouTube videos as well.

Earlier studies on beauty blogging have approached the topic from a variety of viewpoints, including beauty blogs as marketing tools (e.g. Karlsson 2015; Toivanen 2011), the influence of beauty bloggers on their readers (e.g. Saitkasimova 2015; Wright 2017) and motivational drivers of beauty bloggers (e.g. Kroll 2015). However, aside from Gannon and Prothero's (2016) study on beauty blogger selfies as authenticating practices, the actual content in beauty blogs has been covered only lightly in previous research. Thus, a decision was made to define the primary objective for this thesis as describing typical content types appearing in beauty blogs. A comprehensive understanding of beauty blog content will also facilitate future research on beauty blogs. This part of the study was conducted by performing a qualitative content analysis on a total of 200 blog posts from four successful beauty blogs. This analysis provided information about different elements of content appearing in beauty blogs, and through studying how these elements were combined in individual blog posts, types of beauty blog content were identified. The aim was to discover content types that had not been discussed in previous research as well as provide a detailed description for each content type. Through reading these descriptions presented in section 4.2 of this thesis, a quick image of what different kinds of posts on beauty blogs typically consist of can be formed.

To make information about different types of content on beauty blogs more useful for applications in, for example, planning of beauty blog content or marketing campaigns on beauty blogs, a secondary objective of evaluating the value that each content type provides to the blog reader was introduced. This analysis involved reflecting on how the readers can benefit from each content type basing on previous studies on blog content value, which provided a more thorough understanding of beauty blog content than descriptions of the content types alone. The findings are discussed in section 5.1 of this thesis.

2 Literature review

The theoretical part of this thesis is divided into three sections. The first section provides an overview of blogging as a phenomenon, including the communal nature of blogging, blogging as a way to earn income and the requirements for a blog to become successful. The second section focuses on beauty blogging in particular to establish a basis for further analysis on the topic in this study. The final section summarises findings of previous studies on the value readers find in blogs as well as how the authenticity and credibility of the blogger affect the value provided.

2.1 The blogging phenomenon

Blogs are considered to be one of the major ways to share knowledge online (Hsu & Lin 2008, 66). They are websites in which the content consists of individual articles that are called posts or entries. Besides written text, the posts can also feature images and videos. Blogs are updated frequently, and when new posts are published, earlier content remains unaltered. The content in blogs is usually arranged in reverse-chronological order, with the most recent post on top. Each post contains details of when it was published, which enables the reader to assess whether the information is still relevant. (Kortesuo & Kurvinen 2011, 10; Nardi, Schiano & Gumbrecht 2004, 222; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 20; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 4). The term blogosphere is used to refer to the global network of interlinked blogs (Kortesuo & Kurvinen 2011, 82; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 20).

In a survey conducted among Finnish blog readers (N = 722), the most popular blogging categories were food, lifestyle and fashion and beauty. Strengths of blogs from the reader's point of view, especially in comparison to traditional magazines, include being free and easy to access online, having a personal touch, the ability to connect with the blogger directly, as well as rapid and real-time updates (Aller Media & Kopla 2014).

Blogs can be maintained either by an individual, a group or an organisation (Kortesuo & Kurvinen 2011, 10). They are an easy way for anyone to publish online material on any topic they desire (Hsu & Lin 2008, 65). Bloggers can be roughly divided in three categories: those who blog to grow their personal profile, those who blog about a specific subject and those who blog to boost their business profile (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 37). In their study, Hsu and Lin (2008, 72) showed that two main motivators for bloggers were helping others by sharing knowledge and gaining an online reputation by sharing thoughts and experiences with others.

Blog websites are typically either hosted by an external service, such as Blogger or WordPress, or self-hosted by the blogger on his or her own domain (Houghton 2015, 12; Kortesoja & Kurvinen 2011, 34–35; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 35 & 37–39). A blog can also be part of a blog a so-called 'blogging portal', which is a website that gathers together several blogs (Valtari 2017, 268). Finnish examples of blogging portals mainly aimed at young women are Indiedays and Lily, founded in 2010 and 2011 respectively (Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 111 & 117–118).

2.1.1 Communitality in blogs and blogs on social media

The communal nature of blogging is significant: instead of being purely informational sites, the essence of blogs is the blogger communicating directly to their audience and the audience responding through leaving a comment (Rowse & Garrett, 2012, 4). Thus, the comment section, where readers can interact with the blogger and each other, is considered an essential part of a blog (Kortesoja & Kurvinen 2011, 10; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 20). An active comment section is a sign of interaction between the blogger and the readers and helps build a sense of community, which again encourages the readers to repeatedly return to the blog (Rowse & Garrett 2012, 17). However, according to a survey conducted in 2014, only 8 % of Finnish blog readers regularly leave comments on the blogs they are following. Still, the study also showed the importance of the comment section, as 63 % of blog readers regularly read through the comment sections, their main motivations being to see what others think about the topic and to learn useful tips and ideas from the conversations. (Aller Media & Kopla 2014)

Community engagement does not take place only on the blog, but bloggers are typically present across several social media platforms. Bloggers use social media to get attention and create traffic to their blog, network and make new contacts, generate opportunities, have conversations with their audience and keep it engaged, as well as build a personal brand. The main social networks include Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest. The differences between these platforms affect what type of content works most efficiently on each of them. Instagram is ideal for visual content, so it works well for bloggers with a visual focus, e.g. fashion, food or lifestyle. A lot of bloggers also produce video content, such as video blogs, and YouTube is the most popular video platform. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 37, 211, 219 & 221; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 68; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 135, 149 & 154)

2.1.2 Bloggers as influencers and blog monetisation

The term 'influencer' is often used in the context of bloggers, as they have influence over their audience, a group of potential buyers, which makes them important to businesses and brands (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 36). The most common roles influencers consider themselves to have are sharing their experiences and feelings, being experts in their field and provoking discussion (Manifesto 2018).

Blogs are a way for anyone to showcase their expertise and personal profile, thus creating networks and advancing professional goals (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 39; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 14). Closely related to this is personal branding: what the blogger is known for and what differentiates him or her from others. As opposed to business brands, a personal brand is allowed to show imperfections, which can add to the appeal of the blogger by making him or her look more real. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 87, 89 & 101) Following a blog regularly can make the readers feel as if they know the blogger on a personal level (Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 60). Additionally, bloggers are typically seen as normal people, which makes them more relatable and trustworthy to everyday customers than actors and other celebrities traditionally used in advertising products (Forbes 2016, 79–80).

Bloggers can earn money through their blog by selling their expertise, personal brand and their position as an influencer (Valtari 2017, 268). The term professional blogger describes a person who aims to earn money through blogging as a profession. Income from blogs can be direct, such as revenue from advertising, sponsorships and affiliate marketing, or indirect, i.e. earnings from work opportunities that emerge as a result of successful blogging, for example book deals or speaking engagements. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 115–116 & 121; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 6–8) Blogging portals normally pay regular compensation to selected bloggers on their platform. Also, the portals represent bloggers in negotiations with marketers, help them gain visibility and offer professional support. (Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 111, 114 & 117–118) Starting to earn a living from blogging is a long-term process, and most professional bloggers worked for several years to gain an audience and reach their current position (Valtari 2017, 259).

In affiliate marketing, the blogger recommends products from a company to their audience and earns a commission when a sale is made. Bloggers can also offer marketing space to companies on their blog by selling banner ads, where the blogger typically charges either a fixed fee for a certain time period or a fee based on the number of times the advert appears on the blog. Bloggers can sell advertising space to companies directly, but they can

also use a third-party service, such as Google AdSense, that sells adverts on the blogger's behalf and charges a commission. In addition, several bloggers sell digital products, such as e-courses or e-books, utilising their personal brand and established position as an expert. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 116 & 118–119; Korteso & Kurvinen 2011, 107 & 110; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 136; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 72 & 81; Valtari 2017, 268 & 274–275)

An example of commercial content on blogs are 'co-creation' campaigns, where the blogger participates in an event organised by a business, e.g. a makeup masterclass arranged by a cosmetics company, and writes about it on her blog (Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 114). Companies can also purchase visibility on the blog in the form of one or several blog posts, the content of which is planned by the blogger and the advertiser together (Valtari 2017, 270). These kinds of sponsored posts appear as regular content on the blog, not as ads, which make them a popular form of advertising on blogs, especially as they are not affected by adblocking technology (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 132). A sponsored post should clearly state that it is an advertisement (Valtari 2017, 274).

Alongside with their blog, bloggers also use other social media channels for commercial content, such as publishing a photo on their Instagram account in collaboration with a business (Valtari 2017, 272). Blogs are the most important platform for commercial content for Finnish social media influencers, but Instagram has gained importance on that sector as well (Manifesto 2018).

2.1.3 Blog success factors

The basic requirements for a successful blog are regularly updated content and readers who frequently visit and interact with it (Hsu & Lin 2008, 65). Success can mean different things for different bloggers, but some typical metrics are fame, income and size of audience (Rowse & Garrett 2012, 161). Building a successful blog is not a quick process, but requires effort, consistency and determination, and possibly even several years of time (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 81 & 83). In their study, Du and Wagner (2006, 10–11) found that the success of a blog primarily depends on the value that it provides to its readers. Value creation in blogs is discussed in more detail in section 2.3 of this thesis.

Determinants of a high-quality blog include features that are related to the appearance, content and technical properties of the blog. A good design on the blog is essential for attracting and retaining readers, as well as for appearing professional. The blog should be

easy to navigate and function well technically. The overall high quality of a blog is necessary for engaging readers and achieving success. (Liao, To & Liu 2013, 622–623, 630–631; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 48)

The foundation of a successful blog is high-quality content that is useful and unique to its readers (Du & Wagner 20016, 10; Liao, To & Liu 2013, 623; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 51, 53 & 109). Successful blogs typically have a specific niche, or a defined range of topics, which sets the target audience and thus makes it easier for advertisers to see who they would reach through the blog. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 38). It also helps readers become loyal to the blog, as they can expect to find content relevant for them. Thus, having a focus helps the blogger establish a readership and monetise the blog more efficiently. (Rowse & Garrett 2012, 20 & 22)

Community has a great importance in the success of a blog, as a loyal community of followers supports the blog (Rowse & Garrett 2012, 131). The blogger should actively interact with readers on the comment section by replying to their comments, as active discussion is one of the key constituents of a successful blog. (Houghton 2015, 96; Valtari 2017, 253–254 & 268) Another tool bloggers use to make their audience stick to the blog is to advertise upcoming content by sharing what they are planning to write about. Bloggers can also arrange draws for the readers in cooperation with companies on their blog: the company donates prizes for the draw and gains positive visibility, while the blogger benefits by engaging her readers. (Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 67–68 & 140)

2.2 Beauty blogging

The content of a beauty blog typically consists of posts about beauty products, makeup tips and tutorials, makeup and nail looks, beauty advice, descriptions of shopping experiences and shopping tips. Beauty blogs may also feature posts on more personal and general lifestyle topics, but the main focus is on beauty. There are several types of posts about beauty products, including reviews, hauls, recent empties, monthly favourites and announcing new product releases that often also include basic information about the products, such as price, quality and functionality as well as how to use and apply them to achieve the best possible results. The products can be makeup products, skincare, hair-care and body care items, as well as beauty tools. Beauty bloggers share their thoughts about the products, often also discussing the related cosmetic brands as a whole. A typical post in a beauty blog contains both written text and photos. (Daniluk 2016, 9; Iduozee 2015, 40–41 & 91; Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10 & 23–25; Kedveš 2013; Kroll 2015, 18–19 & 57) Bloggers often also produce videos of, for example, product reviews or creating a

look, either to support written blog posts or independently (Kroll 2015, 58). Beauty bloggers may have a special interest, e.g. premium skincare products, on which the majority of their posts focus (Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10).

Photos on beauty blogs most commonly show products and different beauty looks (Daniluk 2016, 9; Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10 & 23–24; Kedveš 2013; Kroll 2015, 18–19 & 57). Beauty bloggers commonly use photos of themselves ('selfies'), for example, to show their face or part of their face, e.g. eyes or lips, before and after the application of a makeup product or the transition from a bare face to a complete makeup look. Posts featuring step-by-step photos of makeup application and captions describing what is being done are called tutorials. Tutorials also give instructions on applying a product and which application methods work best for each product. Bloggers also use photos referred to as 'swatches', where they show how a product and its colour look when applied on their skin, giving the reader a better idea of how the product will look in real life. The photos are used for the purposes of explication as well as evaluating products. (Forbes 2016, 82–83; Gannon & Prothero 2016, 1865–1866 & 1868–1869; Kauraniemi 2017, 31)

A haul is a post that features a list of products that the blogger has bought recently, usually together with a statement that she will publish a review of the products once she has gained more experience from using them (Kauraniemi 2017, 24). In a type of post called 'recent empties' the blogger gives her opinion on products that she has recently used up and gives recommendations to readers (Kroll 2015, 9 & 19). Some bloggers publish posts with a photo of their makeup of the day (called face of the day or FOTD) or nails of the day (called NOTD) and, below the photo, a list of all the products they have used to create that look (Kauraniemi 2017, 9).

Beauty bloggers and their audience come from a variety of backgrounds, but they all share an interest towards beauty-related topics. In Finland, most beauty bloggers are ordinary women from all around the country between the ages 20 and 35. The beauty blog community shows the communal character of the blogosphere, where bloggers support each other, mention each other's blogs in their posts and share information. Still, the community is quite close-knit and requires a lot of effort to be accepted into. (Kauraniemi 2017, 9, 12 & 22–24)

Fashion and beauty is the third most popular category among female Finnish blog readers (40 % of female survey respondents), after food blogs and lifestyle blogs (44 % and 42 % correspondingly) (Aller Media & Kopla 2014). Among Finnish social media influencers,

beauty is the second most popular topic across blogs, Instagram and YouTube (11 % of survey respondents), alongside travel and after lifestyle (35 %) (Manifesto 2018).

Beauty blogs have become an important source of information for customers who are looking for product recommendations and, simultaneously, bloggers have gained importance by widely influencing the purchase decisions made by consumers. Traditionally, beauty brands have used celebrities to promote their products. However, consumers have become sceptical of these celebrity endorsements, as they saw that the photos had been manipulated and the celebrities were being paid to advertise the products. Beauty bloggers are seen as an opposing force to celebrity endorsements, as product reviews written by bloggers are considered to be unbiased and truthful. As a result, marketers are focusing more and more efforts into utilising this medium to reach their customers. For example, companies frequently send free samples to bloggers with the intention of the bloggers featuring the products in their posts. Thus, the companies are aiming to benefit from the bloggers' influence on their audience. However, beauty bloggers do not only write about product samples sent to them by companies. (Bianchi 2016; Iduozee 2015, 41; Kroll 2015, 9, 61 & 75; Toivanen 2011, 25)

Competences related to beauty blogging are both technical (applying makeup and reviewing products) and expressive (make up artistry). In addition, beauty bloggers need to have competences common to all bloggers: technical (use of blogging platforms and producing photos) and expressive (writing and photography). (Gannon & Prothero 2016, 1864–1866)

Beauty bloggers are motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. They receive pleasure from expressing themselves creatively, for example through creating makeup looks and photography, on their blog and pursuing their interest in makeup and beauty, as well as trying new products and helping their audience. They enjoy being part of an online community that shares similar interests and receiving recognition from their readers and peers. They feel rewarded for their activities when they are approached by companies and see compensation and product samples they receive when working with businesses as forms of appreciation. (Kroll 2015, 56–57, 60, 63–65, 68–69 & 70–72)

2.3 Value creation in blogs

Creating value for consumers is a requirement for a blogger to become commercially successful (Pihl & Sandström 2013, 312). The most evident contributor to the success is the content of the blog, both written text and other media. Blog content value can be determined by measures such as the type of information provided, the frequency and volume of posts as well as the presentation and organisation of content. (Du & Wagner 2006, 10) The number of loyal followers and people who regularly interact with a blog are indicators of success for the blog. High-quality blog content should provide positive experiences, useful information and beneficial knowledge to the readers. (Shiau & Luo 2013, 10)

Blog readers have different motivations for reading blogs, such as wanting to be entertained or educated, keep up to date with current topics or feel as a part of a community. They find value in blog posts that they find useful and relevant to their needs. (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 169; Rowse & Garrett 2012, 51 & 178) For female blog readers, entertainment is the main value they receive through reading blogs, but finding tips and instructions, interesting and entertaining texts to read, as well as finding inspiration and ideas and hearing about trends are nearly equally important (Aller Media & Kopla 2014; Noppari & Hautakangas 2012, 47). Blogs are used for both utilitarian motivations, i.e. enhancing work, learning and life performance, and hedonic purposes, i.e. engaging in fun and entertainment (Liao, To & Liu 2013, 621 & 629).

The social value of a blog, i.e. the existing and potential social resources of a blog, also contributes to the value of the blog (Du & Wagner 2006, 11). Through following a blog, the reader gains a sense of belonging to a community (Hsu & Lin 2008, 72). Blogs are a channel for information sharing and socialising, offering the readers an opportunity to communicate with others who share similar interests and create enjoyment, positive experiences and a strong sense of belonging through interacting with them (Liao, To & Liu 2013, 630; Shiau & Luo 2013, 10). Blog readers follow the discussion in the blog comment section to see what others think and find new tips and ideas (Aller Media & Kopla 2014). Blogs with an active community sharing ideas and experiences in the comment section are more valuable to the reader than just the bloggers sharing theirs, as there is more diversity in the discussion (Rowse & Garrett 2012, 129).

2.3.1 Information, reviews and recommendations

Some of the main reasons for following blogs include looking for information and knowledge as well as opinions and recommendations (Kornejeva 2012, 45 & 51). People visit beauty blogs to keep up with trends, find information about a certain product and increase their knowledge about beauty products in general (Balabanis & Chatzopoulou 2018, 11–12; Daniluk 2016, 6; Paço and Oliveira 2017, 132). Blog readers particularly wish for illustrative, high-quality content and useful advice that is based on real usage experience. Objective product introductions, comparisons of different options as well as targeted and well-considered product recommendations with practical tips for use are also seen as useful. (Ranta 2015, 98–99)

There is a wide variety of cosmetic products available and it would be too expensive and time-consuming for an individual consumer to evaluate all of them. Thus, it is considered useful when bloggers introduce the newest trends, try products they have received from different companies and estimate who they would be suitable for. Also, if the blogger has similar skin issues as the reader, the reader can find solutions to their problems through reading about the blogger's experiences with different products. (Ranta 2015, 113)

As consumers' awareness of the variety of different alternatives available increases, they demand more and more inventive technologies, ingredients and products in the beauty industry. Consumers know what they want from a beauty product and want to find products that best fulfil their needs. They also wish to know about product ingredients and their effects. Blogs are a way to share information in a shorter time scale than traditional media and in the form of quick-to-read blog posts, which gives the busy modern consumer an opportunity to quickly and effortlessly acquire the information they desire on a certain product. (Iduozee 2015, 40–41 & 91; Kauraniemi 2017, 24–25; Ranta 2015, 99) Useful product recommendations on blogs can decrease search time and cost along with improving the efficiency of evaluating between different alternatives (AlSaleh 2017, 34; Hsu, Lin & Chiang 2013, 81).

Consumers today put a lot of effort into reducing uncertainty and researching a product before making a purchase decision. Online consumer reviews have a major role in assisting consumers with the research of beauty products, as they give access to a large amount of peer opinions, experiences and evaluations. Reviews of products made by bloggers can be considered consumer reviews, as they usually test the products on themselves. (Iduozee 2015, 40–41 & 91; Riquelme & Saeid 2014, 13) According to a survey, 49 % of Finnish blog readers look for product reviews on blogs to support their purchase

decisions (Aller Media & Kopla 2014). Based on what they read on a blog, consumers can learn about the positive and negative aspects of a product as well as what to expect from it and thus determine if it is worth their money (Iduozee 2015, 40–41; Kauraniemi 2017, 24–25). Bloggers also often share discount codes to online stores, which can make the purchasing process faster or make it more attractive to try new products or services (Ranta 2015, 98–99).

