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Exploring audience engagement in YouTube vlogs through consumer engagement theory: The case of U.K. beauty vlogger Zoe Sugg

by Hantian Zhang and John Lee

Through the lens of consumer engagement theory, this research develops a case study of U.K. vlogger and influencer Zoe Sugg. Findings suggest that YouTube vloggers' implementation of interaction, rewards and information offers as audience engagement factors can be seen as contributing to their consumer engagement as personal brands on YouTube. This research bridges gaps regarding the application of consumer engagement theory to vlogging. It offers new directions for exploring audience experience with vloggers and similar social media creators from a perspective of obtaining consumer engagement.

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1. Introduction

Video blogs (vlogs) are a streamed video media type on a variety of topics including beauty, gaming and lifestyles (Jerslev, 2016). Consumption of vlogs is widespread: over 50 percent of adults in the U.S. were vlog viewers (Nguyen, 2018).

YouTube has played an important role in encouraging vlog consumption (Kaminsky, 2010). YouTube allows video bloggers (vloggers) to easily distribute content (Weaver, *et al.*, 2012). Vloggers who operate on YouTube are also called YouTubers (Corréa, *et al.*, 2020).

Some YouTube vloggers have developed large audiences. In 2020, among more than 37 million channels on YouTube, 700 YouTube channels gained over 10 million subscribers, and around 22,000 channels gained over one million subscribers (Funk, 2020). These popular vloggers could also be seen as influencers, famous among their viewers and with an ability to influence public opinions towards, for example, brands and products (Abidin and Ots, 2016; Freberg, *et al.*, 2011). These YouTube vlogger influencers are part of a larger culture of online influencers, along with other social media influencers established through, for example, content creation on Instagram, Twitter and TikTok. Our focus in this paper is on vlogging, and on YouTube vlogging in particular, which, if a vlogger transitions to influencer, can grow to have complex relationships with their work on other platforms.

One concept that relates to vloggers' success on YouTube is the achievement of *audience engagement* (AE). AE refers to the building of connections and experiences between online media creators and audiences.

The achievement of AE with online media, such as vlogs on YouTube, is reflected by active participatory activities by audiences with vloggers including liking and commenting on videos, and the direct consumption of vlog content (Burgess and Green, 2018; Khan, 2017; McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016).

Existing research unveiled vloggers' common implementation of AE factors to engage viewers on YouTube. These include encouraging viewer interaction for participation and using certain filming techniques to stimulate consumption (*e.g.*, McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016; Rasmussen, 2018; Zhang, 2018).

Commonly, the AE factors concerning vlogs and YouTube that can account for vlogger success have been mainly studied from the perspective of a creator-audience relationship.

In this paper, however, we propose another angle to interpret AE and its contribution to vlogger success through a concept that has rarely been applied explicitly in the context of vlogging. The concept is *consumer/customer engagement* (CE) — behavioural connections between consumers and brands, beyond product purchase and consumption (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010).

CE has been widely used to refer to consumer relationships with brands (*e.g.*, Beckers, *et al.*, 2018; Obilo, *et al.*, 2021). Achieving CE can build and maintain positive relationships between firms and consumers. CE turns consumers into participants (Schmitt, 2012) taking part in product development (Sashi, 2012) and fostering product success.

CE also fosters customer trust, brand knowledge, retention and dissemination of a brand via "word of mouth" (WOM — communication between consumers regarding a brand) (Cheung, *et al.*, 2020; Obilo, *et al.*, 2021; Vivek, *et al.*, 2012).

This paper aims to establish an argument that when considering vloggers as personal brands, AE with vloggers can be understood as a form of CE.

This paper also argues that some AE factors that vloggers use to engage viewers, in general, could be seen as CE factors contributing to vlogger success as personal brands.

We build this argument by using a case study of a popular vlogger. This case study illustrates how we can see AE factors in vlogger videos as comparable to those exploited by traditional brands for CE.

By exploring vlogger AE using CE, this paper provides an explicit discussion that bridges the gap between CE and vlogging on YouTube.

This paper contributes to those areas in the literature that seek to understand YouTube and similar social media creator and influencer practices for their audience bases and their overall successes or failures.

The paper offers new ways for interpreting behaviours of online content creators that may eventually build audiences and fan bases.

2. AE and CE in vlogging

2.1. Audience engagement (AE)

Shao (2009) characterized user engagement with online user-generated media as consisting of *participation* (*e.g.*, interactions between users), *consumption* (*e.g.*, viewing content) and *production* (*e.g.*, posting content).

On YouTube, user engagement refers to participation, production and consumption of content on the platform (Khan, 2017). So, AE emphasizes user activities as audiences, consisting of participation and consumption on online media platforms.

For vlogging on YouTube, the concept of AE also applies. For example, Burgess and Green (2018) stressed the importance of conversational features, emphasizing interactions between vloggers and viewers.

McRoberts, *et al.* (2016) identified vlogger AE behaviours, including interacting with viewers via comments.

AE was also considered as being reflected in YouTube metrics including views, comments and likes (Szmuda, *et al.*, 2020).

These implied that AE with vloggers is viewer participation on YouTube and consumption of content, which could be related to the building of viewer-vlogger relationships.

Previous studies unveiled vlogger practices for AE on YouTube. For participation, researchers found that vloggers encourage viewer comments (McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016), ask for video ideas (Rasmussen, 2018) and respond to viewer comments to create expectations for new videos (Tur-Viñes and Castelló-Martínez, 2019).

Perceived authenticity associated with behaviours like self-disclosure (Ferchaud, *et al.*, 2018; Jerslev, 2016; Marópo, *et al.*, 2020) also encourages continuous engagement activities by viewers on YouTube (*e.g.*, subscribing to channels) (de Bérail, *et al.*, 2019).

For consumption, Zhang (2018) suggested that vlogger camera techniques helped to generate a sense of "presence" — a psychological feeling of being in an environment and with vloggers presented in videos — absorbing viewers into a story (Tal-or and Cohen, 2010) presented by a vlog.

Bishop (2018) argued that an understanding of YouTube's algorithms plays an important role in vlogger content visibility. Vloggers use "keyword stuffing" [1] to make the speech searchable through closed captions and more likely to be recommended by algorithms, encouraging viewer consumption.

Appealing content could be another reason for vlogger AE. For instance, learning and entertainment are two important reasons for teens to subscribe to YouTube channels and consume content (García Jiménez and Montes Vozmediano, 2020; Pires, *et al.*, 2019). This implies that vloggers' educational and entertainment content may contribute to their AE by attracting followers.