2.3.2 Authenticity, credibility and value creation

As consumers have become sceptical about traditional advertisements due to possible special effects and Photoshop enhancements, blogs provide a sensation of a real person who is unedited and relatable (Iduozee 2015, 40–41 & 91). Consumers find bloggers they can relate to more trustworthy than traditional journalists and are thus more likely to follow their beauty advice and product recommendations. Beauty bloggers who are perceived the most genuine, for example in their product endorsements, are considered to be the most credible. (Wright 2017, 314–316)

Featuring sample products and using affiliate marketing is widespread in beauty blogs (Kroll 2015, 77). Blogs with a lot of commercial content can be controversial to the readers, as they are not certain if the bloggers are giving their honest opinion or if they are being compensated by a brand for mentioning their products. Recommendation posts with just links and discount codes can be considered too commercial by the readers, but their credibility is improved when the recommendations are useful and objective, the general quality of the post is high and the blogger is able to justify her statements through good and convincing argumentation. Bloggers with a genuine want to help their readers by providing useful information are considered more reliable than others who are believed to blog for their own personal advancement. (Colucci & Cho 2014, 118 & 120; Kauraniemi 2017, 25–26; Ranta 2015, 96–99 & 103) Losing authenticity in the eyes of their audience is a major concern for bloggers (Kroll 2015, 72). To retain their credibility, bloggers should consider the needs of their audience when practicing affiliate marketing and only promote products they can stand behind (Courtenay-Smith 2016, 101 & 117). To tackle a potential conflict of interest between receiving compensation and trustworthiness, bloggers also use transparency and self-disclosure as tools by stating whether they received products as PR samples or purchased them with their own money (Gannon & Prothero 2016, 1873–1874; Kroll 2015, 73).

The credibility of a product review increases when the information contained is relevant to consumer needs, based on facts, detailed and complete and when the reviewer does not appear to be paid for their recommendations. Consumers particularly appreciate reviews where the reviewer has personal experience from using the product and explains how it worked for her specifically, as that offers details about the product and its potential. Information on the reviewer is also important for the reader for assessing the credibility of the review, as cosmetic products are very rich in characteristics and their performance is highly dependent on personal features. (Filiari 2015, 1267; Iduozee 2015, 33 & 94; Riquelme & Saeid 2014, 14) Comprehensive reviews that describe both the positive and negative aspects of a product, with good arguments, advice and examples, are seen as more credible, as there is a reduced risk of a hidden marketing area compared to when only positive sides are highlighted (Iduozee 2015, 28 & 94 & Ranta 2015, 103).

In order to be credible and interesting to readers, a blog should not only contain commercial content (Ranta 2015, 100). Blogs that are completely independent of the brands they feature would likely be more credible than ones affiliated with brands, but the blogger would be able to capture little value. Conversely, only publishing commercial content would make a blog not unlike any traditional marketing channel, so less value would be created for the reader and thus there would be less value for the blogger to capture. Commercial bloggers aim to find balance between these two aspects. (Pihl & Sandström 2013, 319–320)

3 Research design and methodology

This section first defines the objectives, research questions and scope of this study. Next, a basic description of qualitative content analysis as a research method is given. Finally, explanations are given for how the material for this study was selected and collected as well as how qualitative content analysis was applied on this material.

3.1 Research objectives and research questions

The objective of this thesis is two-fold. First, a qualitative content analysis of four successful beauty blogs is conducted in order to identify and categorise different types of content in these blogs. Secondly, the findings of the content analysis are used to examine the value that the blogs provide to the readers.

Blogging is a timely topic, as the amount and significance of user-generated content is increasing. Still, research focused on the particular niche of beauty blogging is relatively scarce. The aim of this research is to give insight into the characteristics of beauty blogging as a phenomenon. The results will be potentially useful to the cosmetics industry, marketing agencies working with bloggers, academic researchers in the fields of communication, digital marketing and Web 2.0, as well as existing and aspiring beauty bloggers.

Based on the research objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What types of content exists in successful beauty blogs?

RQ2: What value does this content provide to the readers?

The qualitative content analysis produces a coding frame that consists of categories representing different elements of content in beauty blogs. Subsequent analysis then examines how these categories are typically combined in blog posts, which answers the first research question ('What types of content exists in successful beauty blogs?'). The second research question ('What value does this content provide to the readers?') is answered in the discussion section of this thesis by evaluating the value that each type of content brings to the reader, using information from previous research that was discussed in the literature review section.

3.2 Research scope

When choosing objects for the content analysis, only beauty blogs were considered. In this study, beauty blogs are defined as blogs where the majority of the content is focused on beauty-related topics (makeup, skincare, hair, cosmetic products). Non-beauty related content is coded as irrelevant in the qualitative content analysis.

Only written content and still images in actual blog posts are covered in this study. Other components of the blog sites, such as header, sidebar and blogger description are excluded from the analysis. Comment sections are also outside of the scope of this study.

Video content is not analysed, even if the blogger also produces videos herself or links videos created by others in their blog posts. Additionally, the blogger's social media channels (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.) are excluded from this study.

The research focuses only on the value that is provided to the reader through the content of the blog. The commercial value to businesses, for example to cosmetics manufacturers, is not covered. Furthermore, the communal value created through the interaction between the blogger and the readers is not analysed.

3.3 Methodology

One objective of this thesis was to identify and categorise different types of content in beauty blogs. For this purpose, qualitative content analysis was selected as the most suitable research method, as it is a method used to describe the meaning of qualitative material in a systematic way. Qualitative content analysis can be used to study various types of materials, including interview transcripts, textbooks, contracts, diaries, websites, entries on social network sites, television programs, newspaper articles and magazine advertisements. The material can be either verbal or visual. (Schreier 2012, 1–4)

In qualitative content analysis, successive parts of the material are assigned to the categories of a coding frame. This method differs from other qualitative methods for data analysis in that it does not aim at giving a holistic overview of the material. Instead, it is used to describe the material only in certain respects and from the angle specified by the research question. (Schreier 2012, 1 & 3–4) The benefit of content analysis is that it is an unobtrusive technique that can be applied on unstructured data, which enables preserving the conceptions of the original data source, which structured methods such as surveys or structured interviews largely ignore (Krippendorff 2013, 45–46).

Qualitative content analysis reduces and summarises the data by focusing on the parts of the material that are relevant to the research question and taking their meaning to a more abstract level. Parts of the material are coded as instances of a category in the coding frame, which enables comparing them with other parts. At the same time, the material is filtered by the coding frame and material not covered by the main categories and distinctions in the material not covered by the subcategories will no longer be visible after the analysis, leading to some of the specific and unique meaning being lost. Thus, a balance between preserving the unique features of the content and allowing a certain degree of comparison should be found when using the method. The strength of qualitative content analysis is that it allows describing and classifying large amounts of qualitative data. (Schreier 2012, 31, 33, 61–62 & 80–82) This makes it also particularly suitable for analysing online material (McMillan 2000, 81).

The coding frame is built around the selected key aspects in the content, which are called the dimensions or the main categories of the coding frame. These are usually derived from the research question. After the main categories are specified, subcategories are formed to identify how the selected key aspects are discussed in the material. Subcategories of the same main category should be mutually exclusive. The subcategories can be based on what is already known about the topic (deductively) or they can be formed in a data-driven way (inductively) from the research material. It is possible to combine both methods when building the coding frame. There is no pre-defined structure for the coding frame, but the construction of the frame is based on the research question and decisions made by the researcher. A data-driven way to build the coding frame is particularly appropriate if the research goal is to describe the material. (Krippendorff 2004, 132; Schreier 2012, 59–61 & 87)

The unit that has been selected for the qualitative content analysis is referred to as the unit of analysis. For example, when analysing interviews, each interview is defined as one unit of analysis. The units of analysis are segmented into units of coding, which are the most basic elements of the material that can be meaningfully interpreted with regard to the categories of the coding frame. During segmentation, units of coding are isolated from their surrounding contents. However, to interpret the meaning of units of coding, information about their context is required. For this purpose, the context unit is defined as the portion of surrounding content that is required to interpret the meaning of a particular unit of coding. In the case of an interview, for example, the context unit could be the preceding interview question, the full answer of the interviewee or earlier parts of the interview. Irrelevant material in the research data, i.e. material that does not have a bearing upon the

research question, should be left out from the analysis. (Boyatzis 1998, 62–63; Krippendorff 2004, 101; Schreier 2012, 61–62, 80–82, 130–131 & 133)

Normally, once the coding frame is complete, a trial coding is performed using part of the research material, after which the coding frame is adjusted if necessary. After the trial phase, the main coding is done on the full research material using the final coding frame. Once all research material has been coded, the qualitative content analysis is complete. However, the coding focuses on the meaning of each unit of coding, but research questions normally relate to units of analysis. Thus, the results from the qualitative content analysis typically need to be transformed to the level of the units of analysis to enable answering the research question. This can be done by using data matrices to compare the units of analysis with each other. (Schreier 2012, 146, 197 & 207–208)

Section 3.6 of this thesis describes how the coding frame for this study was built and applied.

3.4 Case blogs

As cases for the empirical study, a sample of four successful and well-established beauty blogs was selected: Linda Hallberg, Miia Johansson, Nude and Temptalia.

As the first objective of this thesis was to describe different types of content in beauty blogs, the case blogs were selected so that each of them had a different focus to enable sufficient variability in data for the qualitative content analysis. The second objective of this thesis was to study the value that beauty blogs provide to their readers. As both quality of content and value created for the reader are major factors contributing to the success of a blog (Pihl & Sandström 2013, 312; Du & Wagner 2006, 10), it was reasonable to assume that elements providing value to the reader could be found in the content of the case blogs, which had already proven to be successful.

According to Kuula (2011, 188–189), blogs can be ethically used as objects of research without permission from their authors. However, the names and other personal details of the authors should be treated with caution. In this study the focus was on the content of the blogs themselves, not on the bloggers, so there were no ethical issues in this respect.

For the purpose of this study, each blog was given a number that will be used later on in this thesis to refer to the blog. Short descriptions of all four blogs are given below.

Blog 1: Linda Hallberg¹ is a Swedish professional makeup artist and the most popular beauty blogger in Sweden (Matilainen 2016; Törnblom 2017). In her self-titled blog she posts pictures of creative makeup looks and lists of the products she has used to achieve these looks. In addition, she publishes other types of beauty-related content, including product reviews. Her posts are usually written in both Swedish and English. In this study, only content written in Swedish was analysed.

Blog 2: Miia Johansson² is a Finnish professional blogger and makeup artist (Johansson n.d.), whose self-titled blog features posts about a variety of beauty-related topics, focusing especially on makeup advice and product tips. The blog has changed name after the research material was collected on 9 April 2018, at which point the blog was called 'Miik-kulaisen'.

Blog 3: Nude³ is a beauty blog written by a Finnish professional blogger and beauty journalist (Naakka n.d.). The typical content of the blog consists of product reviews and other posts related to cosmetic products, as well as hair and makeup tutorials. The blog was awarded the title of the best beauty blog in the Blog Awards Finland 2016 (The Blog Awards Finland 2016) and was the most visited beauty blog in Finland in 2017 (Rantala 2017).

Blog 4: Temptalia⁴ is an American beauty reference and resource website consisting of a blog, a database of makeup products and communal features. The blog content is written by one author, the Editor-in-Chief of the website, and mainly consists of detailed reviews of makeup products. (Temptalia n.d.)

3.5 Data collection

As material for the study, 50 latest posts (from 31 March 2018 backwards) in each of the four case blogs were analysed, leading to a total research material of 200 individual blog posts. This was only a fraction of all the posts in the case blogs, but as the objective of this study was to describe the typical and thus most frequent content types in beauty blogs, this amount of material was estimated to be sufficient.

¹ <http://lindahallberg.se/>

² <https://miiajohansson.com/>

³ <http://www.lily.fi/blogit/nude>

⁴ <https://www.temptalia.com/>

In her study discussing the challenges of applying content analysis to online content, McMillan (2000, 85) notes that the fast-paced changes in the content of websites make it necessary that data is collected within a short period of time. Even though the nature of blogs differs from most other websites in that previously published text and photos should remain unchanged over time (Kortesuo & Kurvinen 2011, 10), it is still possible that changes are made or the whole blog is taken down over the duration of the study. Thus, it was necessary to store the data in a form that would remain the same.

In this study, all text and photos from the posts to be analysed were copied into Microsoft Word. A separate document was created for posts from each of the case blogs, and the titles and publishing dates of the posts were noted down. Copying the posts into a word processing software was a practical solution considering the research method, as it was necessary to note the units of coding among the text. When it is necessary for advancing research aims, making copies of online material for research purposes is allowed for students of Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences, in the extent that is required by the research objective (Kopiosto n.d., 2–3). The information about the layout of the blog posts was lost, but this was not an issue, as the research only focused on the actual text and pictures.

McMillan (2000, 92) also highlights the importance of specifying when the data was collected, as the exact timing may carry importance if changes take place on the site. The data collection dates for this study are indicated in table 1. The time period over which the 50 posts to be analysed were published was different for each blog, as their posting frequencies varied. These periods are also noted in table 1.

Table 1. Publication periods and collection dates of analysed posts from each case blog

| Blog name | First analysed post published on | Last analysed post published on | Data collected on |
|------------------|---|--|--------------------------|
| Linda Hallberg | 9 March 2018 | 31 March 2018 | 9 April 2018 |
| Miia Johansson | 4 January 2018 | 31 March 2018 | 9 April 2018 |
| Nude | 6 January 2018 | 31 March 2018 | 10 April 2018 |
| Temptalia | 24 March 2018 | 31 March 2018 | 10 April 2018 |

3.6 Research design

After the material for the analysis had been selected and stored, it was first segmented into units of coding. A basic structure for the coding frame was built deductively based on information from previous studies on beauty blogs, after which it was completed inductively by creating categories for units of coding that did not fit a pre-existing category. Once the coding frame was completed, it was first tested on part of the material and adjustments were made where required. Finally, the remaining material was coded using the final version of the coding frame and the meaning of each unit of coding with regard to the coding frame categories was determined. The contents of each step are summarised in figure 1 and explained in further detail in sections 3.6.1–3.6.4.

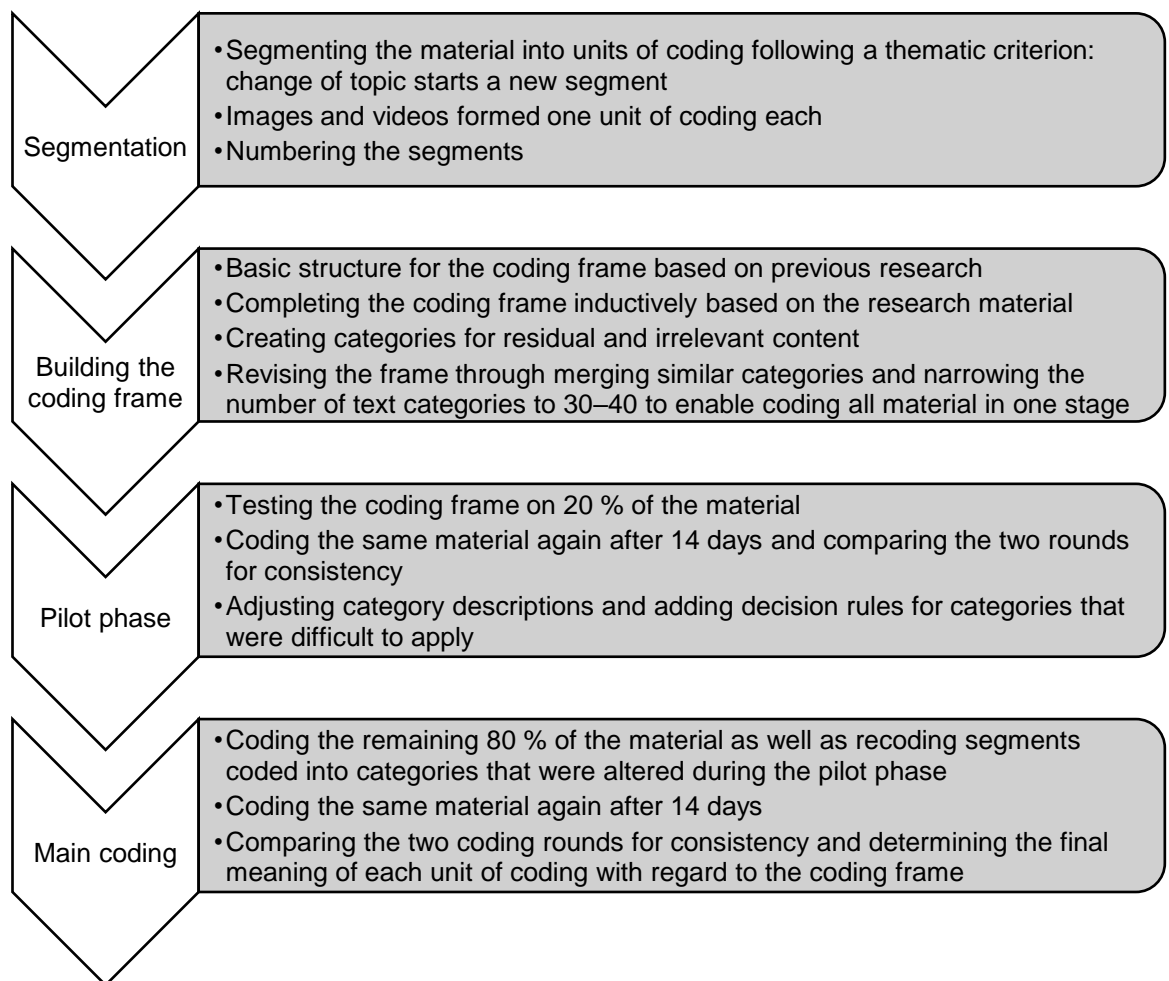


Figure 1. Steps of the qualitative content analysis process

3.6.1 Segmentation

In this study, each blog post corresponded to one unit of analysis. The blog posts were segmented into units of coding following a thematic criterion, as instructed by Schreier (2012, 136–137). Each unit of coding corresponded to mentioning or discussing one topic, and a change of topic indicated the beginning of another unit. The topics were defined so that each of them would fit exactly one subcategory of the coding frame (Schreier 2012, 138). However, in this study the coding frame would be partly built inductively from the material itself, and thus the exact structure of the coding frame was not known when the material was segmented. Thus, when first segmenting the material, knowledge from previous studies on beauty blogs as well as assumptions made by the researcher were used to estimate how the categories of the coding frame would eventually be formed. In qualitative content analysis, developing the coding frame and segmenting the material into units of coding are closely interrelated (Rustemeyer 1992, in Schreier 2012, 132). When the meaning of a unit of coding was not otherwise clear, the rest of the blog post was used as context unit.

Besides written text, also still images in the blog posts were analysed. Each image acted as one unit of coding, according to Schreier's (2012, 144) instructions. Occasionally, the blog posts also contained pictures where several related photos were combined into one image file, e.g. when comparing different makeup looks. These image files were segmented as one unit of coding each. Similarly, videos embedded in blog posts were segmented as one unit of coding, but the content of the videos was not analysed further.

The segments were identified by numbers referring to the blog (1–4), the unit of analysis (i.e. a blog post) in that blog (1–50, starting from the newest post) and a number stating the position of the segment in a unit of analysis (the first segment of a unit of analysis was noted with number 1), e.g. 2.31.7. The segments were noted in the Word documents into which the blog posts had been copied. Post titles and publication dates, as well as any tags or categories the blogger used to organise her content, were excluded from the segments, as they were not objects of the content analysis.