We can argue that these AE factors contribute to vlogger success as reflected by large audience bases. However, these factors have been mainly studied by previous researchers from a creator-viewer perspective.

In this paper, we suggest another angle to interpret AE factors and their contribution to vlogger success through the concept of CE. This concept has rarely been explicitly applied in the context of vlogging.

2.2. Consumer/customer engagement (CE)

CE represents consumer behaviours towards a brand beyond purchase and consumption. These behaviours include consumers posting brand-related messages (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010), co-developing with a brand (*e.g.*, providing ideas for new products) (Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014), delivering WOM (*e.g.*, recommending products to others) (Beckers, *et al.*, 2018) and interacting with other consumers (Obilo, *et al.*, 2021).

Researchers have defined CE as a psychological process (Bowden, 2009; Mollen and Wilson, 2010). It is a psychological state that involves cognitive (*e.g.*, concentration on the brand), emotional (*e.g.*, attachment to the brand) and behavioural (*e.g.*, consumer participation) dimensions (Alvarez-Milán, *et al.*, 2018; Brodie, *et al.*, 2011; Hollebeek, 2015).

Although CE has a psychological dimension, from a brand's perspective, it can only be inferred from consumer behaviours.

For instance, the psychological state of engagement with a brand can only be identified when customers are actively supporting a given brand (Sashi, 2012), participating in brand-initiated activities (Vivek, *et al.*, 2012), or actively posting brand-related messages on blogs (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010).

We view CE as behavioural connections between consumers and brands, beyond purchase and consumption.

"Consumers" and "customers" are defined differently. Customers are people who purchase a given product while consumers are end users.

However, customers can be product users while consumers can also become potential customers. Companies that want to develop CE may need to treat consumers and customers equally.

This is perhaps why we found "customer" and "consumer" were used to express CE interchangeably (*e.g.*, Brodie, *et al.*, 2013; Brodie, *et al.*, 2011). In this paper, we do not distinguish between consumers and customers in CE.

2.3. AE as a form of CE in vlogging

We argue that AE and CE in vlogging are closely related because we consider vloggers as personal brands.

Like traditional brands, vloggers present themselves online and provide videos as their primary products for their audiences (consumers). They may ultimately receive, for example, audience views, likes, subscriptions and fan bases that derive from and contribute to their visibility on YouTube. They potentially earn income through video monetization (*e.g.*, advertising).

Vlogger capabilities of generating social and/or economic values allow us to see them as having one or more characteristics that are in line with the concept of personal brand — "an intangible asset linked to a person, which generates economic and social value through its visibility as a result of a personal branding process" [2]. Abidin and Ots (2016) also indicated that the development of personal brands was key to the

success of online influencers.

Though personal brands are different from traditional brands as organizations, self-branding is still a “series of marketing strategies applied to the individual” [3]. Arruda (in Chen, 2013) stated that personal branding mirrors traditional branding. Chen (2013) and Tarnovskaya (2017) found the personal branding stages of YouTube creators were similar to those of traditional brands.

In this paper, we consider vloggers as personal brands developed on YouTube and viewers as their consumers of products as videos. This transforms our view of the vlogger-viewer relationship from a creator-audience perspective to a brand or provider-consumer perspective.

Some researchers consider “social media engagement” to be a form of CE that refers to consumer and brand relationships built through social media. It involves consumer interaction with a brand, co-creation of brand-related content and expression of attitudes towards a brand on social media (Barger, *et al.*, 2016; Dessart, 2017; Pentina, *et al.*, 2018; Mishra, 2019).

We consider vloggers to be personal brands and vloggers’ AE refers to building an audience and vlogger relationships on YouTube akin to a social media site. We argue that AE achieved by vloggers on YouTube can be interpreted as a form of CE that builds vlogger-audience relationships. It contributes to the success of vloggers as personal brands on YouTube.

AE on YouTube usually involves both participation and content consumption (Khan, 2017; Shao, 2009). However, we regard audiences’ viewing vlogs from vloggers (as personal brands) as comparable to a consumption of brand products. CE also relates to behaviours beyond product purchase and consumption.

Therefore, we construct our explicit concept of AE in vlogging as:

A form of CE manifested by viewers’ behavioural connections with vloggers, as personal brands, that extend beyond vlog viewing.

For instance, engaged viewers will actively comment, like or subscribe to vloggers’ YouTube channels. This is similar to how consumers engage with a brand.

AE has rarely been discussed in relation to vlogging on YouTube as a form of CE, from a perspective that considers the vlogger-audience relationship to be comparable to that between brands and consumers.

Corr a, *et al.* (2020) noted followers’ engagement with vloggers as CE with “human brands”. However, this concept of vloggers as human brands mainly referred to them as marketing personas. They promoted other products in their videos to consumers, who were also their audiences. CE with these vloggers was also revealed through “the purchase or use intention of the brands” [3] as presented in videos. Therefore, that study did not discuss how vloggers promoted themselves as personal brands.

Cheng, *et al.* (2020) considered the WOM (*e.g.*, recommending vlogs to others) among vlog audiences as a manifestation of their CE behaviours towards travel vlogs. This is similar to the WOM among consumers. This CE behaviour was then found to positively affect travel intentions of consumers. However, Cheng, *et al.* saw viewers as potential consumers for tourism locations presented in vlogs. They did not conceptualize AE via CE within a vlogging context specifically from the perspective that vloggers were brands and audiences were consumers of video products.

Other researchers discussed vlogging and YouTube as channels for engaging with traditional brands or other objects rather than with vloggers. For example, vlogs have been used to encourage student engagement (DeMara, *et al.*, 2016); as tools for civic and political engagement to discuss social issues (Caron, 2017; Raby, *et al.*, 2018); and to engage consumers with advertising (Kujar and Singh, 2018). These researchers have seen vlogs as vehicles focused on achieving a kind of engagement with some wider concept or issue.

Therefore, the rest of this paper presents our exploration of how vloggers’ actions for AE can be seen as comparable to traditional brands’ actions for CE.

3. Interpreting AE factors via CE in vlogs

We initially compared critical factors originally implemented by companies for CE with vloggers’ common practices for AE in existing studies. We identified three key factors contributing to vlogger CE: *interaction, rewards and information offers*.

3.1. Interaction

On YouTube, it is common for vloggers to engage audiences via interaction. Those interactions include responses to comments and questions from audiences, asking questions and requesting video ideas (Burgess and Green, 2018; Rasmussen, 2018; Tarnovskaya, 2017; Tur-Vi es and Castell -Martinez, 2019).

We argue that, as personal brands, vlogger interaction with viewers for AE is comparable to brand companies interacting with consumers for CE. Firms can encourage interaction by, for example, arranging interactive events (Vivek, *et al.*, 2012), using online platforms (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010) and involving consumers in the creation process for new products and services (Brodie, *et al.*, 2013; Vivek, *et al.*, 2018).

Sashi (2012) considered interaction to be important for the CE process through which customers and firms communicate via tools like social networking that helps firms to understand consumer needs.

Shawky, *et al.* (2020) further stated that interaction was an important level of engagement indicating the start of two-way communication between consumers and brands.

The similarities between vlogger interactions with audiences to encourage participation as personal brands, and corporate strategies of interacting with consumers for CE as traditional brands, allows us to argue that vloggers use interactions as an AE factor that contributes to their CE.

3.2. Rewards

Research has shown that vloggers announce giveaways to engage their viewers (McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016; Rybaczewska, *et al.*, 2020; Tarnovskaya, 2017). These are similar to *rewards* that corporations commonly provide to customers for CE (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010; Ashely and Tuten, 2015).

Rewards can be useful to encourage a co-creation process (Sawhney, *et al.*, 2005; Hoyer, *et al.*, 2010), related to the development of CE (Brodie, *et al.*, 2011).

Hence, vloggers’ offering rewards for their audiences is comparable to companies rewarding their consumers for CE. We argue that vloggers implement rewards as a type of AE factor that can be interpreted as contributing to their CE.

3.3. Information offers

A common purpose for consuming online user-generated media is seeking information (Shao, 2009). Research found that seeking information heavily affects user participation on and consumption of social media. Users seek information for solving specific tasks via YouTube (Buf and  tefanii , 2020) and searching for brand updates on other social media sites (Kamboj, 2019).

Offering information to an audience should be important for vloggers to promote not only their content but also information that might be useful to their viewers. Previous research noted that vloggers promote information such as their social media sites (McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016; Tarnovskaya, 2017) in videos.

Similarly, corporations also offer various resources to keep consumers informed about their products (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010). This is also related to relevance-building (Vivek, *et al.*, 2018), which includes companies providing relevant information engaging customers.

Therefore, vloggers’ offering information to their audiences is comparable to companies providing related information for CE.

Since we consider AE as a form of CE, this argument allows us to suggest that interaction, rewards and information offers performed by vloggers are important AE factors in order to achieve CE as personal brands.

However, previous research (*e.g.*, Burgess and Green, 2018; McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016; Rasmussen, 2018) examined the use of these factors as vloggers’ actions for AE in videos. They did not explicitly interpret their findings in terms of CE theory.

4. Research methods

4.1. Case study of Zoe Sugg

Zoe Elizabeth Sugg is a U.K. beauty vlogger who also became an influencer via her beauty vlogging creations on YouTube. She started her YouTube channel *Zoella* [2] in 2009 featuring mainly beauty videos. Her second channel, *MoreZoella* [4], contains videos of her life activities. She has been ranked first on the *Forbes*’ Top Influencer List (O’Connor, 2017), and also features multiple social media channels including Twitter and Instagram. It can be argued that she has since transcended YouTube and become a broader kind of influencer altogether (Smith, 2022). Her role as an Instagram influencer has recently been analysed in detail (Belanche, *et al.*, 2021). Here we focus on her YouTube career as an example of successful vlogging as a specific media form.

Sugg built a large fan base on YouTube, an indicator of her success. Her channel *Zoella* reached over 11 million subscribers by July 2017.

According to Social Blade (2018) at <https://socialblade.com/>, only 300 of 23 million YouTube channels have over 10 million subscribers. As of 2020, still, only 700 channels out of over 37 million channels have 10 million subscribers (Funk, 2020).

Subscribing to a YouTube channel “demonstrates that a user desires a continued relationship with that YouTube personality” [2]. Hence, we consider subscribing to Sugg’s channel to be an example of a viewer’s engagement in building a long-term and intimate relationship (Sashi, 2012) with her as a personal brand.

Therefore, Sugg is an appropriate case of a self-branded vlogger where the achievement of AE can be seen as a form of CE contributing to her success on YouTube.

Sugg’s long vlogging history since 2009, with multiple video types, allows us to analyse her output in detail and extract rich information. This is essential for analysis of a selected, specific case (Patton, 1990).

We are mainly examining Sugg to demonstrate how the implementation of AE factors can be interpreted as CE factors within real-life vlogging practice.

We then use information extracted Sugg’s example to propose specific implementations of these factors as ways for vloggers to achieve CE. This creates a direction for future investigation and measurement.

Sugg has already achieved extensive AE, based on the number of subscribers, which we take as an indicator of successful CE. We use CE theory to explore how her practices compare to those of traditional brands in ways that may help to account for her success.

However, Sugg is only one case, and we cannot be sure how typical she is, even as a highly successful influencer vlogger. We are encouraged by the relationships that we find between her practice and our theory to feel that it would be worth investigating others in the same vein.

4.2. Data collection

We collected links to videos uploaded by Sugg before August 2017 ($N=346$) on her main channel *Zoella*, where her success originated.

We then categorise Sugg’s videos [2] as: Haul, Collection, Personal Item Showcase, Beauty Experience, Beauty How-to, Product Review, DIY, Fashion and Style, Entertainment, Reaction, Topical Chat, Year Conclusion, Q&A, Documentary, Channel Celebration, Self-facts, Draw My Life.

One video was selected from close to the beginning of each year in each category, up to the year 2017. In total, 76 videos were collected as our final samples [2]. Though video content is our main data, text attached to videos (audience comments and video descriptions), was also considered during the analysis process.

4.3. Thematic analysis

We adapted a thematic analysis as a qualitative approach on sampled videos to identify and interpret patterns in our vlog data to reflect on Sugg’s practice on YouTube, with both *deduction* and *induction* as two primary approaches (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

In our deductive analysis, we sought to identify engagement factors, derived from CE theory, that we thought existed in Sugg’s videos. Three main codes were first developed — *interaction, rewards and information offers*.

- *Interaction* includes any message that Sugg delivers in videos that can trigger viewer actions in addition to video viewing, such as responding to her requests by commenting.
- *Rewards* indicates offers from Sugg to recognize her audience’s actions and contributions.
- *Information offers* refers to Sugg’s promotion of related information that viewers may appreciate, such as promoting other social media platforms.

Our deductive analysis aimed initially to identify these engagement factors in video content.

We used both transcription and description for coding. All video samples were watched in full and in detail.

If engagement factors were delivered by Sugg’s verbal messages and textual content (*e.g.*, on-screen text), transcripts of the messages were extracted and coded.