3.6.2 Building the coding frame

Before starting the construction of the coding frame, the level at which the subcategories would describe the material was established, as instructed by Mayring (2014, 80–81). It was decided that the subcategories would give a general description of what was being said or being shown in a picture, without taking into account the particular point of view or other details. For example, there would be a category for opinions about a product, but it

would not be recorded if an opinion was positive or negative. Similarly, a category would be created for product recommendations, but the type of product recommended would not be specified. Separate categories would be created for text and photos. The content of videos was excluded from this study, but information about a post featuring a video would still be stored through creating a category for videos in the coding frame.

Deriving from the first research question of this study ('What types of content exists in successful beauty blogs?'), the main category of the coding frame is called 'type of content'. As no other aspects of the material were to be analysed in the qualitative content analysis, the one main category was sufficient. The subcategories were built by combining deductive and inductive methods. First, a preliminary structure for the coding frame was formed through creating subcategories for types of beauty blog content known from previous research discussed in the literature review (see appendix 1). This theory-based coding frame was then extended inductively based on the content of the case blogs by creating categories for types of content observed in the material that were not mentioned in previous literature. This was necessary, as the previous studies discussed beauty blog content only superficially, so further research was required to form a more comprehensive picture of content in beauty blogs.

The inductive subcategories were formed following a process described by Mayring (2014, 79–81). The material was worked through segment by segment, starting from segment 1 in post 1 on Blog 1, then moving on to Blogs 2, 3 and 4. At first, a category was created for the first relevant segment of the material that did not fit into the deductively formed categories. A short description was given to the category to characterise the material fitting this category. Then each subsequent section of the material was analysed and if it fell under an existing category, it was subsumed into this category. Otherwise, a new category was created. If, based on the research material, a category needed more differentiation, it was split into more detailed subcategories. For example, 'Sharing personal beauty routines' was renamed as 'Habits and preferences' and split into three subcategories ('Haircare and hair styling habits', 'Makeup habits and preferences' and 'Skincare habits'), as they each describe different aspects of beauty routines.

According to Schreier (2012, 91), the coding frame can be considered complete when processing more material does not lead to the creation of new categories. In qualitative research, this criterion is called saturation (Saunders & al. 2017). How much material is needed to build the coding frame depends on the how much variability there is in the material. For less diverse material, saturation may be reached after looking at 15–40 % of the data, but for more diverse material it may be needed to go through all of the material.

(Schreier 2012, 91) In this study, all material (50 posts from 4 case blogs each, a total of 200 blog posts) was processed during the inductive process, as this amount was still reasonably manageable for a single researcher. For Blog 1, new categories were found until the last analysed post and thus no saturation was reached. For Blogs 2, 3 and 4, saturation was reached at posts numbered 49, 46 and 14 respectively. For blogs analysed later, the saturation point was reached earlier, as a lot of the categories had already been discovered in the blogs analysed earlier.

During the inductive creation of the coding frame, it was noted that certain content types present in previous studies did not appear in the analysed blog posts, specifically personal care tutorials, monthly favourites (however, the bloggers mentioned their favourite products in different categories regularly over their posts, even though did not feature dedicated posts for monthly favourites) and recent empties. For clarity, these types of content were omitted from the coding frame used in this study.

The coding frame should also contain a category for miscellaneous content that has bearing with regard to the research question but does not fit the other categories, as it is possible that, while coding the material, the researcher will come across information that was not considered when the coding frame was created. Additionally, separate categories are not typically created for types of information that occur only once throughout the material, as the purpose of qualitative content analysis is to summarise the material. Instead, these aspects should either be subsumed under another category or be categorised as miscellaneous. (Schreier 2012, 93) For this purpose, the category 'Miscellaneous beauty-related topics' was included in the coding frame for this analysis.

As the focus of this study was on beauty-related content in the case blogs, material about other topics would not be relevant for answering the research questions. Following Schreier's (2012, 82) advice, a category for irrelevant content was created in the coding frame to handle this type of material. For photos, it was more difficult to define what would be considered irrelevant: for example, a photo could show the blogger in an everyday situation and the focus of the photo would not be on showing her makeup or hairdo. However, a reader will still see the makeup the blogger is wearing and may be inspired by it. For this reason, the coding frame for this study does not include a category for 'irrelevant' photos, but instead a category for 'miscellaneous' photos.

At first, the induced categories were made quite specific to not unnecessarily lose detail in the coding frame, as it was not yet known how many different types of content there would be in total. Once all material was processed, the coding frame was revised, and similar

and possibly overlapping categories were merged, as instructed by Schreier (2012, 117) and Mayring (2014, 81). After this phase, the coding frame contained 61 text categories, 14 photo categories and 1 video category. According to MacQueen, McLellan, Kay and Millstein (1998, 35), a coder can reasonably manage 30–40 categories at a time and if the coding frame has over 40 categories, the coding process should be split into stages. The text, photo and video material in this study were all coded separately, so the number of photo and video categories did not pose any issues in this respect. However, to make the research process smoother, the aim was to be able to code all text material in one stage and thus it was necessary to narrow the number of text subcategories in the coding frame to around 30–40. This number was expected to provide a sufficiently detailed description of the content in the case blogs while keeping the workload of the coding process reasonable.

When merging text categories to make the coding frame more compact, the different values provided by the content in each category, based on what was discussed in the literature review section as well as the researcher's considerations, were assessed in order to retain the distinction between the different values provided by the content in each category, merging only categories that would provide relatively similar value. For example, 'makeup tips' and 'makeup tutorials' were merged into one category, as they both teach the reader how to apply makeup. Categories that appeared only a few times throughout the material were merged into the category for miscellaneous beauty-related topics. The final coding frame for this study has 34 text categories, 14 photo categories and 1 video category. A diagram describing the structure of the coding frame is attached, see appendix 2.

In parallel to the construction of the coding frame, an Excel chart containing names and descriptions of all coding frame categories together with examples of segments belonging to each category was created (see appendix 3). The descriptions function as rules defining whether a segment of data should be coded under a given category during the coding process. The chart also contains data cells for possible decision rules, which are needed to avoid ambiguity in case there is conceptual overlap between two categories of the coding frame and a decision needs to be made under which of these categories a segment should be coded. (Schreier 2012, 95–97 & 102)

3.6.3 Pilot phase

The coding frame was significantly modified after it was first created during the inductive process, so it was necessary to code all segments again using the final coding frame (Mayring 2014, 81). When recoding the material, as the modified coding frame was now used, the segmentation was adjusted where necessary: if two consecutive segments were coded into the same category in the final coding frame, they were merged into a single segment. The numbering of the segments was adjusted accordingly. The codes were entered in a coding sheet, which is a spreadsheet where the first column on each line represents one unit of coding and the second column the category under which the unit has been coded (Schreier 2012, 157–158).

Before coding all material, the coding frame was first tested on a part of the material, as recommended by Schreier (2012, 146). This is done to assess the reliability of the coding frame before the coding is performed on all material (Neuendorf 2017, 172). It is important that the coding frame is tested on different kinds of research material and that all categories of the coding frame are tried during this phase to see that the coding frame indeed suits the research material and that there is no overlap between categories. Typically, a suitable amount of material for the trial coding is 10–20 % of all research material to balance between variability and workload. (Schreier 2012, 149–151) For this reason, 10 first posts from each of the four case blogs were selected for the trial coding, resulting in a total of 40 posts or 20 % of all material.

As the second step of the trial coding, following Schreier's (2012, 146) recommendation, the coding process was repeated on the same 40 posts after 14 days. The time interval between the first and second coding is required so that the researcher is unlikely to remember how all the units of coding were interpreted. A new coding sheet was created for the second round so that the codes assigned during the first round were not visible. On both rounds, it was noted if there were any difficulties with understanding category descriptions or deciding between subcategories. As instructed by Schreier (2012, 146), once the second round was finished, the two rounds were compared for consistency, i.e. if there were segments that were coded differently in the two rounds. This knowledge could then be used to see which categories had been difficult to apply and if adjustments to the coding frame were necessary. The trial coding, consistency check and adjustments to the coding frame together are called the pilot phase of qualitative content analysis (Schreier 2012, 146).

Out of the 897 segments coded during the trial coding, 49 segments (5,5 %) were coded differently in the first and second round. Reasons for discrepancies included typos as well as the researcher still learning to know the coding frame and not acknowledging full category descriptions in ambivalent cases. Based on knowledge acquired during the trial coding, category descriptions were made more detailed and a few decision rules were added for the categories where the differing codes occurred. However, as the coding frame worked well for 94,5 % of the pilot phase material, it was determined that no structural changes in the coding frame were required. As there were no larger issues with the coding frame, recoding the pilot test data once again was not required (Neuendorf 2017, 172).

There were two text categories ('Haircare information and advice' and 'Hair styling tips and tutorials') and three photo categories ('Before and after product application', 'Hair-style' and 'Steps of hair styling') with no codes during the trial coding. Ideally, all categories should be tested during the trial coding (Schreier 2012, 149–151). However, as the categories and category descriptions were created inductively, it was known that there were segments in the material that would be coded under these categories and that the descriptions should fit the material. Also, these five categories are distinct from the other categories in the coding frame, so there should not be any issues with overlaps. Thus, it was not considered necessary to extend the trial coding to further blog posts.

3.6.4 Main coding

The pilot phase was followed by the main coding, where a similar coding process was repeated on the remaining material using the final coding frame with the modifications made after the trial coding. As there were no major changes in the coding frame, it was not necessary to recode all material coded during the trial coding. As recommended by Schreier (2012, 199), only segments that were coded in categories where the category description was changed during the pilot phase were coded again. At this stage, the coding frame could not be modified any longer (Schreier 2012, 197).

In a similar way to the pilot phase, also the main coding was repeated on the same material after 14 days, after which the two rounds were compared, again to assess the reliability of the coding frame (Neuendorf 2017, 172; Schreier 2012, 198–199 & 202–203). During the main coding, 3418 units were coded, of which 195 (5,7 %) were coded differently in the two rounds. The pairs of categories for which the coding inconsistencies occurred most often were 'Favourites and product tips' and 'General opinion of a product' (13 times), 'Detail of a product' (photo) and 'Product in its packaging' (photo) (12 times), and 'Full makeup (and hair) look' (photo) and 'Steps of makeup application' (photo) (7 times).

To finish the qualitative content analysis, the meaning of each unit of coding with regard to the coding frame needed to be determined. For units of coding that were coded the same way twice during either the trial coding or the main coding, the meaning equalled the category of the coding frame under which they were coded both times. However, for units of coding where the codes differed, the final category under which these segments would be assigned had to be decided. (Schreier 2012, 202–203) For these units, carefully observing the category descriptions and decision rules, it was decided which category would be more accurate in describing them and thus was the category under which these segments were finally assigned.

4 Empirical findings

The qualitative content analysis produced information about the meaning of individual segments in the research material through assigning them to the categories of the coding frame. To form a more comprehensive understanding of the material and identify different content types in beauty blogs, the analysis was brought back to the level of the units of analysis, i.e. blog posts. Section 4.1 explains how the different content types were discovered from the data through analysing how different categories were combined in blog posts. In section 4.2, a detailed description of each discovered content type is given and section 4.3 explores differences in typical content between the four case blogs.

4.1 Data analysis and results

After the coding was finished, the results were summarised in a data matrix on an Excel sheet where each line of the matrix corresponded to one unit of analysis (a blog post) and the columns corresponded to the categories of the coding frame, as instructed by Schreier (2012, 208–209). It was recorded whether a post contained a certain category or not. Only the first occurrence was noted: even if a category appeared multiple times in a blog post, it would only be recorded once. This data matrix enabled the comparison of the content of the different blog posts with each other. The aim was to group blog posts by the categories they contained and identify different combinations of categories as different types of beauty blog content. Following the qualitative content analysis, this would summarise the data even further, as the results would be presented group by group, instead of describing them case by case, a single blog post at a time (Schreier 2012, 229).

The structure of the coding frame (see appendix 2) was used as a basis for identifying different content types, as it already illustrated different groups of content elements. Using the data matrix, the aim was to find groups of categories of the coding frame that frequently appeared together in blog posts and thus formed a type of content. For this study, 'frequently appearing together' was defined as a category being joined by another category at least 50 % of the times it appears in a blog post.

The analysis started with the first level of the coding frame, which contains categories for text, photo and video content. Table 2 displays the number of times these categories appeared in the research material, as well as the ratio of posts containing them out of all analysed blog posts. The table shows that all blog posts contained textual content, so it was decided that the focus of the analysis would be put on text categories. However, as photos may carry a meaning in differentiating types of content, a table of photo categories and categories that frequently accompany each of them was also created, see appendix 4.

This information was used to find photo categories that are closely connected to each content type, i.e. if a photo category was frequently accompanied by a certain content type in blog posts.

Table 2. Appearance numbers and frequencies of text, photo and video content in the analysed blog posts

| Category | Number of appearances | % of all blog posts (N=200) |
|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Text | 200 | 100 % |
| Photos | 182 | 91 % |
| Videos | 11 | 6 % |

The next step was to move the analysis to the subcategories of the 'Text' category. Table 3 lists these subcategories as well as their numbers of appearance and frequencies among all analysed blog posts. Out of these categories, 'Advice and information', 'Habits and preferences', 'Miscellaneous beauty-related topics' and 'Products' directly describe beauty-related content and thus are likely to be descriptive of beauty blog content. 'Captions for photos and videos', 'Commercial disclosures' and 'Links to other content' also describe the posts, but they do not necessarily carry beauty-related value and thus they were omitted from this stage of the analysis. The category 'Irrelevant' is for content that does not carry beauty-related value, so it was left out of the analysis for the same reason.

Table 3. Subcategories of the 'Text' category of the coding frame with their appearance numbers and frequencies

| Category | Appearances | % of all posts (N=200) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| Advice and information | 66 | 33 % |
| Commercial disclosures | 117 | 59 % |
| Captions for photos and videos | 30 | 15 % |
| Habits and preferences | 53 | 27 % |
| Irrelevant | 92 | 46 % |
| Links to other content | 82 | 41 % |
| Miscellaneous beauty-related topics | 58 | 29 % |
| Products | 146 | 73 % |

Out of the 200 analysed blog posts, 177 (89 %) contained at least one of the beauty-related text categories. Out of these 177 posts, 91 (51 %) contained two or more beauty-related text categories, which shows that there was a lot of overlap of the beauty-related text categories in the blog posts. This means that it would be difficult to find post types that are mutually exclusive, as different content types are often mixed. On the other hand, creating mutually exclusive post types would not be reasonable, as blogs are typically creations of individuals and there are no actual rules for how content can be mixed in blog posts. So, instead, it was decided to find descriptions for different types of blog content that do not

have to be mutually exclusive, meaning that a single blog post can be described by multiple content types. To learn which beauty-related text categories typically appeared together, it was analysed which other beauty-related text categories frequently accompanied each of them, using the data matrix containing the coding frame categories appearing in each post. These results are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Beauty-related text categories and the other beauty-related text categories that frequently appear together (over 50 % of times) with each of them

| Category | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Advice and information | Products (79 %) |
| Habits and preferences | Advice and information (58 %) Products (77 %) |
| Miscellaneous beauty-related topics | Products (72 %) |
| Products | - |

Table 4 again emphasises that the beauty-related text categories were strongly interlinked in the material. Especially the category 'Products' was prevalent in posts containing any of the other beauty-related text categories: for example, out of the posts that contained advice and information, 79 % also discussed products. The category 'Products', on the other hand, did not have any categories that consistently accompanied it, which means that it appeared in a lot of different combinations.

Next, a similar analysis was repeated on the subcategories of 'Advice and Information', 'Habits and preferences' and 'Products' to identify categories that frequently appeared together and, as a result, discover different beauty blog content types. 'Miscellaneous beauty-related topics' did not contain any subcategories, so this type of analysis was not needed in its case.

4.1.1 Advice and information

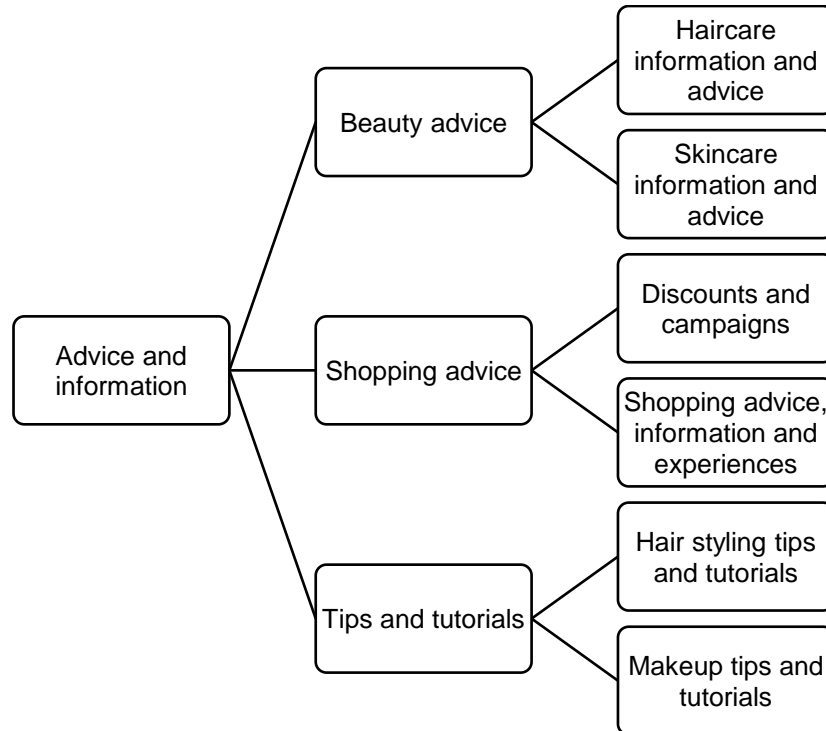


Figure 2. The category 'Advice and information' and its subcategories in the coding frame

'Advice and information' is divided into three subcategories that each have two further subcategories, as shown in figure 2. Using the data matrix containing information about categories in each analysed blog post, it was analysed that none of the subcategories frequently appeared together with the other five, so they all form distinct content types and thus there are six content types under 'Advice and information'. However, there were only two posts in the material that contained the content type 'Haircare information and advice', so it was decided to merge it into the 'Beauty advice' content type together with 'Skincare information and advice'. Table 5 lists these content types as well as the categories that frequently accompanied them, out of all categories of the coding frame.

Table 5. Content types containing advice and information and the coding frame categories that frequently accompany each type

| Content type | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|---|--|
| Beauty advice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (88 %) - Skincare habits (53 %) - Irrelevant (71 %) - Links to other content (65 %) - Miscellaneous beauty-related topics (65 %) - Favourites and product tips (65 %) - Targeted product recommendations (88 %) - Product availability and links to buy (59 %) - Basic product information (65 %) - How to use a product (65 %) - Product ingredients and production method (53 %) - General opinion of a product (65 %) - Product sensation and effect on skin and hair (76 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (88 %) |
| Shopping advice: Discounts and campaigns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (100 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (53 %) |
| Shopping advice: Shopping advice, information and experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (58 %) - Irrelevant (92 %) - Links to other content (58 %) - General opinion of a product (67 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (67 %) |
| Tips and tutorials: Hair styling tips and tutorials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irrelevant (64 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (64 %) |
| Tips and tutorials: Makeup tips and tutorials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (69 %) - Links to other content (69 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (58 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (58 %) |

It was also examined which photo categories were typically joined by the 'Advice and information categories' (see appendix 4). 'Comparison: Before and after product application', 'Comparison of different makeup looks' and 'Steps of makeup application' were frequently accompanied by 'Makeup tips and tutorials' (63 %, 100 % and 85 % of times respectively). 'Steps of hair styling' was accompanied by 'Hair styling tips and tutorials' 100 % of the times it appeared.