Engagement-related non-verbal factors were transferred into textual description and coded. If the overall narrative of the video led to an engagement factor, a code was assigned to the entire video with a description of the narrative.

This approach helped us to initially extend CE theory to vlogging by identifying and applying predefined codes to videos and allowing detailed analysis among vlog data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

For the inductive analysis, we compared coded content to identify specific patterns in the implementation of each AE factor. We grouped this content and gave them a new code as the particular implementation of a factor [10].

We then employed CE theory and existing research to see how Sugg's implementations of these factors were comparable to those that traditional brands use to encourage CE, and thus how they could be seen as relating to her CE as a personal brand.

Some interpretations were also made based on other resources, including audience reactions to these implementations, as reflected by, for example, comments under a given video.

To ensure the trustworthiness of this study, we established credibility, dependability and transferability by employing triangulation (Patton, 1999) and the code-recode technique (Anney, 2014; Krefting, 1991). We also provided a detailed description (Guba, 1981; Thomas and Magilvy, 2011) of Sugg's profile, channel type, status and video types in the context of YouTube [11].

Data posted by public figures, intended to reach a large audience, are considered public, not private (Townsend and Wallace, 2016). There were no concerns over privacy as long as Sugg's videos were publicly presented [12].

Sugg's public videos were meant to reach various audience groups and arguably were expected to be viewed by many individuals. The videos were unlikely to be of a sensitive nature (Townsend and Wallace, 2016).

In addition, viewers' public comments and messages posted relative to popular vloggers' videos were also meant to be read by many others. Therefore, we feel that we could use and quote these messages directly, if necessary, without informed consent. We anonymized viewers as a good practice, considering that their profiles were not as public (Townsend and Wallace, 2016).

5. Results and discussion

We discovered patterns of explicit implementations of interaction, rewards, and information offers across Sugg's videos. These AE factors could be understood as contributing to Sugg's CE.

5.1. Interaction

We found three types of interactions that Sugg used in her videos: *interaction fulfilment, encouragement, and reflection*. By interpreting these actions through CE theory, we argue that they could all be seen as AE factors that contributed to Sugg's successful CE.

Interaction fulfilment

Interaction fulfilment refers to Sugg's fulfilling viewers' interactive requests. One typical example was Sugg's use of Q&A videos, in which she answered viewers' questions from YouTube comments or social media.

This action was similar to the observation by Tur-Viñes and Castelló-Martínez (2019) in which popular vloggers addressed viewers' comments in the form of new videos. Another common type of interaction fulfilment was making videos based on viewer requests.

In terms of CE theory, Sugg's interaction fulfilment was an AE factor that contributes to her CE. Interaction is a key level of CE with satisfaction as an important component, that can help consumers progress to a higher level of CE (Shawky, et al., 2020).

Therefore, Sugg's fulfilling consumer requests for new videos and answering their questions in Q&As may satisfy viewers' needs and build a critical bridge towards CE.

Vloggers' responses to viewers' comments in the form of new videos is also a "carefully designed loyalty marketing strategy" [13]. These actions can maintain viewers' attention to new videos, create expectations for new content and generate new conversations.

These expectations can further encourage engagement behaviors because viewers may feel that their needs could be fulfilled by continuously interacting with Sugg, like consumers engaging with brands beyond product consumption in CE.

For instance, one month after a hair tutorial requested by viewers in 2014 [14], Sugg posted another hairstyle tutorial. She indicated that its content had been requested by viewers [15], indicating a co-creation loop. In this loop, Sugg's creation resulted in further audience requests as an engagement behaviour leading to further fulfilment of interactions.

Sugg's creating an audience-requested video also provided an example that was similar to co-creation between product providers and consumers in CE (Brodie, et al., 2013; Brodie, et al., 2011). In co-creation, consumers (audience) provide ideas for product development (video creation).

Encouragement of interaction

We identified two main ways in which Sugg encouraged interaction, which could be interpreted as CE factors that correlated with AE for Sugg.

First, Sugg actively encouraged viewers to leave suggestions for video ideas. For example, in a video, Sugg asked viewers to comment about videos that they wanted from her during the year: "I really want to know what videos you guys would like to see from me in 2015, so if you have any suggestions for those then do leave those in the comments below also." [16]. This resulted in viewers actively commenting in her videos (Figure 1).

Comments	Username	Date
can you do a q&a or an ask/dare zoe		11th Jan 15 21:27:02
please do some beauty hauls, q&a, diys xxx		11th Jan 15 21:33:24
in 2015 do more q&a 's xx		11th Jan 15 22:01:36
hauls!!! ❤️❤️👍👍		11th Jan 15 22:16:56
shop hauls please! x love your videos		11th Jan 15 22:36:50
zoe do a new haul		12th Jan 15 01:38:53
Please do more of q and a videos		12th Jan 15 12:47:07
more haul videos for 2015!!! you're amazing!!!!		14th Jan 15 09:18:18

Figure 1: Viewer responses to Sugg (retrieved via Hadry.com; composite image).

These actions are comparable to the corporate use of the facilitative role in marketing to involve consumers in projects or service development for CE (Vivek, et al., 2018).

Encouraging consumers in co-creation contributes to CE (Brodie, et al., 2011) and also lead to consumer loyalty because of a positive brand-consumer relationship developed during the process (Parihar, et al., 2019).

Therefore, we see an analogous process with Sugg's videos in which she asked for video ideas from her viewers.

Second, Sugg requested viewer reactions by asking them to leave comments about vlog content. For instance, in a video, she asks viewers about the best time to visit Amsterdam [17].

This is similar to other vloggers (McRoberts, et al., 2016), in developing a way to motivate audience participation (Tur-Viñes and Castelló-Martínez, 2019).

Social interaction (e.g., commenting) is a primary motivation for users to participate on YouTube (Khan, 2017; Pires, et al., 2019). It positively affects consumer online brand engagement activities, including participating in brand-related discourses on social media (Buzeta, et al., 2020).

Similarly, we found Sugg's requests triggered viewers to give suggestions in comments, as shown in [Figure 2](#). This is comparable to companies' marketing efforts in engaging consumers for opinions on social media ultimately affecting CE (Mishra, 2019).

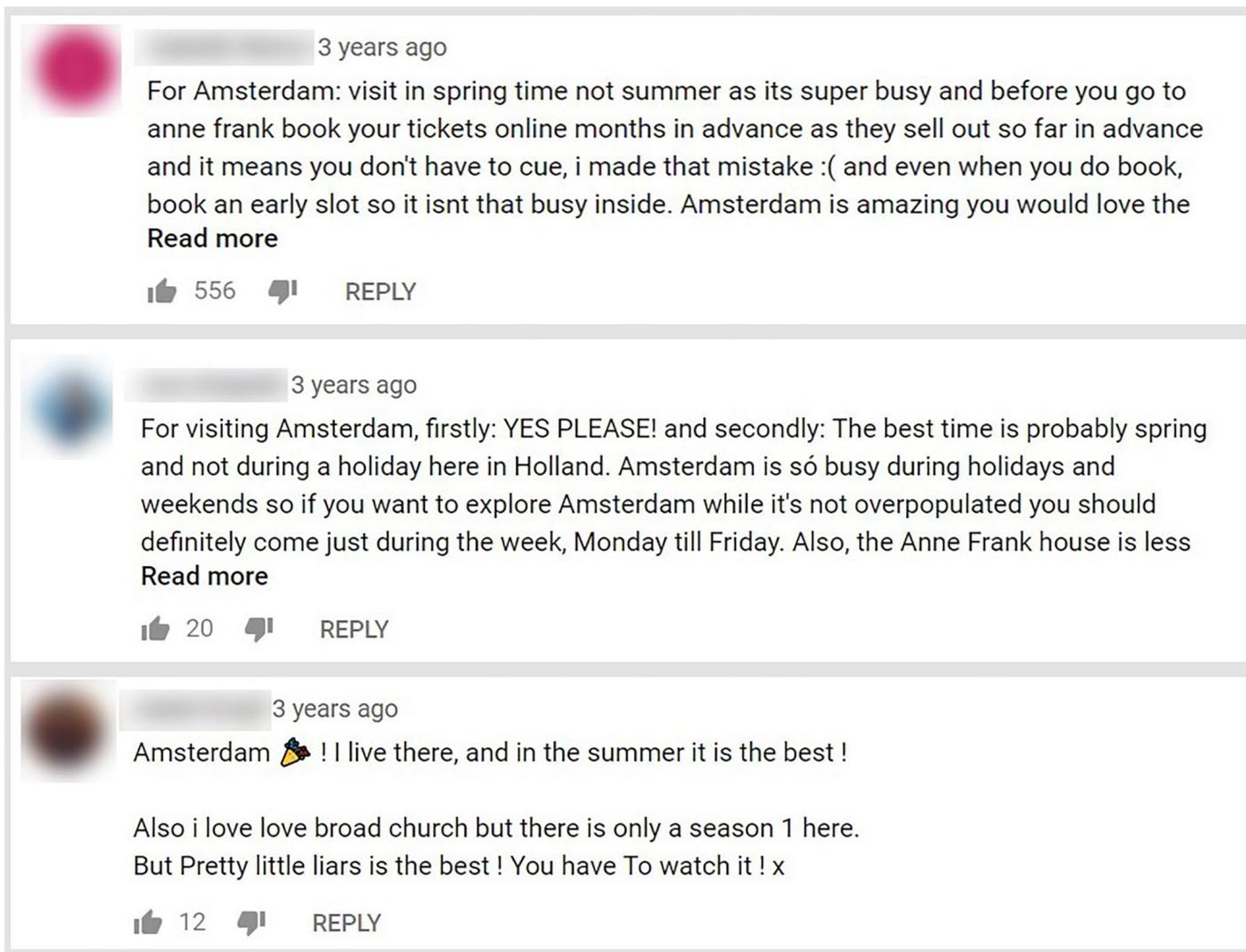


Figure 2: Examples of viewer responses to Sugg's question about Amsterdam (composite image).

Therefore, encouraging reactions may satisfy viewer motivations and encourage CE through participation beyond video consumption.

Interaction reflection

Interaction reflection was Sugg's reactions to her audience's interaction, comparable to other vloggers who acknowledge viewers' presence (McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016). We found that Sugg notified the audience of her reception of interactions in videos.

For instance, at the beginning of a makeup tutorial, Sugg noted: "Firstly, I just quite like to ask how you are, because I feel like you guys are always asking me how I am, and I would actually quite like to know how you are" [18].

Sugg and her boyfriend Alfie Deyes also reacted to edited videos that her fans created called "Zalfie edit" [15].

These reactions may encourage viewers to continue to make creations as their form of engagement with Sugg; we found there were still uploads of fan-made footage on YouTube ([Figure 3](#)).



my zalfie edit

ZALFIE LOVER • 32 views • 1 year ago



Alfie! I love you!//photograph (zalfie edit)

Tabby Edits • 758 views • 1 year ago

Literally my favourite edit I've made --- Copyright Disclaimer Under Section 107 of the Copyright Act 1976, allowance is made for ...



Zalfie edit | I love you

Suggedits • 776 views • 1 year ago



NEW EDIT: ZALFIE IN NEW YORK ❤️

Youtuber Edits • 83 views • 1 year ago

ZALFIE (pointlessblog and zoella) New York vlogs exists please comment if you like it.



Zalfie Edit

Amy -Chan • 102 views • 1 year ago

Please suscribe and comment what other edits you what me to do this is just a quick and easy upload im working on a JERKIA ...



ZALFIE EDIT #2

Shipping Jaspar • 47 views • 1 year ago

enjoy :)

Figure 3: "Zalfie edits" on YouTube.

We interpret viewers sending messages or creations as consumer-initiated engagement (Vivek, *et al.*, 2012). Sugg's reaction to audience messages may give viewers the feeling that Sugg not only noticed their engagement actions but also cared about them (Rasmussen, 2018), which positively encouraged them to further engage with her.

Expressing gratitude for consumer contributions on social media is an important strategy for building consumer loyalty and as a starting point for long-term consumer-brand relationships (Shawky, *et al.*, 2020).

Sugg's reactions and expressions of gratitude created an interaction between the provider (Sugg) and consumers (audience) that is "at the heart of CE" [21].

By interpreting Sugg's interactions with her viewers via CE theory, we propose that Sugg achieves CE through engaging her audience via interaction, implemented as interaction fulfillment, encouragement and reflection.

5.2. Rewards

During video collection and categorisation, we found Sugg offered her audience beauty or fashion products giveaways (Figure 4). We consider these to be a form of rewards commonly used by vloggers (Rybczewska, *et al.*, 2020).