4.1.2 Habits and preferences

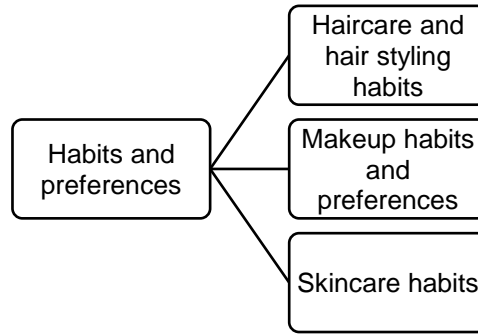


Figure 3. The category 'Habits and preferences' and its subcategories in the coding frame

'Habits and preferences' is split into three subcategories, that do not have further subcategories: 'Haircare and hair styling habits', 'Makeup habits and preferences' and 'Skincare habits', as shown in figure 3. None of them frequently appeared with either of the two other categories in the research material, so they form distinct content types. These content types as well as the categories that frequently appeared together with them are listed in table 6. Out of the photo categories, 'Steps of makeup application' was frequently accompanied by 'Makeup habits and preferences' (69 % of times).

Table 6. Content types describing beauty habits and preferences and the coding frame categories that frequently accompany each type

| Content type | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|---|---|
| Haircare and hair styling habits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irrelevant (80 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (60 %) |
| Makeup habits and preferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (59 %) |
| Skincare habits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skincare information and advice (60 %) - Commercial disclosures (73 %) - Irrelevant (53 %) - Links to other content (73 %) - Favourites and product tips (60 %) - Targeted product recommendations (73 %) - Product availability and links to buy (60 %) - Basic product information (67 %) - How to use a product (53 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (60 %) - General opinion of a product (60 %) - Product sensation and effect on skin or hair (73 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (93 %) |

There are a lot of similarities between the categories that frequently accompany the content types 'Skincare habits' and 'Beauty advice' identified in the previous section, which is explained by the fact that they often appear together: 'Skincare habits' was accompanied by 'Beauty advice' 60 % of the times it appeared. However, there is a conceptual difference between these types, as 'Skincare habits' describes how the blogger takes care of their skin and deals with the possible skin issues they have, without giving advice for what the reader should do.

4.1.3 Products

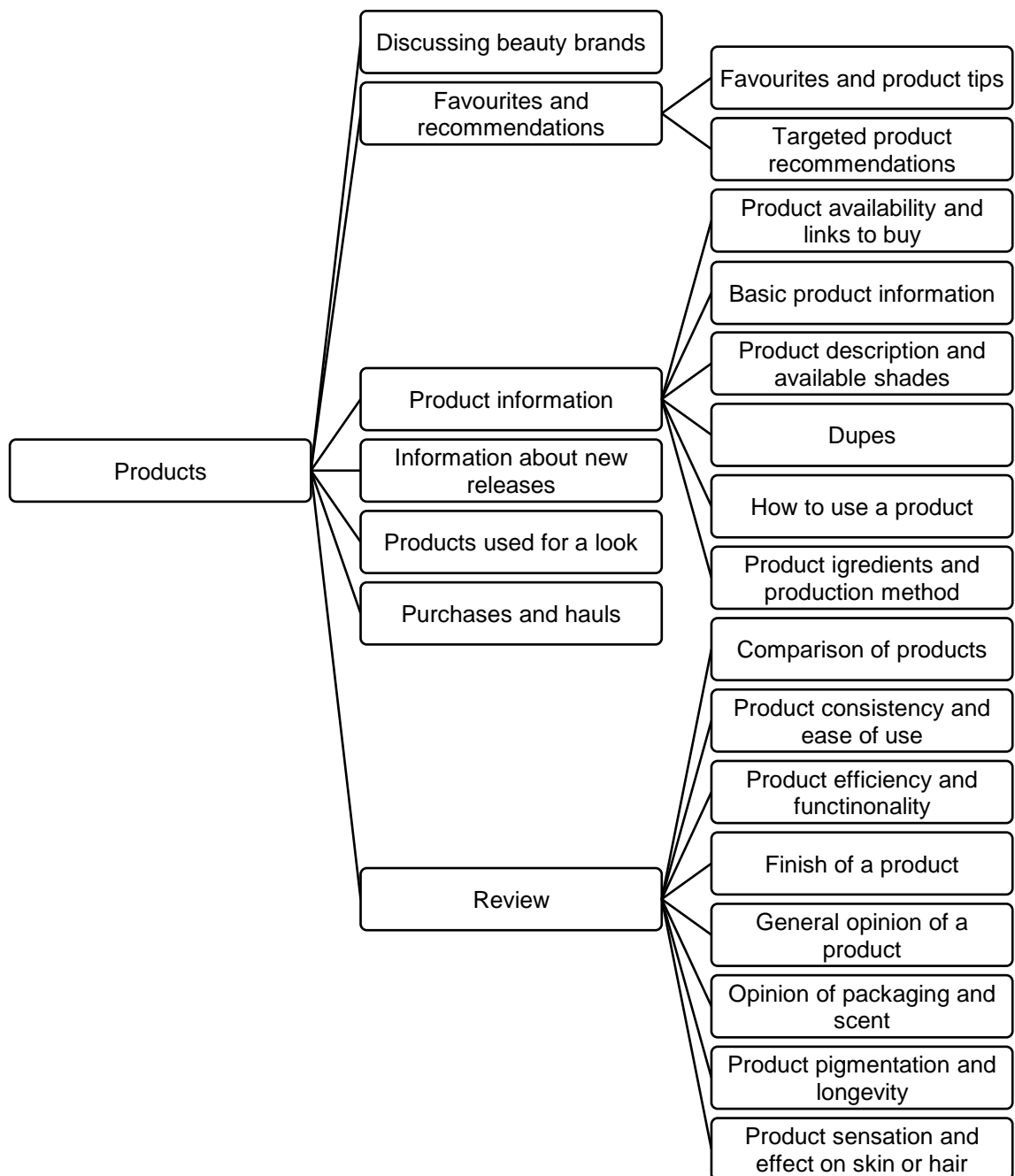


Figure 4. The category 'Products' and its subcategories in the coding frame

The 'Products' subcategory is split into seven subcategories: 'Discussing beauty brands', 'Favourites and recommendations', 'Product information', 'Information about new releases', 'Products used for a look', 'Purchases and hauls' and 'Review', as shown in figure 4. These categories and the parallel-level subcategories of 'Products' that frequently accompany them are listed in table 7.

Table 7. Parallel-level subcategories that frequently appear together (over 50 % of times) with each subcategory of 'Products'

| Category | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Discussing beauty brands | - Favourites and recommendations (76 %) - Product information (86 %) - Review (81 %) |
| Favourites and recommendations | - Product information (71 %) - Review (76 %) |
| Product information | - Review (92 %) |
| Information about new releases | - Favourites and recommendations (60 %) - Product information (73 %) - Review (80 %) |
| Products used for a look | — |
| Purchases and hauls | - Favourites and recommendations (75 %) - Product information (67 %) - Review (83 %) |
| Review | - Favourites and recommendations (52 %) - Product information (92 %) |

The categories 'Favourites and recommendations', 'Product information' and 'Review' were frequently present together with other 'Products' subcategories. It was decided to identify the categories that did not frequently appear with other 'Products' subcategories as independent content types: 'Discussing beauty brands', 'Information about new releases', 'Products used for a look' and 'Purchases and hauls'. Additionally, as the value provided by 'Review' is distinct from the other categories, it was decided that 'Review' would be a content type that can be present in blog posts with other 'Products' content types. Thus, five content types were identified under the 'Products' category. These are listed in table 8 together with the categories that frequently appeared together with them out of all categories of the coding frame.

Table 8. Content types related to beauty products and the coding frame categories that frequently accompany each type

| Content type | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Discussing beauty brands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (76 %) - Links to other content (52 %) - Favourites and product tips (52 %) - Targeted product recommendations (67 %) - Product availability and links to buy (81 %) - Basic product information (67 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (57 %) - General opinion of a product (67 %) - Product sensation and effect on skin or hair (57 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (81 %) |
| Information about new releases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (67 %) - Product availability and links to buy (73 %) - Basic product information (60 %) - Product description and available shades (60 %) - How to use a product (53 %) - General opinion of a product (67 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (80 %) |
| Products used for a look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (88 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (90 %) |
| Purchases and hauls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irrelevant (75 %) - Links to other content (67 %) - Favourites and product tips (58 %) - Product availability and links to buy (67 %) - General opinion of a product (58 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (83 %) |
| Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (85 %) - Links to other content (69 %) - Product availability and links to buy (75 %) - Basic product information (73 %) - Product description and available shades (54 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (68 %) - General opinion of a product (82 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (63 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (83 %) |

Out of the coding frame categories defining these product-related content types, 'Review' is split into 8 subcategories, as seen in figure 4. A blog post is considered to have review content if it contains at least one of these subcategories. As shown in table 8, the most common categories contained by reviews are 'General opinion of a product' (appearing in 82 % of review posts), 'Product consistency and ease of use' (68 %) and 'Product pigmentation and longevity' (63 %). To gain a more comprehensive picture of product reviews on beauty blogs, it was also analysed how often the less frequent review categories appeared in posts with review content. These categories and their appearance frequencies in review posts are 'Comparison of products' (27 %), 'Product efficiency and functionality'

(16 %), 'Finish of a product' (48 %), 'Opinion of packaging and scent' (18 %) and 'Product sensation and effect on skin or hair' (43 %).

As presented in table 8, the content type 'Products used for a look' was nearly always (90 % of times) accompanied by the photo category 'Full makeup (and hair) look'. However, this content type can also feature nail looks: when the photo category 'Nail look' appeared in a post, it was accompanied by the category 'Products used for a look' 75 % of times. Also shown in table 8, product reviews typically (83 % of times) contained the photo category 'Product in its packaging'. Out of the remaining photo categories, the following were frequently accompanied by review content (by at least one subcategory of 'Review') when they appeared: 'Comparison: Before and after product application' (88 % of times), 'Comparison of different makeup looks' (60 %), 'Detail of a makeup look' (60 %), 'Detail of a product' (83 %), 'Product in use' (67 %), 'Swatch' (94 %) and 'Steps of makeup application' (62 %).

4.1.4 Miscellaneous beauty-related topics

As 'Miscellaneous beauty-related topics' is a category for beauty-related content that does not fit any of the other categories of the coding frame, it was decided to define posts that contain this category, but not any of the beauty-related content types specified in sections 4.1.1–4.1.3 with the content type 'Miscellaneous beauty-related content'. There were 11 such posts in the research material. The categories that appeared in these posts as well as their numbers of appearance and frequencies are listed in table 9.

Table 9. Categories that appeared in posts discussing miscellaneous beauty-related topics not described by any other beauty-related content type, as well as their numbers of appearance and frequencies

| Category | Number of appearances | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Captions for photos and videos | 2 | 18 % |
| Commercial disclosures | 2 | 18 % |
| Irrelevant | 7 | 64 % |
| Links to other content | 2 | 18 % |
| Favourites and product tips | 2 | 18 % |
| Photo: Fashion look | 2 | 18 % |
| Photo: Hairstyle | 2 | 18 % |
| Photo: Detail of a makeup look | 1 | 9 % |
| Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look | 4 | 36 % |
| Photo: Nail look | 1 | 9 % |
| Photo: Miscellaneous | 5 | 45 % |
| Photo: Detail of a product | 1 | 9 % |
| Photo: Product in its packaging | 1 | 9 % |

4.1.5 Remaining content

Finally, there were 30 blog posts remaining that did not contain any of the content types identified in sections 4.1.1–4.1.4. The categories that appeared in these posts are listed in table 10.

Table 10. Categories that appeared in the blog posts that did not contain any of the content types identified in sections 4.1.1–4.1.4, together with their numbers of appearance and frequencies

| Category | Number of appearances | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Captions for photos and videos | 10 | 33 % |
| Commercial disclosures | 1 | 3 % |
| Irrelevant | 15 | 50 % |
| Links to other content | 2 | 7 % |
| Favourites and product tips | 6 | 20 % |
| Dupes | 1 | 3 % |
| Photo: Fashion look | 1 | 3 % |
| Photo: Hairstyle | 1 | 3 % |
| Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look | 6 | 20 % |
| Photo: Miscellaneous | 10 | 33 % |
| Photo: Detail of a product | 2 | 7 % |
| Photo: Product in its packaging | 2 | 7 % |
| Photo: Swatch | 1 | 3 % |
| Photo: Steps of makeup application | 1 | 3 % |
| Video | 9 | 30 % |

Out of the categories appearing in these posts, 9 carry beauty-related value: ‘Favourites and product tips’, ‘Dupes’, ‘Hairstyle’ (photo), ‘Full makeup (and hair) look’ (photo), ‘Detail of a product’ (photo), ‘Product in its packaging’ (photo), ‘Swatch’ (photo), ‘Steps of makeup application’ (photo) and ‘Video’. When the coding frame was created, the ‘Video’ category was defined as a beauty-related video embedded in a blog post (see appendix 3). It was decided to extend the definition of the content type ‘Miscellaneous beauty-related content’ to contain these posts well, i.e. all posts that contain beauty-related categories but do not fit into the content types defined in Sections 4.1.1–4.1.3 would be categorised as ‘Miscellaneous beauty-related content’.

All the remaining posts were to be categorised as ‘Irrelevant’, as they did not contain beauty-related content and thus did not provide value in the scope of this study.

4.2 Beauty blog content

As shown in section 4.1, all analysed blog posts contained text. In addition, 91 % of the posts contained photos and 6 % videos. Commercial content is strongly present in beauty blogs: 59 % of the analysed posts contained a separate disclosure stating that the post included affiliate links or advertising or featured products that the blogger had received as PR samples. The majority of the posts (73 %) discussed cosmetic products in some form. 33 % of the posts contained beauty-related advice or information and 27 % described the blogger's habits and preferences related to skincare, haircare and makeup. Based on the coding frame, 15 different beauty blog content types were identified. They and their definitions are listed in table 11.

After the content types had been defined using the coding frame as a starting point, the analysis returned to the level of the blog posts through examining what content types appeared in each analysed blog post. The results are presented in appendix 5. Different content types are often combined in blog posts: each analysed post contained on average 1,8 different content types. Next, it was analysed how frequently the different content types appeared in each case blog. The results are presented in table 12.

Table 11. Beauty blog content types and the rules to determine whether a blog post contains a certain content type

| Content type | Definition |
|--|--|
| Beauty advice | Contains at least one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Haircare information and advice - Skincare information and advice |
| Discounts and campaigns | Contains the category 'Discounts and campaigns' |
| Shopping advice, information and experiences | Contains the category 'Shopping advice, information and experiences' |
| Hair styling tips and tutorials | Contains the category 'Hair styling tips and tutorials' |
| Makeup tips and tutorials | Contains the category 'Makeup tips and tutorials' |
| Haircare and hair styling habits | Contains the category 'Haircare and hair styling habits' |
| Makeup habits and preferences | Contains the category 'Makeup habits and preferences' |
| Skincare habits | Contains the category 'Skincare habits' |
| Discussing beauty brands | Contains the category 'Discussing beauty brands' |
| Information about new releases | Contains the category 'Information about new releases' |
| Products used for a look | Contains the category 'Products used for a look' |
| Purchases and hauls | Contains the category 'Purchases and hauls' |
| Review | Contains at least one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparison of products - Product consistency and ease of use - Product efficiency and functionality - Finish of a product - General opinion of a product - Opinion of packaging and scent - Product pigmentation and longevity - Product sensation and effect on skin or hair |
| Miscellaneous beauty-related content | Does not contain any of the categories listed above and contains at least one of the following categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Miscellaneous beauty-related topics - Favourites and product tips - Targeted product recommendations - Product availability and links to buy - Basic product information - Product description and available shades - Dupes - How to use a product - Product ingredients and production method. - Photo: Before and after product application - Photo: Comparison of different makeup looks - Photo: Hairstyle - Photo: Detail of a makeup look - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look - Photo: Nail look - Photo: Detail of a product - Photo: Product in its packaging - Photo: Product in use - Photo: Swatch - Photo: Steps of hair styling - Photo: Steps of makeup application |
| Irrelevant | Does not contain any of the categories listed above |

Table 12. Appearances and frequencies of different content types in the four case blogs

| Content type | Blog 1 Appear- ances (frequency, N= 50) | Blog 2 Appear- ances (frequency, N= 50) | Blog 3 Appear- ances (frequency, N= 50) | Blog 4 Appear- ances (frequency, N= 50) | Total Appear- ances (frequency, N= 200) |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Beauty ad- vice: Haircare and skincare information and advice | 0 (0 %) | 14 (28 %) | 3 (6 %) | 0 (0 %) | 17 (9 %) |
| Shopping advice: Discounts and campaigns | 7 (14 %) | 4 (8 %) | 3 (6 %) | 1 (2 %) | 15 (8 %) |
| Shopping advice: Shopping advice, infor- mation and experiences | 0 (0 %) | 6 (12 %) | 6 (12 %) | 0 (0 %) | 12 (6 %) |
| Tips and tutorials: Hair styling tips and tutorials | 1 (2 %) | 6 (12 %) | 4 (8 %) | 0 (0 %) | 11 (6 %) |
| Tips and tutorials: Makeup tips and tutorials | 1 (2 %) | 19 (38 %) | 6 (12 %) | 0 (0 %) | 26 (13 %) |
| Haircare and hair styling habits | 1 (2 %) | 6 (12 %) | 3 (6 %) | 0 (0 %) | 10 (5 %) |
| Makeup habits and preferences | 6 (12 %) | 13 (26 %) | 6 (12 %) | 4 (8 %) | 29 (15 %) |
| Skincare habits | 1 (2 %) | 8 (16 %) | 6 (12 %) | 0 (0 %) | 15 (8 %) |
| Discussing beauty brands | 2 (4 %) | 7 (14 %) | 12 (24 %) | 0 (0 %) | 21 (11 %) |
| Information about new releases | 4 (8 %) | 3 (6 %) | 5 (10 %) | 3 (6 %) | 15 (8 %) |
| Products used for a look | 24 (48 %) | 8 (16 %) | 2 (4 %) | 17 (34 %) | 51 (26 %) |
| Purchases and hauls | 0 (0 %) | 5 (10 %) | 6 (12 %) | 1 (2 %) | 12 (6 %) |
| Review | 8 (16 %) | 33 (66 %) | 21 (42 %) | 31 (62 %) | 93 (47 %) |
| Miscellaneous beauty-related content | 8 (16 %) | 4 (8 %) | 12 (24 %) | 8 (16 %) | 32 (16 %) |
| Irrelevant | 5 (10 %) | 0 (0 %) | 2 (4 %) | 2 (4 %) | 9 (5 %) |

When the coding frame was built, descriptions were written for the categories, detailing what kinds of material should be coded under each category (see appendix 3). In section 4.1, the categories defining different beauty blog content types were identified together with the other categories typically appearing in each content type. Next, this information was combined to write detailed descriptions for typical blog posts representing each content type.

4.2.1 Advice and information

Content types giving the reader beauty-related advice and information can be divided into three distinct classes: beauty advice, shopping advice and makeup and hair styling tips. Descriptions of these content types are given below.

Beauty advice

Blog posts with beauty advice offer help and information regarding skincare through discussing different skin types as well as different types of skincare products and what they should be used for. They explain the reader what to do and what not to do in skincare and why, alongside with giving advice for specific skincare needs regarding skin type or age. These posts can also feature skincare information from external sources. In addition to skincare, beauty advice posts can also give tips for haircare and dyeing hair.

Typically blog posts with beauty advice contain targeted product recommendations addressing specific skincare or haircare needs (88 % of analysed beauty advice posts). They can also feature more general tips about high-quality products and highlight the products the blogger herself likes to use (65 % of analysed beauty advice posts). Normally the recommendations also include links to buy the product from an online store, and 59 % of the analysed beauty advice posts also stated separately where the product can be bought. The posts also frequently contain photos of the discussed products (88 % of analysed beauty advice posts) and share basic information about them, such as the price, the size of packaging and the basic properties of the product, including pH value and if the product contains UV protection (65 % of analysed beauty advice posts). These posts can also give advice for how a product should be used or introduce different ways to use a product (65 % of analysed beauty advice posts) and discuss the ingredients of the product and the purpose of these ingredients (53 % of the analysed beauty advice posts). Beauty advice posts can also contain elements of product reviews, most commonly through stating how a product feels when used and describing the effect it has on skin or hair (e.g. moisturising, nourishing, softening, smoothening or tightening) (76 % of analysed beauty

advice posts) and sharing the blogger's or another person's overall opinion of a product (65 % of analysed beauty advice posts).

Besides giving advice to readers, beauty advice posts can also include descriptions of how the blogger takes care of her own skin (53 % of analysed beauty advice posts). These posts also often contain links to other content, such as relevant posts on the same blog or another blog or resources on external websites (65 % of analysed beauty advice posts).

Shopping advice

Two general types of shopping advice were identified in the analysed material. The first type involves giving information about a sale of cosmetic products, announcing a shopping event or sharing a discount code to an online cosmetics store. Posts containing this content type regularly also feature photos of beauty products (52 % of analysed posts with information about discounts and campaigns).

The second type involves giving general advice for buying beauty products as well as sharing information about beauty stores, such as their selection and delivery costs of online stores, and discussing the bloggers' experiences from buying from these stores. Posts with this type of advice frequently include photos of beauty products and the bloggers' overall opinions of products (each appearing in 67 % of posts sharing shopping advice, information and experiences). These posts can also include links to other content, such as other related posts on the same blog (58 % of posts sharing shopping advice, information and experiences).

Makeup and hair styling tips

Posts with makeup tips give advice on what to do and what not to do when applying makeup as well as what shades to use to achieve flattering results. They also give general tips for makeup application, such as how to create a makeup look that lasts. These posts explain how makeup can be used to achieve desired results, such as looking younger or making the skin tone look more even, as well as give targeted makeup advice for different face and eye shapes. They regularly contain photos of makeup looks (58 % of posts with makeup tips), links to other content such as related blog posts (69 %) and evaluations of the pigmentation and longevity of a makeup product (58 %). Types of photos related to makeup tips include showing the face both before and after the application of a product (this type of photos were accompanied by makeup tips 63 % of the times they appear)

and comparing different makeup looks (always accompanied by makeup tips). A specific type of posts with makeup tips are makeup tutorials that involve step-by-step instructions for applying makeup or creating a certain makeup look. The tutorials can also mention the products the blogger used in the tutorial together with links to buy them. Related to this are photos that show different steps of makeup application, possibly also showing the product used. When these photos appeared in an analysed blog post, 85 % of times the post also contained makeup tips or a tutorial.

Blog posts with hair styling tips discuss different ways to style hair and give general advice for hair styling, such as making the hair look more voluminous or creating a long-lasting hairstyle. These posts also frequently contain photos that show the blogger's or another person's makeup look and hairstyle (64 % of posts with hair styling tips). Similar to makeup tutorials, a specific type of hair styling post are hair styling tutorials, which give step-by-step instructions for achieving a certain hairstyle, possibly also mentioning the products used in the tutorial with links to buy them. Blogs can also include photos demonstrating steps of a hair styling process, which were always accompanied by hair styling tips or a tutorial in the analysed blog posts.

4.2.2 Beauty habits

Blog posts with descriptions of the blogger's skincare habits explain what the blogger does as part of her skincare and why. They can also address the possible skin issues the blogger has or has had and explain how she has treated them or covers them with makeup. In the analysed blogs, 60 % of these posts contained skincare information and advice and, as shown in section 4.2.1, posts with beauty advice frequently also describe the blogger's skincare habits, so these two content types are closely interrelated. However, both of them also appear independently and there is a conceptual difference between them: when describing her skincare habits, the blogger describes how she takes care of their skin, but does not necessarily give the readers advice what they should do. Posts with beauty advice, on the other hand, discuss different skincare needs on a wider level.

Out of all posts discussing skincare habits, 60 % also mentioned the blogger's favourite skincare products and shared general product tips, but they can also help readers through recommending products for specific skincare needs (73 % of posts describing skincare habits), both typically with links to buy the products. 60 % of these posts also stated where the discussed products can be bought, 67 % gave basic information about the products, for example their price and packaging size and 53 % explained how a product should be

used. Nearly all of these posts (93 %) featured photos of skincare products. Also evaluations of the products can be present in these post, most frequently describing what kind of effect a product has on the skin (e.g. moisturising, nourishing or softening) and how it feels when applied (73 % of posts describing skincare habits), detailing the consistency of a product and assessing if it absorbs quickly into the skin (60 %) and sharing an overall opinion of a product (60 %). Additionally, these posts can contain links to other related content, such as other blog posts (73 % of posts describing skincare habits).

Analogously to posts related to skincare habits, posts describing the blogger's haircare habits describe how the blogger takes care of her hair and hair colour while possibly also discussing the issues she may have with her hair. The blogger can also share what kinds of hair styling products she likes to use. In the analysed material, these posts regularly featured photos of the blogger's makeup and hair look (60 % of posts describing haircare and hair styling habits).

Posts addressing makeup habits and preferences discuss how the blogger likes to apply her makeup and what kind of tools and products she prefers to use. The blogger can also share what colours she likes and how she decides what makeup or nail polish to wear. Also other people's makeup habits can be shared in these posts.

4.2.3 Products

In the analysed material, 73 % of blog posts featured beauty products, so discussing products is a major element in beauty blog content. In particular, posts about beauty products frequently contained elements of product reviews through sharing the blogger's opinion about products and evaluating different aspects of them. This section discusses how beauty products are typically assessed in product reviews and describes other post types related to beauty products, including discussing beauty brands, listing products used for a makeup look or manicure, announcing new product releases and listing products that the blogger has purchased recently.

Product reviews

Reviews of beauty products in the analysed blogs evaluated different aspects of cosmetic products. The most frequent element indicating a review is the blogger sharing her overall opinion of a product or tool (82 % of analysed product reviews). The opinion can involve the blogger mentioning if she uses the product regularly herself or, if she is a professional makeup artist, uses the product on her clients. This category also covers the blogger's

general thoughts about a product that did not fit the other review categories of the coding frame. Also other people's opinions about a product were occasionally shared on the analysed blogs.

Based on the analysed material, the second most frequent element in product reviews is describing the consistency or texture of a product, for example if it is creamy, smooth, thin or powdery, and evaluating if a product is easy to use (68 % of analysed product reviews). Reviews can explain what happens to a product when it is applied on the skin and assess whether a skincare product is quickly absorbed into the skin. In the case of makeup products, reviews can evaluate if they are easy to apply, for example through discussing the ease of blending a product evenly on the skin and the quality of the applicator of a product. The blogger can also elaborate if a product is easy to remove or if it leaves a stain or residue on the skin.

Reviews of makeup products frequently discuss the pigmentation and longevity of the product (63 % of analysed product reviews). This involves discussing the opaqueness of a product, how many application layers of a product is needed to achieve full coverage and if a concealer or foundation hides skin imperfections well. Evaluating the longevity of a product involves assessing if the product is long-lasting on the skin without fading, transferring or otherwise changing appearance.

Reviews can also illustrate how the skin looks after a product has been applied, for example if it is matte, glowing, shimmery or oily, or how the hair feels after using a haircare or hair styling product, for example smooth or sticky (48 % of analysed reviews). For makeup products, especially foundations, this can also involve assessing if the product emphasises natural skin texture, adheres to dry patches on the skin or if the product evidently looks like makeup after application, as opposed to natural-looking skin. Reviews regularly (43 % of analysed reviews) also discuss how a product feels during application and assess the effect a product has on skin or hair, for example if it is moisturising, nourishing, softening or drying or if it has a smoothening or tightening effect. The blogger can also state if a product has led to breakouts on her skin.

Less frequent elements of product reviews include comparing a product to similar products or a previously released version of the same product (27 % of analysed reviews), discussing the practicability or other features of the packaging, assessing if it takes a long time to finish a product with normal use or giving an opinion of the scent of a product (18

% of analysed reviews) and evaluating if a product performs as it is supposed to, for example if a cleanser cleans the skin well or if a hairspray keeps the hair in place, as well as describing how a product worked for the blogger (16 % of analysed reviews).

In addition to review elements, product reviews typically contain photos of products (83 % of analysed reviews), information about where a product can be bought and links to buy it (75 % of analysed reviews), sharing basic details about a product, such as the price, the size of packaging or if the product contains UV or heat protection (73 % of analysed reviews) as well as describing how a product looks and describing the available shades and possibly stating what skin tones they are suited for (54 % of analysed reviews). Reviews can also include links to other content, such as previously published posts on the same blog (69 % of analysed reviews).

Photos that do not frequently appear in review posts, but are still closely related to reviews include swatches, i.e. showing a sample of how a makeup product looks on skin or lips (accompanied by review content 94 % of the times it appeared in a post), showing the face before and after the application of a makeup product (88 %) and showing a close-up detail of a product, in contrast to showing the full packaging (83 %). Makeup tutorials regularly contain review content as well (62 % of times photos of makeup application steps appear in a post). Reviews can also show photos of the use or application of a product in action (accompanied by review content 67 % of the times it appears in a post), photos of a detail of a makeup look, for example a close-up photo of the eye, where the product under review has been used (60 %) or photos comparing different makeup looks (60 %).

Other content discussing beauty products

In addition to individual products, bloggers can also write about beauty brands as a whole. They can give general information about a brand and what products are available from the brand, as well as sharing their thoughts about a brand. In the same posts, bloggers frequently include photos of products (81 % of analysed posts discussing beauty brands), product recommendations targeted for specific needs (67 %) and more general product tips and mentioning their favourite products (52 %). These posts also give basic information about beauty products, such as the price and size of packaging (67 % of analysed posts discussing beauty brands) and inform the reader where a product can be bought and possibly share a link to buy it (81 %). Elements of product reviews can also appear in these posts, most commonly by sharing an overall opinion of a product (67 % of analysed posts discussing beauty brands), describing the consistency or texture of a product and assessing how easy it is to use (57 %) and illustrating how the product feels when applied

and evaluating the effect it has on the skin or hair (57 %). These posts can also contain links to other content, such as other blog posts (52 % of analysed posts discussing beauty brands).

Beauty blogs can include announcements of new product releases, where they share the information the brand has given about a release, such as description of products, release date and if the product is a limited-edition item or part of the permanent collection, as well as a list of the different products that are part of the release. These posts frequently contain photos of products (80 % of analysed announcements of new releases), inform where the products can be bought or give links to buy them (73 %) and share the bloggers general thoughts and opinion of the released products (67 %). They can also describe the shade range of the products (60 % of analysed announcements of new releases), share basic information about them, such as the price and the size of packaging (60 %), and instruct how they should be used for best possible results (53 %).

A type of content in beauty blogs is showing a photo of a look and listing the products that have been used for the look, typically with links to buy them. In the analysed blogs, 90 % of times this was a makeup look, in which case this content type is commonly referred to as 'face of the day' or 'FOTD' (Kauraniemi 2017, 9). Less frequently, a blogger can also share a photo of their manicure and list the products used: when a photo of a nail look was published in the analysed blog posts, it was joined by information about the nail polish used 75 % of the times. Analogously, this content type is referred to as 'nails of the day' or 'NOTD' (Kauranemi 2017, 9).

The final identified content type related to beauty products comprises listing products the blogger has bought recently, also referred to as a 'haul' (Kauraniemi 2017, 24). These posts typically feature photos of products (83 % of analysed posts listing purchases), information about where the products can be bought or links to buy them (67 %) and the blogger's overall thoughts about the products (58 %). In this context, bloggers regularly also share their favourite products in a certain category and give product tips to readers (58 % of analysed posts listing purchases). These posts can also contain links to other content, such as previously released posts discussing the products listed (67 % of analysed posts listing purchases).

4.2.4 Other content

This section describes blog posts in the analysed material that did not fit the content types discussed in sections 4.2.1–4.2.3, either because they contained content types that appeared only a few times in the material or did not contain any beauty-related content.

Miscellaneous beauty-related content

The coding frame used in this study contained a category for beauty-related topics that did not fit the other categories of the coding frame or were only mentioned a few times throughout the material and thus no individual categories were created for them. These topics included discussing beauty trends and popular types of products, discussing the beauty industry on a wider level (such as cosmetic ingredients and their safety, sustainability in the beauty industry and working in the beauty industry) as well as sharing general thoughts about makeup and skincare. Organising beauty-related draws for the readers and announcing upcoming beauty-related posts were also categorised as miscellaneous content.

Out of the analysed blog posts, 6 % contained embedded beauty-related videos created by the blogger or someone else. As videos were not an object of analysis in this study, they were categorised as miscellaneous content. Also posts containing beauty-related information or photos but not fitting the other identified content types were classified as miscellaneous. These could include lists of the blogger's favourite products in a certain category and product tips to readers, listing dupes (i.e. products that are very similar to another product), photos of products and swatches (i.e. photos showing samples of a product applied on the skin) or photos of hairstyles, makeup looks or manicures.

Content not related to beauty

As this study only focused on beauty-related content in the analysed blogs, all content not related to beauty, i.e. skincare, hair, makeup or beauty products, was categorised as irrelevant. Almost half (46 %) of the analysed posts contained sections not related to beauty, such as addressing the readers through greetings or questions or the blogger sharing things about her everyday life, but typically in combination with beauty-related topics. The content type 'Irrelevant' was created to comprise blog posts that did not contain any beauty-related content.

4.3 Typical content in the case blogs

Among the 200 analysed blog posts, the most frequent content type was product review (in 47 % of the analysed posts). After this come products used for a look (i.e. 'face of the day' or 'nails of the day', 26 %), miscellaneous beauty-related content (16 %), describing makeup habits and preferences (15 %), makeup tips and tutorials (13 %) and discussing beauty brands (11 %). Occasionally occurring content types include beauty advice (9 %), information about discounts and campaigns (8 %), describing skincare habits (8 %), information about new product releases (8 %), sharing shopping advice, information or experiences (6 %), listing purchases (6 %), hair styling tips and tutorials (6 %) and describing haircare and hair styling habits (5 %). Out of the analysed posts, 5 % did not contain any beauty-related content. The percentages add up to over 100 %, as a blog post can contain several content types.

The four case blogs were selected so that their focus was on different types of content, which is illustrated by the differences in the most frequent categories in each blog. In Blog 1, the most frequent content type is products used for a look (i.e. 'face of the day' or 'nails of the day', 48 %), after which come product reviews (16 %), miscellaneous beauty-related content (16 %), information about discounts and campaigns (14 %) and sharing makeup habits and preferences (12 %). In Blog 2, the majority of the posts (66 %) contained product reviews, the next most frequent content types being makeup tips and tutorials (38 %), beauty advice (28 %), describing makeup habits and preferences (26 %), listing products used for a look (i.e. 'face of the day' or 'nails of the day', 16 %) and describing skincare habits (16 %). The most frequently appearing content types in Blog 3 are product reviews (42 %), discussing beauty brands (24 %), miscellaneous beauty-related content (24 %), makeup tips and tutorials (12 %), describing makeup habits and preferences (12 %), describing skincare habits (12 %), sharing shopping advice, information and experiences (12 %) and listing purchases (12 %). Blog 4 particularly focuses on product reviews (62 %), the next most frequent content types being listing products used for a look (i.e. 'face of the day' or 'nails of the day', 34 %), miscellaneous beauty-related content (16 %), describing makeup habits and preferences (8 %) and information about new releases (6 %).

5 Discussion

This study consisted of a qualitative content analysis with the aim of describing content typically appearing in successful beauty blogs. The analysis started by constructing a coding frame out of categories representing different elements of beauty blog content. These categories were created both deductively based on previous studies on beauty blogs and inductively from the research material, i.e. a total of 200 individual blog posts from four popular beauty blogs. A description was written for each category to explain what kind of content should be coded under that category. The next step was to analyse which categories were present in each analysed blog post and find frequently occurring combinations of different categories. As a result, 15 different types of beauty blog content were identified. Descriptions for the content types were written based on the descriptions of the coding frame categories typically appearing in each content type. The categories of the coding frame displayed all elements of content appearing in the analysed material, while the purpose of qualitative content analysis was to summarise this information into a limited number of defined classes. Additionally, recognising how different elements of content are typically combined in blog posts offers more information about the content and the value that it provides than simply listing all elements included.

The analysis confirmed the presence of the majority of beauty blog content types mentioned in earlier studies in the analysed blog posts while providing more specific descriptions of what each content type comprises. Content types identified in this study that were not explicitly indicated in previous research include hair styling tips and tutorials, photos of hairstyles and photos comparing different makeup looks or showing the face before and after makeup application. Additionally, this study formed a more comprehensive understanding of different aspects present in product reviews on beauty blogs. On the other hand, some content types listed in previous studies were not observed in the analysed material, including personal care tutorials, monthly favourites and recent empties. They were excluded from the coding frame used in this study for clarity. However, the coding frame could potentially be used to code blog posts including these content types, in which case personal care tutorials would probably be categorised as beauty advice and monthly favourites and recent empties as either product reviews or miscellaneous beauty-related content, depending on the other categories present in these blog posts. If more differentiation is expected when using the coding frame on other material, the inductive process would need to be repeated on the new material to include content types that were not present in the material analysed in this study.

During the analysis, occurrences of different coding frame categories in each analysed blog post were registered. Each category was counted only once per blog post and information about multiple appearances of a category in a post were not noted. Counting the number of appearances could have provided more differentiation between content types: a post with several appearances of a review category could potentially be more valuable as a review than a blog post mainly containing, for example, beauty advice with a single appearance of a review category. However, as there already was a lot of data to analyse in order to identify the different content types, it was determined that this type of additional differentiation was not necessary for achieving useful results.

5.1 Value of beauty blog content

Following beauty blogs is a quick and practical way to keep up to date with the latest developments in the rapidly evolving cosmetics industry. Bloggers act as informants so that readers do not have to browse multiple sources to learn about the latest news. The number of available products, especially with new items being continually released, can be overwhelming for an individual consumer. Also, when looking for a particular type of product, it would be too expensive and time-consuming for a consumer to try every available option to find the best one. In this respect, the role of the blogger is to function as a filter between cosmetic companies and consumers through trying different products and picking the ones that are worth introducing to the readers out of the stream of new releases as well as estimating who they would be suited for. (Kauraniemi 2017, 24–25; Ranta 2015, 113)

As stated by Liao, To and Liu (2013, 621 & 629), reasons for following blogs include enhancing work, learning and life performance (utilitarian motives) as well as engaging in fun and entertainment (hedonic motivations). Utilitarian values provided by beauty blogs include easier and faster purchase of cosmetic products through following recommendations and links provided by bloggers, reducing the risk of unsuccessful purchases through reading what bloggers think about a product and solving problems related to skincare, hair care, makeup application and hair styling through reading advice on blogs. Hedonic values provided by beauty blogs include discovering new products to try and experience as well as finding inspiration to use one's creativity in trying different makeup looks or hairstyles.

The other end of blog content providing value to the readers is the blogger being able to capture value through the blog. Beauty blogs frequently feature sample products or use affiliate marketing (Kroll 2015, 77). Yet, the advantage of blogs as opposed to traditional advertising is the real and relatable image of the blogger (Iduozee 2015, 40–41). From

this point of view, featuring commercial content can be controversial to readers, but it is also necessary if the blogger wants to capture value and earn income from the blog. Bloggers aim to improve the credibility of commercial posts through using convincing argumentation and making the content useful to the readers, as well as being transparent about featuring commercial material. (Gannon & Prothero 2016, 1873–1874; Kauraniemi 2017, 25–26; Kroll 2015, 73; Pihl & Sandström 2013, 319–320; Ranta 2015, 96–99) Out of the analysed blog posts, 59 % included a separate disclosure stating that the post contained commercial content, i.e. ad links, PR samples or sponsored content.