Spring BooHoo LookBook & Giveaway ad | Zoella

Zoella ✓ 2.2M views • 3 years ago

Spring BooHoo LookBook & £500 **Giveaway** This is a paid for advertorial Shop the Looks: <http://bitly.com/1zTGzaC> Enter the



BooHoo Haul & Giveaway | Zoella

Zoella ✓ 2.5M views • 3 years ago

BooHoo Haul & **Giveaway** * This is a paid for advertorial Competition link: <http://bit.ly/1uWdVcA>
Products Mentioned: Kayley Mesh



Primark Haul and Giveaway | Zoella

Zoella ✓ 1.6M views • 4 years ago

A Primark Haul & Ticket **Giveaway GIVEAWAY** CLOSED Tickets still for sale: <http://bitly.com/10Yo4v> Katy Perry is touring the UK May



Topshop Haul & £500 Giveaway | Zoella

Zoella ✓ 1.3M views • 5 years ago

The things I bought in Topshop & £500 **Giveaway!** Most of the items I purchased can be found here: <http://bitly.com/14vh7Lq> To enter

Figure 4: Sugg's giveaways (composite image).

Providing these rewards helped Sugg achieve engagement because most of them were conditional rewards. To secure rewards, viewers were required to perform certain actions such as commenting under Sugg's videos, which in turn encouraged viewer participation (Garcia-Rapp, 2016). These conditional rewards provided viewers with the potential to connect with Sugg beyond mere video consumption. Sugg's rewards were similar to those provided by companies for CE behaviours (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010), such as consumer participation via social media sites (Ashley and Tuten, 2015). Rewards have also been found to positively influence consumer participation and CE in social media brand communities (Kamboj, 2019; Kaur, *et al.*, 2020). Hence, we regard Sugg's rewards as a CE factor. Sugg's rewards took another form in encouraging viewers to "like" her videos in exchange for more video content. This action was a way of sustaining viewers by suggesting ways to interact with videos, encouraging AE (McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, rewards are also used to encourage co-creation between customers and firms (Hoyer, *et al.*, 2010; Sawhney, *et al.*, 2005) which in turn can develop CE (Brodie, *et al.*, 2011). Similar to corporate strategies of giving rewards for co-creation, requests for likes is potentially a co-creation activity (Obilo, *et al.*, 2021; Shawky, *et al.*, 2020). Sugg provided videos as rewards based on viewers' likes for specific content. Overall, Sugg used rewards by giveaways and "like for more" as a form of AE that contributed to CE.

5.3. Information offers

We found that Sugg actively offered information to her audience in different ways:

- encouraged her audience to check her other video content (Figure 5);
- promoted content of other vloggers, specifically in videos that involved her collaboration with those vloggers; and
- constantly provided information about products that she demonstrated in her videos.



What's In My Bag? (Winter Edition) | Zoella

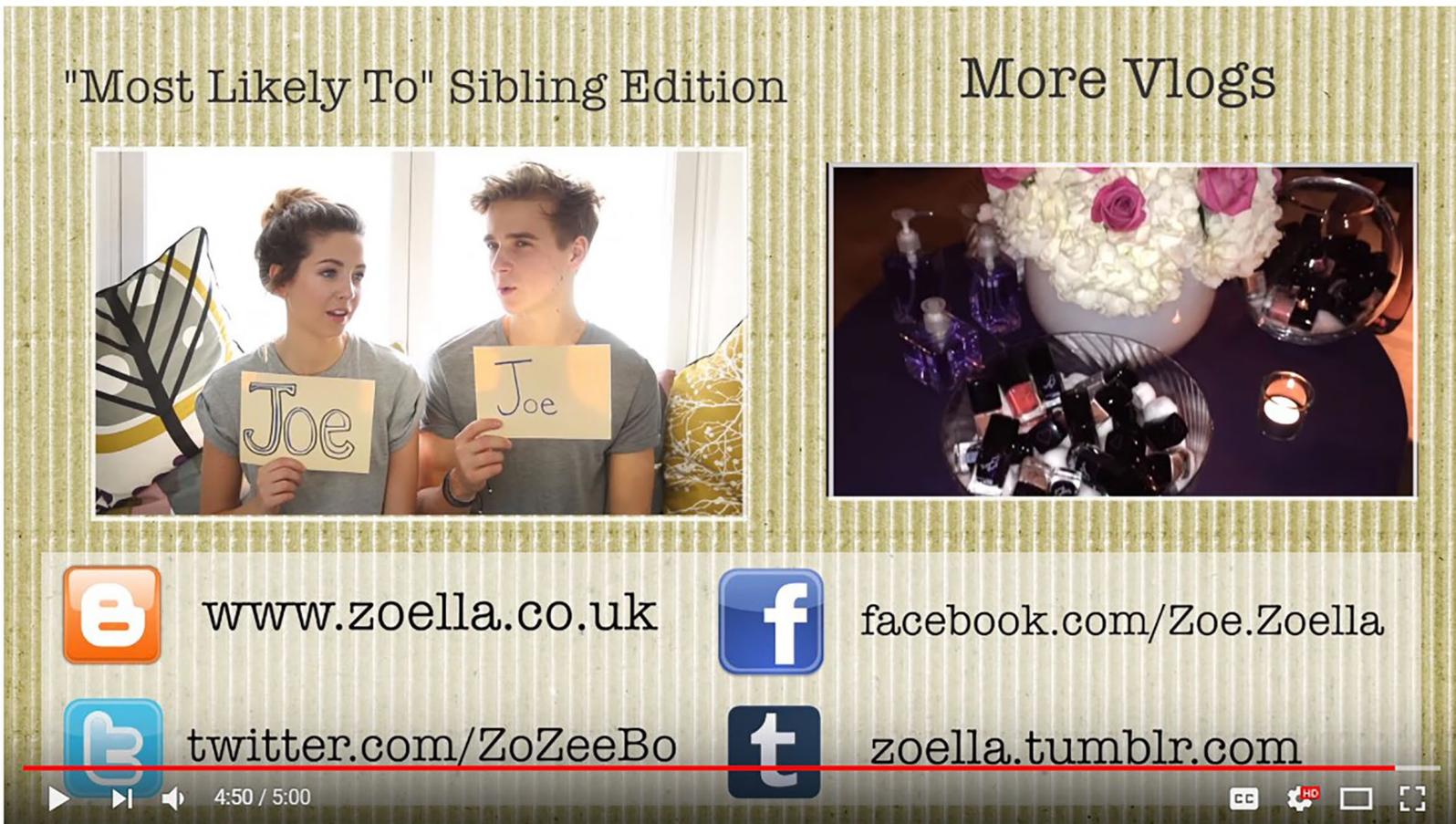
3,241,994 views

👍 76K 💬 949 ➦ SHARE ⋮

Figure 5: Sugg promoted videos on her second channel on the left side of the screen [22].