5.1.1 Advice and information

Through blog posts with beauty advice, readers can find information about how to properly take care of their skin and hair. These posts can also provide help for dealing with different issues, such as problems related to a particular skin type or changes in the needs of ageing skin. Most of beauty advice posts contain product recommendations tailored to different skincare or haircare needs, which helps readers identify products that probably would be useful for them. There is a wide variety of skincare and haircare products with different properties, ingredients and functions, of which consumers typically have limited knowledge, so reading understandable descriptions of these products and explanations of the purpose of their different ingredients on blogs can help consumers make good purchase decisions and find solutions to their problems. It has been recognised in previous studies that useful product recommendations can decrease search time and cost along with making it more efficient to compare different alternatives (AlSaleh 2017, 34; Hsu, Chuan-Chuan & Chiang 2013, 81). In beauty blogs, readers can simply pick the most suitable one from the products recommended by the blogger, instead of having to study a large number of products themselves, and the purchase process is made faster by links through which the reader can buy the products mentioned. Beauty advice posts can also list products the blogger likes to use herself, which can be a source of high-quality product tips for the reader. Links to related content, such as external information resources, help readers access further information that might be relevant to them.

Shopping advice on blogs helps readers make better purchase decisions and estimate what would be the best place to buy a product, based on information and actual experiences shared by the blogger. Bloggers also advertise campaigns and share discount codes to online stores, which means that readers can save money on their purchases if they were intending to buy the discounted products anyway. Discount codes can also make the purchasing process faster or inspire readers to try new products or services (Ranta 2015, 98–99).

Makeup tips on blogs can provide both utilitarian and hedonic value. Readers can learn how to apply makeup in a flattering way, which can give them more confidence in everyday life. Occasionally bloggers add photos comparing different looks in these posts, which helps readers understand the different effects makeup can create. Advice on blogs can help them achieve a makeup look that lasts, so they do not have to worry about it during the day or an important event. Makeup application is also a creative process and tutorials encourage the reader to try new looks along with learning new skills. Tutorial posts normally also mention the products used with links to buy them, so the reader can easily purchase the products that are suitable for creating a certain look. An alternative to reading makeup tips on blogs would be to meet with a makeup artist personally to receive advice, but blogs are free and it is easy to compare advice on different blogs and find the tips that are most suited to one's needs. In a similar way, blog posts with hair styling tips and tutorials help readers make their hair look good and encourage them to try new hairstyles.

5.1.2 Beauty habits

Through reading about a blogger's skincare habits, readers can find new things they can try in their own skincare routines. In particular, if the blogger has a similar skin type or similar skin issues as the readers, they can find ways to take care of their own skin to make it feel and appear better (Ranta 2015, 113). These posts frequently also mention products the blogger likes to use, which means that readers can easily find products they could try if they have similar skincare needs as the blogger. Blog posts describing skincare habits often also explain the rationale for doing a certain action or using a certain product in skincare, which can help readers understand what they could try implementing in their own skincare routines. Similarly, through reading about a blogger's haircare and hair styling habits, readers can find ideas to implement in their own haircare routines and products and tricks they could try when styling their hair.

Makeup application is a relatively personal matter, as everyone's preferences, face shapes and skin types are different. Through reading about how a blogger likes to apply her makeup, readers can find ideas they could try when creating their own makeup looks, especially if they have similar features or a similar skin type as the blogger. Seeing how other people apply their makeup can give readers new things to try or offer help to possible challenges they have with makeup application.

5.1.3 Products

Blog posts discussing beauty products typically contain basic information about the products, such as the price and size of packaging. Additionally, descriptions of available shades or instructions for using a product can be included. This way, without having to resort to other sources, the reader can form a quick idea of a product and estimate if it is something he or she would like to try or if there is a suitable shade available. Purchasing products is made easy as blog posts featuring products typically also explain where a product can be bought or contain a direct link to buy it.

Reading product reviews on blogs helps consumers reduce uncertainty before purchasing products and determine whether they should invest in a certain product (Iduozee 2015, 40–41; Kauraniemi 2017, 24–25; Riquelme & Saeid 2014, 13). Through reading product reviews on blogs, readers can learn whether the blogger liked a certain product and, based on the arguments given by the blogger, evaluate if they would like the product themselves. In this way, bloggers try out different products so that readers do not have to spend money on products that are not of good quality or probably do not work for them.

Especially when buying makeup products online, consumers cannot evaluate the consistency or pigmentation of a product by testing it on their skin. In the case of skincare products, it is impossible to assess how a product feels on the skin and what kind of effect it has without being able to actually try the product. Thus, reading about these aspects on blogs is valuable information for consumers making online purchases. Bloggers can describe the finish of a product once applied, for example if it is matte or shimmery or if it adheres to dry patches on the skin, which can help the reader form an idea of how the product will look on the skin. To support claims about product pigmentation or appearance on the skin, review posts can include swatches, i.e. samples of a product applied on the skin, or photos of the face before and after product application. Less frequently, bloggers also comment on the scent of products, which can be important for consumers who prefer certain fragrances or try to avoid scented products. When bloggers compare products to similar products in reviews, the reader may be familiar with the product in comparison and thus be able to form a picture of the product reviewed.

Even when the consumer is able to physically try a product in a store, choosing the right product may require additional information to support the purchase decision (Iduozee 2015, 40–41). Product reviews on blogs can discuss how easy it is to use or apply a product, which can be difficult to evaluate when quickly testing the product in a store. Bloggers

can also estimate how long a makeup product lasts on the skin without changing appearance, which normally is impossible for consumers prior to buying the product. Including these aspects in reviews also demonstrates that the blogger has personal experience from using a product, which makes the review more credible (Iduozee 2015, 33; Riquelme & Saeid 2014, 14).

When purchasing cosmetics, consumers usually just look at individual products, but when bloggers write about beauty brands, readers can form a broader understanding of a brand and the different products the brand offers. In this context, bloggers regularly give product tips and mention their favourite products, which can give the reader ideas of new products to try.

Announcing new releases on beauty blogs helps consumers learn about newest products and innovations and thus keep up to date with what is happening in the beauty industry. Based on these posts, readers can determine if a new product sparks their interest and if it is something they would like to purchase, particularly if the blogger has already been able to review the product. These posts can also include instructions for how to use a product to achieve best possible results, which is essential information especially when new innovations are introduced.

'Face of the day' posts that feature photos of a makeup look together with a list of the products used for the look can offer blog readers inspiration for trying new and different makeup looks. As the products used are listed, these posts can also offer a way for the reader to see how a product looks on the face, especially when this content type is combined with product reviews. Readers can also learn new ways to use a product or to combine different products. These posts provide enjoyment to the readers through giving ideas on new things to implement in their makeup routines and creative ways to play with makeup.

In blog posts referred to as 'hauls' bloggers list products that they have purchased recently. These can be new releases, currently popular products, products that have been recommended to the blogger by someone else or the blogger's favourites that she is re-purchasing. Hauls can give inspiration to readers on new products to try, and if they wish to buy something, they can effortlessly do that through the purchase links typically included. The purchase decision is further supported by the review elements frequently present in these posts. Hauls can also contain links to other content, such as more comprehensive reviews of the products featured, which provides the reader with additional useful information.

5.2 Reliability and validity

Beauty blogs primarily reflect the interests and preferences of the blogger, which means that there is no standard format for beauty blog content. Not all content types are present on every blog, so to make the research material for this study diverse and discover as many beauty blog content types as possible, four different case blogs were selected so that each of them had a different focus. When coding frame categories were created inductively, no saturation was reached for Blog 1, meaning that new categories were found until the last analysed post, and for Blogs 2 and 3, saturation was reached after almost all 50 posts from each blog had been processed (at posts numbered 49 and 46 respectively). This could be an indication that more categories would have been identified if the analysis had been extended onto further blog posts, which could potentially have improved the quality of the coding frame. On the other hand, it is also possible that a rare type of content coincidentally appeared in a post that was processed late, which led to saturation being achieved late. For Blog 4, which was processed last, saturation was reached at post 14, as most categories had already been identified in blogs analysed earlier. Nevertheless, even without any additional material, the coding frame had to be compressed after the inductive phase by reducing categories to a number manageable within the scope of this study, so identifying more categories during the inductive phase would not have led to more differentiation in the coding frame.

Reliability is a criterion typically used to evaluate the quality of a specific research instrument, such as the coding frame in the case of qualitative content analysis. The reliability of an instrument is assessed by its ability to produce error-free data, which in qualitative content analysis conducted by a single researcher translates as the consistency of codes across different points in time. Detailed category descriptions are important for conserving reliability, as making the meaning of a category explicit is a requirement for using the category in a consistent way throughout the analysis. (Schreier 2012, 95 & 166–167) In content analysis, the reliability of the coding frame is assessed at a minimum of two points: before the proper analysis on part of the material and after the final coding of all material (Neuendorf 2017, 172). The simplest measure used to assess reliability is the percentage of agreement, which in this case is the ratio of the number of units of coding on which the codes at different points in time agree to the total number of units of coding (Schreier 2012, 170).

In this study, the percentage of agreement between the first and second round of trial coding was 94,5 % and between the first and second round of main coding main coding

94,3 %. This suggests that the coding frame was able to describe the majority of the analysed content in a reliable way but making category descriptions clearer after the trial coding did not improve overall consistency. Reasons for this could include that the percentage of agreement already was quite high and the adjustments to the coding frame were minor, as well as not all possibilities for overlap being evident in the material studied during the trial coding, which led to some category descriptions remaining slightly ambivalent. The pairs of categories for which inconsistent codes occurred most frequently were 'Favourites and product tips' and 'General opinion of a product' (13 times), 'Detail of a product' (photo) and 'Product in its packaging' (photo) (12 times), and 'Full makeup (and hair) look' (photo) and 'Steps of makeup application' (photo) (7 times). In all of these, there is some conceptual overlap between the two categories. For example, when a blogger shares a positive opinion about a product, it can also be interpreted as a recommendation. A photo of a makeup look can also be seen as a step of makeup application, if the same post contains photos showing steps of how that look was achieved. In addition to making category descriptions and decision rules clearer, the reliability of the analysis could have been improved by involving another researcher, as the comparison of codes assigned by different researchers as well as discussion between researchers could have exposed potential inconsistencies more efficiently than what was possible with a single researcher. However, in thesis work this was not feasible.

In qualitative content analysis, the researcher has a lot of power regarding the structure of the coding frame and the categories it includes, the main factor defining the structure being the research question. One structure is not necessarily better than another as long as the categories capture what is relevant considering the research question. For this reason, if the analysis conducted in this study was repeated by another researcher, the resulting coding frame could be slightly different. The ability of the coding frame categories to adequately represent the concepts of the research material is understood as the validity of the coding frame. When the aim is to describe the material, the concepts of content validity, i.e. the extent to which an instrument covers every dimension of a concept, and face validity, i.e. the extent to which an instrument appears to measure what it is expected to measure, are considered important. Content validity is suitable for evaluating the quality of deductively created coding frames and face validity is relevant for inductively created coding frames. (Schreier 2012, 60–61, 90, 175 & 185–186)

In this study, a base for the coding frame was created deductively using information from previous studies, but the frame was completed inductively based on the analysed material. Thus, face validity was considered more relevant for evaluating validity in this case. The main factor implying low face validity is a lot of segments being assigned into residual

categories, i.e. categories for miscellaneous content that does not fit the other categories. This is a sign of the substantial categories not being able to capture the meaning of these segments, which again means that the coding frame does not sufficiently cover the meaning of the material. Another aspect to take into consideration is the distribution of segments across the coding frame categories. A large portion of material being coded under one category can indicate that the coding frame is not sufficiently differentiated. Also, the categories should not be too abstract, as that leads to more information being lost than what is necessitated by the summarising nature of qualitative content analysis. This is closely related to the number of categories in the coding frame: a larger number of categories typically is a sign of more aspects of the material being taken into consideration. (Schreier 2012, 186–188)

During the qualitative content analysis in this study, 2,3 % of all segments (N = 4266) were coded under the residual text category ('Miscellaneous beauty-related topics') and 1,7 % under the residual photo category ('Miscellaneous photos'). Additionally, 3,1 % of the material was categorised as irrelevant. This means that the substantial categories of the coding frame were able to capture the meaning of 95,9 % of the analysed relevant segments. The number of segments coded under a category varied between 2 (0,05 % of all segments) and 290 (6,8 %). The most frequent categories were 'Product in its packaging' (photo) (6,8 % of all segments were coded under this category), 'General opinion of a product' (6,6 %) and 'Basic product information' (6,2 %). This information is easily explained by the nature of the material, as 73 % of all analysed blog posts discussed beauty products, which typically involves featuring photos of the products as well as sharing an opinion and basic information about them. It also shows that there was not a single category with a significantly large number of segments coded under it, which suggests that the material was dispersed across different categories. The final coding frame used in this study included 34 text categories, 14 photo categories and 1 video category. The number of text categories in particular was limited around the maximum number of categories that was possible to reliably code in one round, without having to split the analysis into stages and thus increasing the amount of work and time required. This implies that the number of categories and consequently the level of detail in the coding frame was as high as was feasible within the scope of this study. All these factors suggest relatively high face validity in this analysis.

As the aim was to describe the material and not provide exact quantitative results, the content types, i.e. frequently co-appearing combinations of coding frame categories, were identified at the researcher's discretion using methods deemed suitable with regard to the research objectives. More exact results could have been achieved for example through

analysing the correlation of different categories appearing together in blog posts. However, this would not have brought additional value to the results considering the goal of qualitatively describing typical beauty blog content. Additionally, it depends on the blogger how the different categories are combined in blog posts, so analysing different case blogs might have led to slightly different descriptions for the identified beauty blog content types. However, as the majority of content types discussed in previous research on beauty blogs were identified in this study, it can be assumed that the coding frame of this study and the identified content types would relatively well apply to other beauty blogs as well.

5.3 Self-evaluation

My key learning during this thesis process was discovering, learning and applying a research method that was most suitable for solving a research problem that I identified based on my own interests and a gap in existing literature. Qualitative content analysis is a systematic scientific method, where it is important to logically proceed in analysing the material by following predetermined steps. To successfully implement the analysis, it was necessary for me to first carefully internalise the method and the aspects to consider at each step, after which I was able to determine how to best use it in my own research. After the analysis was complete, the output was a lot of raw data about individual segments that were coded under the categories of the coding frame. Thus, next I had to identify a method that was feasible within the scope of the study for interpreting this data and answering my research question. Finally, I reflected on my results and compared them to related to previous studies. Considering my research objective, I think the analysis and the interpretation of the results were successful but could however been made more reliable using more sophisticated statistical methods.

At the start of my research process, I spent a lot of time familiarising myself with literature on beauty blogs and blogging in general and only decided upon my research problem rather late in the process. After identifying the research question, I still had to spend a considerable amount of time on selecting and subsequently learning my research method. If I were to repeat this process, I would aim to define my research problem as early as possible and then focus my efforts on only studying material relevant to this problem. However, once I had decided on the method to use and selected the material for the analysis, the research proceeded smoothly, mainly by following Schreier's (2012) practical guide for qualitative content analysis.

6 Conclusion

This study identified three main types of content in beauty blogs: beauty-related advice and information, descriptions of the blogger's beauty habits and discussion about beauty products. The blogs provide both utilitarian and hedonic value to their readers. They offer solutions to skincare and haircare problems and help readers improve their makeup application skills while also making buying cosmetics easier and providing information for making better purchase decisions. At the same time, they help the readers find enjoyment from trying new products and offer inspiration for different makeup looks and hairstyles.

The primary value of this study was to provide a comprehensive overview of typical content in beauty blogs, on which there was little previous research available. In addition, it provided an understanding of the value offered by this content. The results of this study can be useful to cosmetic companies and marketing agencies specialising in influencer marketing. The findings can support the efficient planning and implementation of focused marketing campaigns on beauty blogs. The advertisers will have a thorough understanding of beauty blog content and the value it provides, which will help them define their expectations for marketing campaigns more accurately and thus facilitate communication between the blogger and the advertiser. The results can also help marketers with no previous experience in advertising on beauty blogs to quickly form an understanding of the marketing possibilities available. For existing and aspiring beauty bloggers, the results can give a set of practical tools for content planning and highlight the necessity of creating value to the readers. The bloggers will be able to recognise the features of valuable content in beauty blogs and utilise this knowledge to reflect on how to improve their content.

This study provided a theoretical model of the value provided by beauty blog content based on earlier studies on blog content value. The real value that readers find on beauty blogs could be confirmed empirically through interviews or surveys. Further analysis could study how beauty bloggers balance between commercial and non-commercial content and if the values readers find in commercial and non-commercial posts differ, as previous studies have shown that readers can find commercial content less trustworthy. The importance of social value provided by blogs is also known from previous research, but the social aspect of beauty blogs was excluded from this study. Thus, future research could also examine the social value found on beauty blogs. Additionally, learnings from this study can be applied to research on beauty videos on YouTube, which provide similar content in video format, as well as how the values offered by beauty blogs and YouTube videos differ.