Similar to other vloggers (Garcia-Rapp, 2016; McRoberts, *et al.*, 2016; Tarnovskaya, 2017), we found that Sugg promoted her social media sites for maximized online visibility (Marópo, *et al.*, 2020).

Sugg used visual "end cards" with links to her other content at the end of a given video (Figure 6). Although she has seldom used these cards since 2015, she still includes information that once appeared on those cards in video descriptions for her audience.



How To: Halo Braid | Zoella

4,995,787 views

👍 207K 💬 1.1K ➦ SHARE ≡+ ⋮

Figure 6: Sugg's end card with social media promotion [23].

By these actions Sugg acted in a way that was comparable to companies offering related information, building relevance with consumers for CE (van Doorn, *et al.*, 2010; Vivek, *et al.*, 2018), like providing information about products on social media (Ashley and Tuten, 2015).

Seeking information is one motivation for an audience to consume YouTube content (Buf and Ștefăniță, 2020; Khan, 2017; Pires, *et al.*, 2019). Dolan, *et al.* (2019) also found that informational content posted by brands on social media contributed to CE behaviours.

Sugg's offers of information may satisfy viewer motivation and lead them to actively follow Sugg's updates on the channel for more content as a CE behaviour.

Sugg's active promotion of her social media also connected her audience to other platforms.

6. Conclusion

AE is a common concept used to address creator-audience relationships on media platforms like YouTube. CE is also a common concept that is used to address consumer-provider relationships associated with brand success.

In the context of vlogging on YouTube, CE and AE have rarely been connected to interpret vlogger success. This paper initially bridged that gap by applying CE theory to offer a new perspective on interpreting vlogger AE practices on YouTube.

By viewing vloggers as personal brands, we characterised vlog AE as a form of CE manifested by behavioural connections between viewers and vloggers that extend beyond video viewing.

We consider interaction, rewards and information offers performed by vloggers to be critical AE factors for their CE. This interpretation is based on connections between CE factors and common AE practices by vloggers in related research.

We then explored how vloggers' implementations of these factors could be interpreted as contributing to CE, by conducting a study of the YouTube vlogger Zoe Sugg.

Sugg exploited techniques, to achieve AE, that could be interpreted as CE factors.

We observed that Sugg used interaction, with interaction fulfilment, encouragement and reflection.

Sugg delivered rewards based on her own subject focus, mainly product giveaways, or provided videos as a form of reward by asking for "likes".

Sugg also offered related information that viewers may have needed to keep them updated and connected by actively promoting information about video content, social media and products shown in videos.

Based on theories and related research on CE, these AE behaviours are comparable to factors implemented by traditional brands to encourage CE.

These actions may be found among other vloggers, especially those who have become influencers with similar success to Sugg, in terms of audience size on YouTube.

Our research takes an initial step to bridge gaps regarding the explicit application of CE theory to vlogging to interpret vlogger AE on YouTube. The research adds to the existing literature on how AE practices by YouTube vloggers relate to their audience bases and their success. Our results argue that CE theory can be extended from a provider-consumer perspective to an analogous individual vlogger-viewer perspective.

This study offers researchers a new perspective to understand behaviours by vloggers and similar social media creators and influencers for AE in their content as CE factors. These factors can develop a vlogger/online content creator-audience relationship comparable to a provider or brand-consumer relationship.

Our research may also help existing vloggers or social media creators understand how their behaviours, strategies or techniques affect viewer experiences that relate to CE.

There are certain limitations of our research. First, our results show that for Sugg, at least, the predictions of our application of CE theory to interpret AE in vlogging are borne out. Hence it may apply to other similar vloggers. However, further research should be undertaken on other vloggers to investigate whether, or in which ways, this is so.

Also, in the case study, we demonstrated how we can consider vlogger AE practices to be comparable to those performed by traditional brands and firms for CE. However, although our results propose that AE factors contribute to vlogger CE, we cannot estimate the degree of their effectiveness on CE. Future studies could measure the effectiveness of these factors.

In addition, our samples from Sugg were gathered in 2017. Analysing these data initially addressed our research objective of the application of CE theory to interpret vlogger AE, based on Sugg's practices during that period in which her success had already been built. However, YouTube is a fast-changing platform, as is the vlog industry. For example, since 2018 Sugg shifted her focus onto her second channel and elsewhere, as noted earlier (Belanche, et al., 2021; Smith, 2022).

Future research could focus on more recent vlog industries and practices and compare those with our results. We could then see whether there are similar or new outcomes that could help us understand vlogger-audience relationships from the perspective of CE.

Finally, our research interests mainly focused on Sugg's practices on YouTube, where her popularity mainly originated. However, Sugg's activities have extended beyond YouTube, including her beauty brand Zoella Beauty and her founding of the creative agency *A to Z creative* (Weiss, 2018).

These professionalized and commercialized practices have made Sugg and other similar vloggers now less different from mainstream celebrities and brands (Usher, 2020). They may generate engagement that is closer to traditional CE where people engage as customers rather than as YouTube viewers.

Further research could focus on the merge between YouTube practice and commodity practices to explore the establishment of engagement.

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Notes

1. Bishop, 2018, p. 80.

2. Scheidt, et al., 2020, pp. 4–5.

3. Marwick, 2013, p. 166.

4. Corrêa, et al., 2020, p. 179.

5. Zoella at <https://www.youtube.com/user/zoella280390/>.

6. MoreZoella at <https://www.youtube.com/user/morezoella>, now called Zoe Sugg.

7. Ferchaud, et al., 2018, p. 89.

8. Descriptions of Sugg's video types are in the supplementary data set file "Zoe Sugg's profile and video types" in [Appendix A](#).

9. Video samples are listed in the supplementary data set file "Zoella video samples" ([Appendix B](#)).

10. Analysis examples can be found in the tables of the supplementary data analysis file "Thematic analysis" ([Appendix C](#)).

11. See [Appendix A](#).

12. Six videos samples (uploaded between 2009 and 2011), were set to private by Sugg in 2021. Therefore, due to ethical concerns we did not reveal the content of those videos in this paper.

13. Tur-Viñes and Castelló-Martínez, 2019, p. 11.

14. Zoella (19 February 2014), "How to: Halo braid," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H82HzwSK2s>

Sugg indicated that the video was requested by viewers (00:19): "I get a lot of requests from you guys saying: 'how have you done this, how do you do that?' So, I thought today I would do like, a midweek mini video, showing you how I do one of my many styles that I like to do."

15. Zoella (19 March 2014), "How to: Messy bun," at <https://youtu.be/y8d6PspOXE?e=22>

Sugg indicated in the video that the content was requested by viewers (00:21): "The next hairstyle I want to do with you is also every highly requested."