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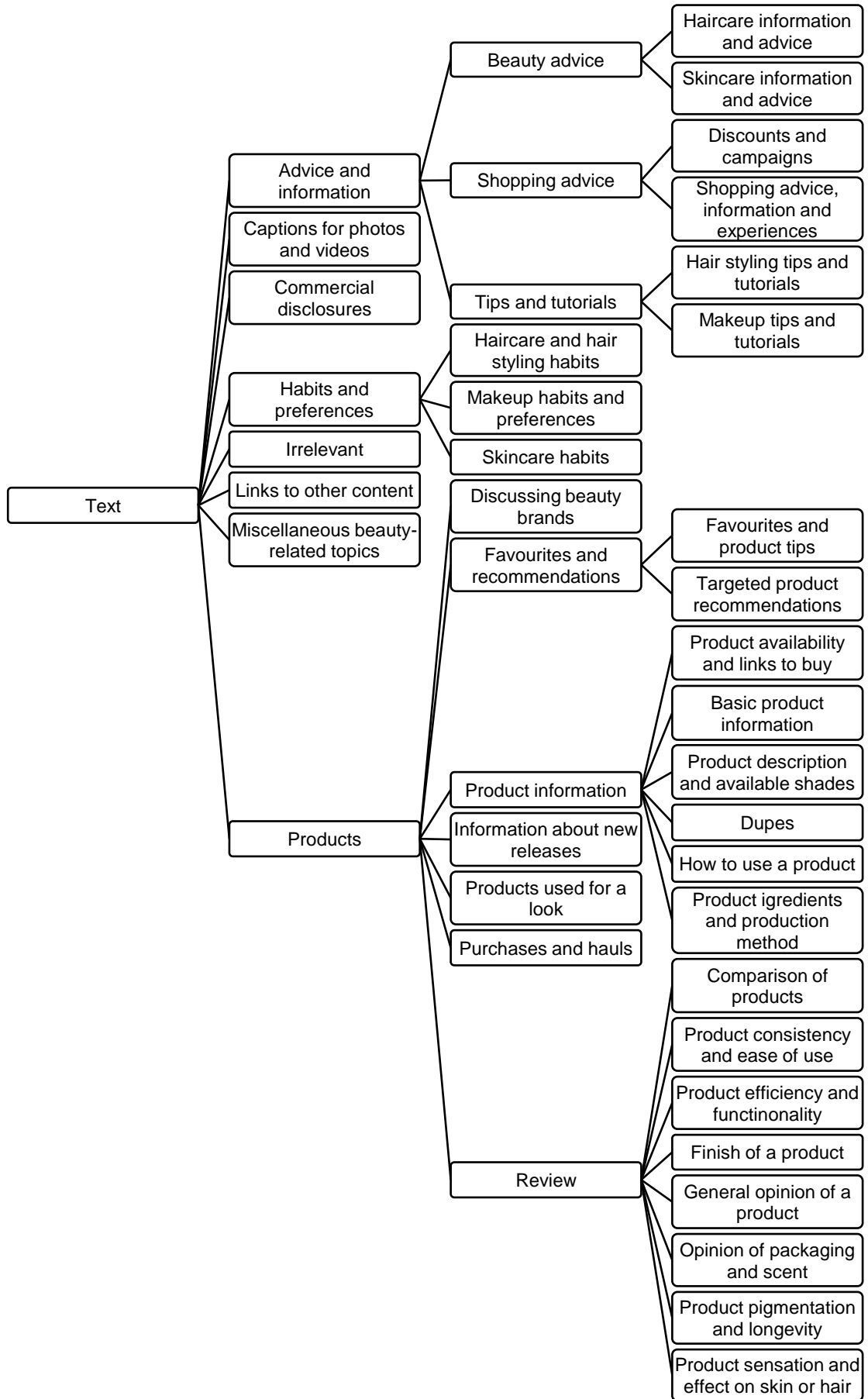
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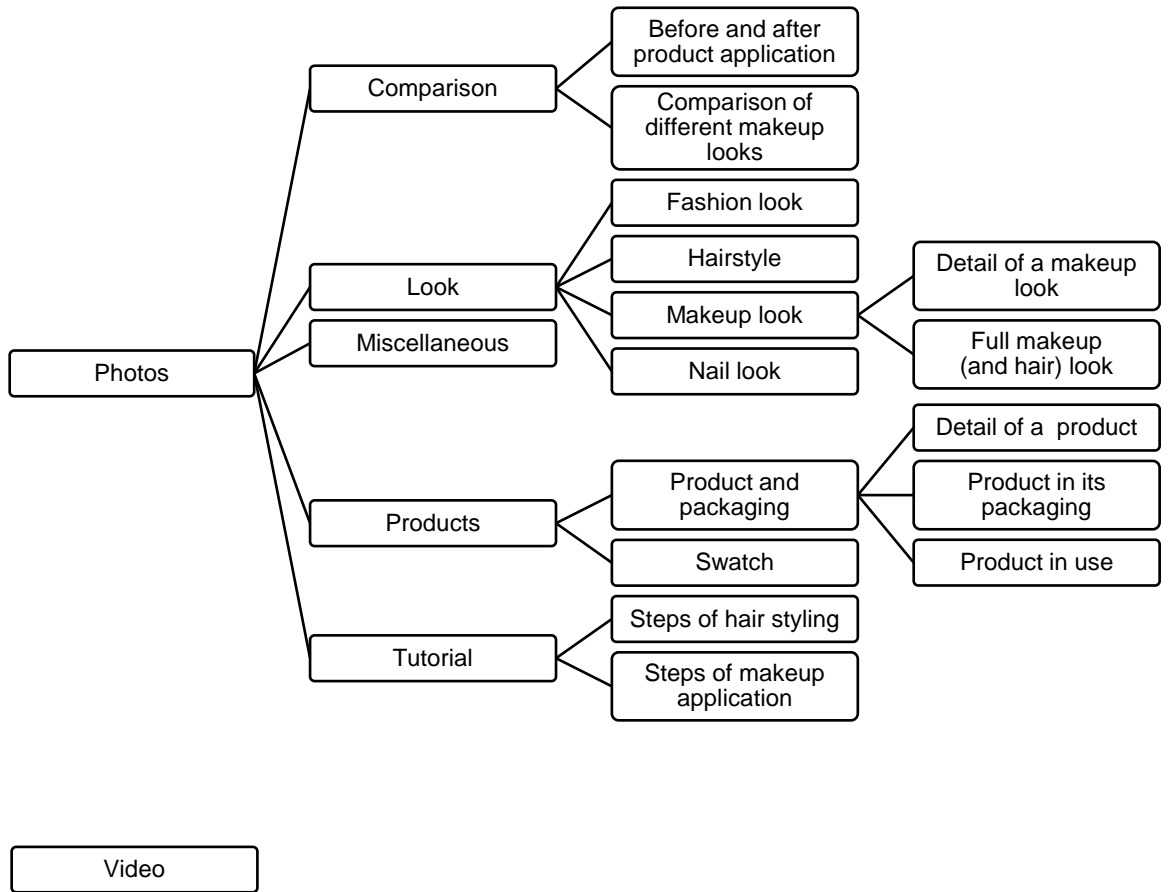
Appendices

Appendix 1. Preliminary coding frame built deductively based on previous research

| First-level subcategory | Second-level subcategory | Third-level subcategory | |
|--|---|--|---|
| Text (Kauraniemi 2017, 9) | Advice | Beauty advice (Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10) and personal care tutorials (Kroll 2015, 18) | |
| | | Shopping advice and sharing shopping experiences (Kroll 2015, 18) | |
| | | Makeup tips and tutorials (Daniluk 2016, 9; Kauraniemi 2017, 23–24; Kedveš 2013) | |
| | Sharing personal beauty routines (Kedveš 2013) | – | |
| | Discussing topics not related to beauty (Kauraniemi 2017, 9; Kedveš 2013; Kroll 2015, 18) | – | |
| | General beauty-related discussion (Daniluk 2016, 9; Kroll 2015, 18) | – | |
| | Beauty products (Kauraniemi 2017, 9) | | Views and opinions of beauty brands (Kauraniemi 2017, 24–25) |
| | | | Product recommendations and monthly favourites (Kauraniemi 2017, 9; Kroll 2015, 25) |
| | | | Product introductions and descriptions (Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10) |
| | | | Announcing new product releases (Kedveš 2013) |
| Listing products used for a makeup or nail look (Kauraniemi 2017, 9) | | | |
| Hauls (Kauraniemi 2017, 9 & 24) | | | |
| Product reviews and sharing opinions on products (Daniluk 2016, 9; Kauraniemi 2017, 9–10 & 24–25; Kedveš 2013; Kroll 2015 10 & 18) | | | |
| Recent empties (Kauraniemi 2017, 9; Kroll 2015, 9) | | | |
| Photos (Kauraniemi 2017, 9) | Looks | Photos of makeup looks (Kauraniemi 2017, 9; Kroll 2015, 57) | |
| | | Photos of nail looks (Kauraniemi 2017, 9) | |
| | Photos of beauty products (Kroll 2015, 57) and swatches (Kauraniemi 2017, 31) | – | |
| Video (Kroll 2015, 58) | – | – | |

Appendix 2. Final coding frame (diagram)





Appendix 3. Coding frame with category descriptions

Text categories

| Category | Description and decision rules | Example and translation |
|---|---|--|
| Haircare information and advice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – advice for and information about haircare and dyeing hair | <p>”Samalla tavoin kuin muutakin ihoa pitää kuoria, niin sitä tarvitse myös päänahka. Hiusten hyvinvointi lähtee päänahasta” (Johansson 1.3.2018)</p> <p>“Just as the rest of the skin needs to be exfoliated, so does the scalp. The wellbeing of the hair starts with the scalp”</p> |
| Skincare information and advice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – explaining what to do and what not to do in skincare and why – information about different skincare products and what they are used for – information about different skin types – skincare advice for different needs (e.g. skin type, age) – sharing information about skincare from external sources | <p>”Silmänympäryvoiteita pitäisi alkaa käyttämään siinä iässä, kun aloittaa meikkaamisen (jos ei nyt puhuta pelkästä ripsarin lisäämisestä). Viimeistään 20-vuotiaana kuitenkin olisi hyvä lisätä tämä päivittäiseen ihonhoitoon.” (Johansson 29.3.2018)</p> <p>“The use of eye cream should be started simultaneously as one starts to use makeup (unless it involves only wearing mascara). At the latest, this should be included in the daily skincare routine by the age of 20.”</p> |
| Discounts and campaigns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – advertising a shopping event or a sale of cosmetic products – sharing a discount code to the readers | <p>“Glöm inte att vi är på Kicks i Mall of Scandinavia idag mellan 14-18, och det är 20% på alla ögonprodukter” (Hallberg 25.3.2018)</p> <p>“Remember that we will be at Kicks at the Mall of Scandinavia today between 14–18 and there will be a 20 % discount on all eye products”</p> |
| Shopping advice, information and experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – information about a beauty store (e.g. its selection and delivery costs) – experiences from buying cosmetics from online stores – general advice for buying beauty products | <p>“Tilausasiassa sain rohkaisun teiltä, sillä joku lukijoistani oli tilannut Tartelta aiemmin ja kertoi, että ostos meni läpi ongelmitta ja tuotteet tulivat kotiin nopeasti. Minun paketillani kesti ehkä hieman kauemmin, koska en ollut kotona, kun DHL:n tyyppi yritti pakettia toimittaa, mutta ei 2,5 viikkoa Jenkeistä tulevalle paketille paha toimitusaika ole!” (Naakka 21.2.2018)</p> <p>“I was encouraged by you to make an order, as one of my readers had ordered products from Tarte</p> |

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| | | before and told me that there were no issues with the purchase and the products were delivered quickly. The delivery of my package took a bit longer, because I wasn't at home when the DHL courier was trying to deliver the package, but a delivery time of 2,5 weeks from the USA is not terrible!" |
| Hair styling tips and tutorials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – tips for hair styling (e.g. how to make the hair look more voluminous or make a hairstyle last) – discussing different ways to style hair – step-by-step instructions for creating a certain hairstyle, possibly mentioning the products used with links to buy them <p>Decision rule: Product-specific instructions are coded under 'How to use a product'.</p> | <p>"Ja vaikka et niin välittäisi hiusten pitämisestä kiharalla, antaa laine hyvän pohjan myös erilaisille kam-pauksille." (Naakka 5.2.2018)</p> <p>"And even if you don't like having your hair curled, a wave is a good base for different updos as well."</p> |
| Makeup tips and tutorials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – advice on what to do and what not to do when applying makeup to achieve flattering results – advice what shades to use for different occasions or to achieve flattering results – targeted makeup advice for different face and eye shapes – tips for makeup application (e.g. how to achieve a makeup look that lasts) – explaining how makeup can be used to achieve desired results (e.g. to look younger or make the skin tone look more even) – step-by-step instructions for applying makeup or creating a certain makeup look, possibly mentioning the products used with links to buy them | <p>"Tämä on ehkä yksi helpoimmista lookeista, joita olen ikinä blogiin tehnyt. Levitä vain luomiväriä koko liikkuvalla luomelle. Katso suoraan peiliin ja varmista, että luomiväri kurkkaa vähän luomivaon yläpuolelta. Tämä on tärkeä ohje varsinkin sellaisille, joilla on raskaat luomet. Häivytä luomivärin reunat." (Johansson 14.2.2018)</p> <p>"This is possibly one of the easiest looks that I have ever shown on the blog. Simply apply the eyeshadow on the entire mobile lid. Look straight in the mirror and ensure that the eyeshadow is just visible above the crease. This is important especially for those with hooded eyes. Blend the edges of the eyeshadow."</p> |

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| <p>Captions for photos and videos</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – explaining what is happening in a photo – stating the products that are shown in a photo – explaining how the effect of a makeup product can be seen in a photo – explaining what an embedded video contains – copyright credits for photos that are not taken by the blogger <p>Decision rule: If the segment is directly under a photo and only states what is in the photo, it is not categorised separately, but together with the photo.</p> <p>Decision rule: Based on context, if products are shown in a photo by themselves first, but the post later features a photo of a look where they have been used, the caption is coded under ‘Products used for a look’.</p> | <p>“Keräilin pitkään itselleni uusia tuotteita laatikkoon ja nyt vihdoinkin sain purkaa sen! Kuvasin siis videon itselleni täysin uusilla tuotteilla. Tässä ns. first impressions -videossa mukana mm. Tarten uutuusmeikkivoide, RCMA:n irtopuuteri ja Jeffree Star Velour Liquid Lipstick. Ja ehkäpä huonoin ripsiväri pitkään aikaan :D Tsekkaa koko tuotelistaus Youtubesta videon alta ja kerro mitä tykkäsit! :)” (Naakka 23.2.2018)</p> <p>“I was collecting new products in a box for myself for a while and now I was finally able to take them out! So I filmed a video with products that were completely new to me. This first impressions video features the new foundation from Tarte, the loose powder from RCMA and the Jeffree Star Velour Liquid Lipstick, among other things. And possibly the worst mascara in a while :D Check the complete list of products below the video on YouTube and let me know your thoughts! :)”</p> |
| <p>Commercial disclosures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – stating if the post contains ad links, advertising or features products that the blogger has received as PR samples | <p>“*pressutskick, innehåller adlinks” (Hallberg 27.3.2018)</p> <p>“*PR sample, contains ad links”</p> |
| <p>Haircare and hair styling habits</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how the blogger takes care of her hair and hair colour – what types of hair styling products the blogger typically uses – the blogger describing her hair issues | <p>“Yleensä käytän kevyttä työskentelylakkaa auki oleviin kampauksiin.” (Johansson 23.1.2018)</p> <p>“Normally I use a light working hair spray for open hairstyles.”</p> |
| <p>Makeup habits and preferences</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how the blogger likes to apply her makeup – what kind of tools and products the blogger prefers when applying makeup – what colours the blogger likes and how she decides what makeup or nail polish to wear – sharing other people's makeup habits | <p>“Jag har kört med no-foundation och fejkfräknar nu i två dagar. Känns rätt skönt faktiskt. Och så har jag haft två tidiga morgnar, har inte orkat lägga foundation..” (Hallberg 28.3.2018)</p> <p>“I have been wearing a no foundation look with fake freckles for two days now. It really feels rather lovely. And as I have had two early mornings, I haven't bothered with applying foundation...”</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Skincare habits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what the blogger does as part of her skincare routine and why – what kind of skin issues the blogger has or has had and how they have treated them or cover them with makeup | <p>“mutta päivällä iho on kuivuudesta edelleen korppu vaikka mitä tekisi. Olen kokeillut erilaisia seerumeita ja öljyjä ja sekoittanut aina meikki-voiteen sekaan jotain kosteutta-va. Silti mikään ei ole tuntunut riittävän” (Naakka 28.3.2018)</p> <p>“but no matter what I do, the skin is still parched during the day. I have tried different serums and oils and have always mixed something moisturising into my foundation. Still, nothing seems to have worked”</p> |
| Irrelevant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – content not related to beauty (skincare, hair, makeup or beauty products) – addressing the readers (e.g. greetings, asking questions from the readers) | <p>“God morgooooon! Idag har vi möte hela dagen, sen bär det av till Bologna lite senare. Vi ska på Cosmoprof! SÅ taggad!” (Hallberg 14.3.2019)</p> <p>“Good morning! Today we will be in meetings all day and then we are off to Bologna a bit later. We are going to Cosmoprof! I am so excited!”</p> |
| Links to other content | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – links to previous posts on the same blog or other resources on the same website, or republishing this content in a new post and linking to the original content – links to the blogger's social media channels – links to external websites (e.g. another blogger's post, a video or a beauty-related external website) | <p>“Ihonhoidon suosikeistani voit lukea ihonhoito-osiossani.” (Johansson 10.1.2018)</p> <p>“You can read about my favourite skincare products in the skincare section of my blog.”</p> |
| Miscellaneous beauty-related topics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – discussing beauty trends and popular types of products – discussing the beauty industry (e.g. cosmetic ingredients and their safety, sustainability in the beauty industry, working in the beauty industry) – the blogger sharing her general thoughts about makeup, skincare and other beauty-related topics – advertising upcoming beauty-related posts – beauty-related draws for the readers – beauty-related discussion that does not fit the other categories | <p>”Ysäriältä tutut hiusklipsut ovat palanneet! Klipsuja löytyy nyt joka lähtöön ja erityisen kiinnostavia ovat ne koristeelliset. Trendikäintä on asetella klipsut molemmille puolille päätä lähelle korvia.” (Naakka 6.1.2018)</p> <p>“The hairclips that were popular in the 1990s have made a comeback! There are all kinds of hairclips available and the decorative ones are particularly interesting. The trendiest look is to wear the clips close to the ears on both sides of the head.”</p> |

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|---|--|---|
| <p>Discussing beauty brands</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general information about a beauty brand – what products are available from a brand – the blogger's thoughts about a brand | <p>“Ja vielä kirsikkana jo muutenkin ihanan kakun päällä; Boho Green Make-up lahjoittaa vuosittain 1% yrityksen liikevaihdosta luonnon-suojelulle <3” (Naakka 22.3.2018)</p> <p>“And as a cherry on top of the cake: Boho Green Make-up donates 1 % of its annual revenue to environmental conservation <3”</p> |
| <p>Favourites and product tips</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the blogger's favourite products in a certain category (typically with links to buy them) – recommending beauty products and tools (typically with links to buy them) – mentioning products the blogger likes to use (typically with links to buy them) – sharing the readers' favourite products in a certain category <p>Decision rule: If a product is specifically recommended for a defined purpose or a certain skin type, the segment is coded under 'Targeted product recommendations'.</p> | <p>“WHAT IS YOUR MOST USED BASE PRODUCT THIS SPRING? Huda Beauty #FauxFilter foundation or Guerlain Lingerie de Peau foundation.” (Temptalia 31.3.2018)</p> |
| <p>Targeted product recommendations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – recommending beauty products to people with certain needs (e.g. different skin types, different ages or different haircare needs) – recommending products for specific occasions and uses (e.g. photoshoots) – stating if a beauty product suits a certain skin type or not | <p>“Nämä kaksi edellä mainitsemaani tuotetta ovat loistavia seka- ja rasvaisen ihon kaksoispuhdistukseen.” (Johansson 11.3.2018)</p> <p>“The two aforementioned products are excellent for the double cleansing of mixed and oily skin.”</p> |
| <p>Product availability and links to buy</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – explaining where a product can be bought and if it is currently available – link to a store that sells a certain product | <p>“Kollektionen finns ej än i Sverige, men finns på Katvondbeauty.com” (Hallberg 12.3.2018)</p> <p>“The collection is not yet available in Sweden, but it can be purchased at Katvondbeauty.com”</p> |

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| Basic product information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the price of a product and possible comments on the price – the size of the packaging of a product – the expiration period of a product – stating if a product is from a permanent or limited-edition collection – explaining what the product is supposed to do or sharing the description the brand has given about a product – the country of origin of a product – basic properties of the product (e.g. if it contains UV or heat protection, pH value) | <p>"och de kommer i burkar om 7 gram," (Hallberg 27.3.2018)</p> <p>"and they are available in jars of 7 grams"</p> |
| Product description and available shades | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describing how a product looks – listing the different available shades of a makeup product and possibly stating who they are suited for (e.g. different skin tones) – describing the colour of a shade or the shades in a makeup palette | <p>"is a medium pink with subtle, cool undertones" (Temptalia 27.3.2019)</p> |
| Dupes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – listing products that are very similar to another product | <p>"Tarte Bubbly (LE, \$28.00) is darker, cooler (90% similar). Milani Dayglow (P, \$10.00) is warmer (90% similar). MAC Summer Opal (LE, \$22.00) is cooler (90% similar)." (Temptalia 30.3.2018)</p> |
| How to use a product | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what a product can be used for or different ways to use a product – example of how the blogger uses a product and why – how to apply or remove a product – how to achieve the best possible results with a product (e.g. if the product should be used on top of another product or how the skin should be prepped before applying the product) – if a product works well in combination with other products or under makeup | <p>"joten se kannattaa levittää kabukisiveltimellä ohuena kerroksena." (Johansson 16.3.2018)</p> <p>"so it is best applied in thin layers with a kabuki brush."</p> |

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| Product ingredients and production method | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – mentioning the ingredients of a product or what material a product is made of – stating the purpose of the different ingredients in a product – mentioning ingredients that are not contained in a product (e.g. perfumes or preservatives) – stating if a product is cruelty-free or contains only natural ingredients | <p>“Ainesosalistasta bongasin ainakin soijaöljyn, auringonkukkaöljyn, E-vitamiinin ja maitohapon.” (Naakka 21.3.2018)</p> <p>“In the list of ingredients, I spotted soybean oil, sunflower oil, vitamin E and lactic acid, among other things.”</p> |
| Information about new releases | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – announcing that a new product from a brand has been released – sharing information the brand has given about the release (e.g. description, release date, if it is a permanent or limited-edition product and inspiration behind the product) – listing the products that are part of a new release | <p>“Jag har fått mycket frågor kring nedbrytbart glitter, och nu har faktiskt ett utav mina favoritglittermärken faktiskt släppt fyra nedbrytbara glitter! Joho” (Hallberg 29.3.2018)</p> <p>“I have received a lot of questions about biodegradable glitter and now one of my favourite glitter brands has actually released four biodegradable glitters! Yay”</p> |
| Products used for a look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – listing products used for a makeup or nail look (typically with links to buy them) <p>Decision rule: If the blogger mentions that a product is their current favourite, the segment is coded under 'Favourites and product tips'.</p> | <p>”Silmissä on taas Isadoran Eye Shadow Quartet 15 Coffee & Cream -luomiväripaletin sävyjä*.” (Johansson 9.3.2018)</p> <p>“And on the eyes, I am wearing shades from the Eye Shadow Quartet 15 Coffee & Cream eye-shadow palette by Isadora*.”</p> |
| Purchases and hauls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – listing products that the blogger has recently purchased and where she bought them – the blogger explaining why she decided to buy a certain product | <p>”Pari viikkoa sitten tein tilauksen Tartelle, jossa oli juuri silloin ilmaiset toimitukset kaikkialle. Halusin vihdoin ostaa lisää merkin kuuluisaa ja meikäläisenkin rakastamaa Shape Tape Contour Concealer -peiteainetta sekä heidän uutta meikkivoidettaan Shape Tape Hydrating Foundation. Lisäksi heitin mukaan Amazonian clay 12-hour full coverage foundation -meikkivoiteen” (Naakka 21.2.2018)</p> <p>“A couple of weeks ago I made an order at Tarte that at the time offered free worldwide delivery. I wanted to finally buy more of the brand’s popular Shape Tape Contour Concealer, which I also love, as well as their new Shape Tape Hydrating Foundation. In addition, I ordered the new Amazonian Clay</p> |

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| | | 12-hour Full Coverage Foundation” |
| Comparison of products | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – comparing a product to similar products or a previously related version of the same product | <p>“Olen aiemminkin käyttänyt Essencen sävykorjaajaa, mutta tämä on sitä edellistä puikkoversiota paljon tehokkaampi.” (Naakka 26.1.2018)</p> <p>“I have used a colour corrector by Essence before, but this one is a lot more effective than the previous stick version.”</p> |
| Product consistency and ease of use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describing the consistency or texture of a product (e.g. creamy, rich, heavy, smooth, light, thin, runny, dry, powdery) – explaining what happens to the product when it is applied on the skin – assessing the ease of the application of a product (e.g. if a makeup product is easy to apply evenly or blend, if there is fallout during the application of a makeup product or if a mascara forms clumps) – assessing the quality of the applicator of a product – assessing if a skincare product absorbs quickly – assessing if a product is easy to remove or if it leaves a stain or residue | <p>“I had no trouble blending and diffusing any of the shades on my skin, and despite having a firmer feel in the pan, I could use fan brushes and other feathery brushes to pick up product.” (Temptalia 31.3.2018)</p> |
| Product efficiency and functionality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assessing if a product performs as it is supposed to (e.g. if a cleanser cleans the skin well, if a shampoo leaves the hair fresh or if a hairspray keeps the hair in place) – the blogger describing how a product worked for her | <p>“Se puhdistaa ihohuokokset tehokkaasti meikistä ja epäpuhtauksista” (Johansson 11.3.2018)</p> <p>“It effectively cleans the pores of makeup and impurities”</p> |

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| Finish of a product | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describing how the skin looks after a product has been applied (e.g. if it is matte, glowing, shimmery or oily) – assessing if a makeup product emphasises natural skin texture or adheres to dry patches on the skin – assessing if a skincare product leaves a film on the skin after application – how the hair feels after using a haircare or hair styling product (e.g. smooth or sticky) – if a product is visible on the skin after application (for products that should not show, e.g. a foundation) | <p>“and a satin finish – it appeared almost matte, but the gold shimmer strewn through the bronzer became more apparent after I blended it on my skin.” (Temptalia 30.3.2018)</p> |
| General opinion of a product | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the blogger's overall opinion of a product or tool – assessing the different aspects of a product (general opinion, pigmentation, texture, longevity, application) using a quantitative scale – if the blogger likes the colour of a product – if the blogger uses the product regularly herself or has the product in her professional kit, if she is a professional makeup artist – sharing other people's or the blog readers' opinion of a product – the blogger's general thoughts about a product (not fitting the other subcategories of 'Review') | <p>“Jag är taggad på denna eftersom ni nog vet att jag ÄLSKAR dessa färger.” (Hallberg 14.3.2018)</p> <p>“I am excited about this because, as you know, I LOVE these colours.”</p> |
| Opinion of packaging and scent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general opinion and thoughts of the packaging of a product – assessing if it takes a long time to finish a product with normal use – if the product is practical to have with you and use for touch-ups during the day – opinion of the scent of a product <p>Decision rule: If an opinion of the ease of application or the applicator is included, the segment is coded under 'Product consistency and ease of use.'</p> | <p>“En usein pidä luonnonkosmetiikan vahvoista kasvituoksuista, mutta tässä on mieto, jopa hieman ylellinen sekä makea tuoksu.” (Johansson 16.2.2018)</p> <p>“I don't usually like the strong botanical scent of natural beauty products, but this one has a mild, even slightly luxurious and sweet fragrance.”</p> |

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| Product pigmentation and longevity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – assessing the opaqueness or pigmentation of a product – assessing how many application layers of a product are needed to achieve full coverage – assessing if a concealer or foundation hides skin imperfections well – assessing if a product is long-lasting on the skin without fading, transferring or otherwise changing appearance – assessing if a lip product gathers in the lip lines or if there is fallout from a powder makeup product during wear | <p>“It had semi-opaque pigmentation that was buildable to full coverage with two to three layers.” (Temptalia 25.3.2018)</p> |
| Product sensation and effect on skin or hair | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describing how a product feels when applied or used – assessing the effect of the product on the moisture level or softness of the skin or hair (e.g. if it is moisturising, nourishing, softening or drying) – assessing if the product smoothens or tightens the skin – stating if using a product has led to breakouts on the blogger's skin | <p>“Än så länge har jag bara känt mig ännu mer mjuk och len i ansiktet. Älskar det! Inga finnar eller andra konstigheter har ploppat upp heller.” (Hallberg 20.3.2018)</p> <p>"So far the skin on my face has just felt even softer and smoother. I love it! No pimples or other complications have appeared either."</p> |

Photo categories

| Category | Description and decision rules |
|---|--|
| Before and after product application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing the face before and after the application of a makeup product |
| Comparison of different makeup looks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a collage of two or more photos of makeup looks to compare the different looks (judged by context) |
| Fashion look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing a complete look with clothes, makeup and hair |
| Hairstyle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – picture of a hairstyle (not showing the face or clothes) |
| Detail of a makeup look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – photo focusing on a detail of a makeup look (e.g. the eye) |
| Full makeup (and hair) look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing a full makeup look (typically the hair is shown in the photo as well) – sharing a photo of someone else's makeup look (e.g. a celebrity) – the photo may also feature products that have been used or could be used to create the look |
| Nail look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing the nails with nail polish – the photo may also feature the nail polish bottle used for the manicure |

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| Miscellaneous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – miscellaneous photos not fitting the other categories – promotional photos released by brands – showing the blogger's makeup storage and the area where she does makeup – photos indirectly related to beauty (e.g. showing the blogger wearing makeup in an everyday situation, but the focus of the photo is not on showing the makeup) |
| Detail of a product | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing a detail of a product (e.g. the applicator or a close-up of the label) <p>Decision rule: If the photo clearly shows the ingredients list on the label, the photo is categorised under the text category 'Product ingredients and production method'.</p> |
| Product in its packaging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing the packaging of a product (the packaging may be closed or the product inside may be shown as well, several products may be featured in the same photo) – showing the blogger holding a product or products, with focus on showing the product <p>Decision rule: Based on context, if the focus of the photo is to show a makeup look, it is categorised under 'Makeup look' or 'Steps of makeup application'.</p> <p>Decision rule: If a blog post contains a photo that has been published on the blog earlier with a link to the original post, the photo is categorised under the text category 'Links to other content'.</p> <p>Decision rule: Photos showing a close-up of a part of a product and/or its packaging are categorised under 'Detail of a makeup product'.</p> |
| Product in use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing the application or use of a product in action |
| Swatch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing how a makeup product looks when applied on the skin, several shades may be shown in the same photo (the actual product may be shown in the same photo as well) – showing a lip makeup product on the lips (the photo shows only the lips, the rest of the face has been cropped off) |
| Steps of hair styling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – showing a step of a hair styling process |
| Steps of makeup application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a photo showing a step or a photo collage showing several steps of makeup application – a product used may be featured in the photo as well |

Video category

| Category | Description |
|--------------|--|
| Video | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – embedded beauty-related video created by the blogger or someone else |

Appendix 4. Photo categories of the coding frame and the categories that frequently accompany each of them

| Photo category | Frequently (over 50 % of times) accompanied by (frequency) |
|---|---|
| Comparison: Before and after product application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makeup tips and tutorials (63 %) - Commercial disclosures (63 %) - Links to other content (63 %) - Favourites and product tips (63 %) - Product availability and links to buy (75 %) - Basic product information (63 %) - Product description and available shades (63 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (75 %) |
| Comparison of different makeup looks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makeup tips and tutorials (100 %) - Captions for photos and videos (60 %) - Commercial disclosures (60 %) - Links to other content (100 %) - Miscellaneous beauty-related discussion (80 %) - How to use a product (60 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (60 %) |
| Fashion look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Captions for photos and videos (60 %) - Irrelevant (80 %) - Miscellaneous beauty-related topics (60 %) |
| Hairstyle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Links to other content (57 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (57 %) |
| Detail of a makeup look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (80 %) - Links to other content (60 %) - Product availability and links to buy (60 %) - Basic product information (60 %) - Product description and available shades (60 %) - Dupes (60 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (60 %) - Finish of a product (60 %) - General opinion of a product (60 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (60 %) - Photo: Detail of a product (60 %) - Photo: Swatch (60 %) |
| Full makeup (and hair) look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (67 %) - Products used for a look (58 %) |
| Nail look | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Miscellaneous beauty-related topics (75 %) - Products used for a look (75 %) |
| Detail of a product | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (83 %) - Links to other content (64 %) - Product availability and links to buy (79 %) - Basic product information (76 %) - Product description and available shades (71 %) - Dupes (57 %) - Product ingredients and production method (62 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (74 %) - Finish of a product (64 %) - General opinion of a product (83 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (71 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (79 %) - Photo: Swatch (71 %) |
| Product in its packaging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (80 %) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Links to other content (62 %) - Product availability and links to buy (70 %) - Basic product information (69 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (59 %) - General opinion of a product (73 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (52 %) |
| Product in use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (100 %) - Irrelevant (83 %) - Product availability and links to buy (67 %) - Basic product information (67 %) - Product sensation and effect on skin or hair (67 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (67 %) |
| Swatch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial disclosures (89 %) - Links to other content (74 %) - Product availability and links to buy (86 %) - Basic product information (80 %) - Product description and available shades (91 %) - Dupes (69 %) - Product ingredients and production method (69 %) - Product used for a look (51 %) - Product consistency and ease of use (83 %) - Finish of a product (77 %) - General opinion of a product (91 %) - Product pigmentation and longevity (83 %) - Photo: Detail of a product (86 %) - Photo: Product in its packaging (83 %) |
| Steps of hair styling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hair styling tips and tutorials (100 %) - Irrelevant (100 %) - Links to other content (100 %) |
| Steps of makeup application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makeup tips and tutorials (85 %) - Commercial disclosures (69 %) - Makeup habits and preferences (69 %) - Links to other content (62 %) - Favourites and product tips (62 %) - Photo: Full makeup (and hair) look (54 %) |

Appendix 5. Content types in each analysed blog post

Blog 1

| Unit of analysis | Content types |
|------------------|--|
| 1.01 | Irrelevant |
| 1.02 | Products used for a look |
| 1.03 | Products used for a look |
| 1.04 | Products used for a look |
| 1.05 | Information about new releases & Review |
| 1.06 | Products used for a look |
| 1.07 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.08 | Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look |
| 1.09 | Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look |
| 1.10 | Discounts and campaigns & Review |
| 1.11 | Hair styling tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look |
| 1.12 | Irrelevant |
| 1.13 | Haircare and hair styling habits & Review |
| 1.14 | Products used for a look |
| 1.15 | Discounts and campaigns & Products used for a look |
| 1.16 | Discounts and campaigns |
| 1.17 | Irrelevant |
| 1.18 | Discounts and campaigns & Products used for a look |
| 1.19 | Makeup habits and preferences & Information about new releases & Review |
| 1.20 | Products used for a look |
| 1.21 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.22 | Discounts and campaigns |
| 1.23 | Discounts and campaigns & Products used for a look |
| 1.24 | Products used for a look |
| 1.25 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.26 | Skincare habits & Review |
| 1.27 | Products used for a look |
| 1.28 | Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look & Review |
| 1.29 | Discounts and campaigns |
| 1.30 | Products used for a look |
| 1.31 | Irrelevant |
| 1.32 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.33 | Products used for a look |
| 1.34 | Discussing beauty brands |
| 1.35 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.36 | Products used for a look |
| 1.37 | Products used for a look |
| 1.38 | Discussing beauty brands |
| 1.39 | Information about new releases & Review |
| 1.40 | Products used for a look |
| 1.41 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |

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|------|---|
| 1.42 | Products used for a look |
| 1.43 | Information about new releases & Review |
| 1.44 | Products used for a look |
| 1.45 | Irrelevant |
| 1.46 | Products used for a look |
| 1.47 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.48 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 1.49 | Products used for a look |
| 1.50 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences |

Blog 2

| Unit of analysis | Content types |
|------------------|--|
| 2.01 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 2.02 | Beauty advice & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 2.03 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences |
| 2.04 | Discounts and campaigns & Products used for a look & Review |
| 2.05 | Haircare and hair styling habits |
| 2.06 | Discounts and campaigns & Makeup tips and tutorials & Review |
| 2.07 | Beauty advice & Skincare habits & Review |
| 2.08 | Beauty advice & Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look & Review |
| 2.09 | Beauty advice & Makeup habits and preferences & Review |
| 2.10 | Review |
| 2.11 | Beauty advice & Makeup tips and tutorials & Review |
| 2.12 | Beauty advice & Skincare habits & Review |
| 2.13 | Information about new releases & Products used for a look & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 2.14 | Shopping advice, information and experiences & Hair styling tips and tutorials & Haircare and hair styling habits & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 2.15 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 2.16 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Review |
| 2.17 | Hair styling tips and tutorials |
| 2.18 | Beauty advice & Haircare and hair styling habits & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 2.19 | Makeup tips and tutorials |
| 2.20 | Beauty advice & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Makeup tips and tutorials & Review |
| 2.21 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Discussing beauty brands & Information about new releases & Review |
| 2.22 | Beauty advice & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Skincare habits & Review |
| 2.23 | Makeup habits and preferences & Information about new releases & Review |
| 2.24 | Products used for a look |
| 2.25 | Beauty advice & Skincare habits & Review |
| 2.26 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look & Review |
| 2.27 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Review |

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|------|---|
| 2.28 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Review |
| 2.29 | Makeup tips and tutorials |
| 2.30 | Makeup habits and preferences & Review |
| 2.31 | Beauty advice & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Skincare habits |
| 2.32 | Hair styling tips and tutorials & Haircare and hair styling habits & Products used for a look |
| 2.33 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look |
| 2.34 | Beauty advice & Review |
| 2.35 | Discounts and campaigns & Makeup habits and preferences & Skincare habits & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 2.36 | Hair styling tips and tutorials & Products used for a look |
| 2.37 | Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 2.38 | Hair styling tips and tutorials |
| 2.39 | Discounts and campaigns & Hair styling tips and tutorials & Haircare and hair styling habits & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 2.40 | Beauty advice & Skincare habits & Discussing beauty brands & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 2.41 | Review |
| 2.42 | Haircare and hair styling habits |
| 2.43 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences |
| 2.44 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 2.45 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 2.46 | Beauty advice & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Makeup tips and tutorials & Skincare habits & Review |
| 2.47 | Makeup tips and tutorials |
| 2.48 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences |
| 2.49 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 2.50 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |

Blog 3

| Unit of analysis | Content types |
|------------------|---|
| 3.01 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.02 | Products used for a look |
| 3.03 | Skincare habits & Review |
| 3.04 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences |
| 3.05 | Review |
| 3.06 | Discussing beauty brands |
| 3.07 | Beauty advice & Discounts and campaigns & Skincare habits & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 3.08 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.09 | Irrelevant |
| 3.10 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.11 | Discussing beauty brands & Information about new releases & Purchases and hauls |
| 3.12 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.13 | Discussing beauty brands & Review |

| | |
|------|--|
| 3.14 | Makeup habits and preferences & Discussing beauty brands & Information about new releases & Review |
| 3.15 | Beauty advice & Haircare and hair styling habits & Discussing beauty brands & Information about new releases & Review |
| 3.16 | Information about new releases & Review |
| 3.17 | Skincare habits & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 3.18 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.19 | Beauty advice & Skincare habits |
| 3.20 | Haircare and hair styling habits |
| 3.21 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.22 | Shopping advice, information and experiences & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 3.23 | Discounts and campaigns & Shopping advice, information and experiences & Discussing beauty brands & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 3.24 | Haircare and hair styling habits |
| 3.25 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Review |
| 3.26 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.27 | Skincare habits & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 3.28 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Discussing beauty brands & Review |
| 3.29 | Review |
| 3.30 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.31 | Hair styling tips and tutorials |
| 3.32 | Review |
| 3.33 | Shopping advice, information and experiences & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 3.34 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.35 | Makeup tips and tutorials |
| 3.36 | Shopping advice, information and experiences |
| 3.37 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Skincare habits & Review |
| 3.38 | Shopping advice, information and experiences & Discussing beauty brands |
| 3.39 | Hair styling tips and tutorials |
| 3.40 | Shopping advice, information and experiences |
| 3.41 | Purchases and hauls |
| 3.42 | Hair styling tips and tutorials |
| 3.43 | Makeup habits and preferences & Discussing beauty brands & Information about new releases & Purchases and hauls & Review |
| 3.44 | Makeup habits and preferences & Products used for a look |
| 3.45 | Irrelevant |
| 3.46 | Discounts and campaigns & Hair styling tips and tutorials & Review |
| 3.47 | Makeup tips and tutorials & Makeup habits and preferences & Review |
| 3.48 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.49 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 3.50 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |

Blog 4

| Unit of analysis | Content types |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4.01 | Review |
| 4.02 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.03 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.04 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.05 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.06 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.07 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.08 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.09 | Purchases and hauls |
| 4.10 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.11 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.12 | Review |
| 4.13 | Review |
| 4.14 | Information about new releases |
| 4.15 | Irrelevant |
| 4.16 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.17 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.18 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.19 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.20 | Review |
| 4.21 | Review |
| 4.22 | Irrelevant |
| 4.23 | Information about new releases |
| 4.24 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.25 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.26 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.27 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.28 | Review |
| 4.29 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |
| 4.30 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.31 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.32 | Makeup habits and preferences |
| 4.33 | Review |
| 4.34 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.35 | Makeup habits and preferences |
| 4.36 | Information about new releases |
| 4.37 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.38 | Discounts and campaigns |
| 4.39 | Makeup habits and preferences |
| 4.40 | Review |
| 4.41 | Review |
| 4.42 | Review |
| 4.43 | Review |
| 4.44 | Miscellaneous beauty-related content |

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| 4.45 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.46 | Products used for a look & Review |
| 4.47 | Makeup habits and preferences |
| 4.48 | Review |
| 4.49 | Review |
| 4.50 | Review |