16. Zoella (11 January 2015, 16:48), "2014 beauty favourites," at <https://youtu.be/No24eMwGAP4?e=1008>

17. Zoella (26 January 2015, 05:32), "Playground films & the perfect pizza #AskZoella," at <https://youtu.be/q4KNEFFgDoc?e=331>

18. Zoella (16 March 2016, 00:01), "Spring pinks makeup look | Show & tell," at <https://youtu.be/uGpP773pn-s>

19. Zoella (16 January 2017), "Reacting To Zalfie edits," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JfYC7rb4PE>

20. Zoella (11 January 2015, 16:13), "2014 beauty favourites," at <https://youtu.be/No24eMwGAP4?e=972>

21. Vivek, et al., 2012, p. 133.

22. Zoella (9 December 2012, 00:38), "What's in my bag? (winter edition)," at https://youtu.be/VG-N_CogOMV?e=38

23. Zoella (19 February 2014, 04:50), "How to: Halo braid," at <https://youtu.be/H82HzwSK2s?e=289>

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Appendix A: Descriptions of Zoe Sugg (Zoella)'s profile, channels and video types

Zoe Sugg (Zoella)'s profile and channel status

Zoe Elizabeth Sugg, also known as *Zoella*¹ on YouTube, is a U.K. beauty, fashion, and style vlogger. She created her YouTube channel *Zoella* in 2009. Her channel had reached over 11 million subscribers by July 2017. *Forbes* listed her as one of the top influencers in the beauty category in 2017². Her main channel, *Zoella*, mainly features videos about beauty products and tutorials, and other content such as conversational content. She also has her second channel called *Zoe Sugg MoreZoella*³, which was created in 2012 contains videos of her life activities. Apart from videos, she has also created her own brands including beauty brand Zoella Beauty⁴. She also has released novels, such as the series *Girl Online*⁵.

Video types from Zoe Sugg (Zoella)

Details on Sugg's video types:

Haul⁶: Haul videos feature Sugg showing her audience beauty or fashion products that she bought and providing some details, like prices.

Collection⁷: Collection videos have a similar format as Hauls, but do not necessarily show things that Sugg just bought. For instance, she shows products she likes in the video series called 'Favourites'. Products are not only beauty related, but also others such as food and drinks.

Personal Item Showcase⁸: In these videos, Sugg shows the audience things that she usually keeps personally, especially in her bag. Some of these items are regular daily essentials, not necessarily beauty products.

Beauty Experience⁹: Sugg introduces her everyday beauty habits in these videos, such as her daily skin care method.

Beauty How-to¹⁰: These videos feature step-by-step tutorials on beauty styles, especially makeup and hair tutorials.

Beauty Product Review¹¹: In these videos, Sugg shows new products and expresses her opinions about them.

DIY¹²: These videos show food preparation and sometimes handicraft, such as festive dessert making and decoration crafting.

Fashion and Style¹³: These videos show Sugg in different scenes wearing different types of clothing. These videos mostly feature cinematic editing and background music. In addition to fashion, she also showcases her lifestyle in a similar format, for instance, showing home decorations and festive parties.

Reaction¹⁴: Reaction videos feature Sugg responding to things, such as her old pictures or videos made by fans. The whole process is also related to entertainment but is more specifically focused on her specific reactions.

Entertainment¹⁵: Entertainment videos mainly show amusing activities. For example, Sugg invites other vloggers to answer questions about herself. Entertainment is a category with a broad range of topics, but its main purpose is amusement, in addition to her other signature beauty videos.

Topical Chat¹⁶: These videos feature Sugg talking directly to the camera about personal topics and advice.

Year Conclusion¹⁷: In these videos, Sugg summarises what happened during the previous year and discusses her plans for the new year.

Q&A¹⁸: In Q&As, Sugg answers questions that viewers have asked under video comments or on social networks. Sometimes, the questions that she answers are pre-set from the Internet; in this case, after she finishes answering questions, she asks other vloggers to do the same. This action is called a 'tag'. Videos in which she answers set questions are called 'tag videos' in a Q&A format.

Documentary¹⁹: Documentary videos mainly showcase Sugg's life activities. She uses hand-held cameras to show different activities and environments around her, such as trips with her friends. This category also includes showcases of other topics, such as room tours, in which Sugg shows her audience her working environment.

Channel Celebration²⁰: One video on Sugg's channel celebrates her reaching one million subscribers in 2013. The whole video features a montage of her past videos. Although it is just one video, it is a unique video type that also appears on other vlogger channels.

Self-facts²¹: In these videos, Sugg shares several things about her, such as her hobbies and life experiences. This is also a popular video format on YouTube.

Draw My Life²²: Draw My Life is another popular video format. Sugg's mainly entails her illustrating her life on a whiteboard. It includes descriptions of her earlier life and how she started vlogging on YouTube.

Notes

1. *Zoella* [YouTube Channel], at <https://www.youtube.com/user/zoella280390/>.

2. "Forbes Top Influencers in Beauty," at <https://www.forbes.com/top-influencers/beauty/#322230b43378>.

3. *MoreZoella* [YouTube Channel], at <https://www.youtube.com/user/morezoella>, channel name now changed to "Zoe Sugg".

4. Store page of Zoella Beauty, at <https://www.superdrug.com/blog/wellbeing/zoella-sweet-inspirations/>.

5. Store page of *Girl Online*, at https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=girl+online&+stripbooks&ref=nb_sb_noss_2.

6. *Zoella* (15 February 2016), "Huge Boots Haul," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ty0PSq1w8>.

7. *Zoella* (7 February 2016), "January Favourites 2016," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mkNxyFjRA>.

8. *Zoella* (27 January 2014), "What's My Bag?" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ex59fEPPEAY>.

9. *Zoella* (8 December 2015), "My Festive Pamper Routine," at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_gDJHhufDY.

10. *Zoella* (19 February 2014), "How To: Halo Braid," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hf82HcwSK2s>.

11. *Zoella* (23 April 2016), "NEW IN BEAUTY: Blogger Mail 1," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSYrkAWahw0>.

12. *Zoella* (16 August 2015), "Funfetti Cupcakes," at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XJNMcOAAO_Q.

13. *Zoella* (30 October 2013). Autumn LookBook," at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ch54pM_war4w.

14. Zoella (16 January 2017), "Reacting To Zalfie Edits," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FyCErh4PE>.
15. Zoella (23 February 2015), "Best Friend VS Boyfriend," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aalyr7y0t14>.
16. Zoella (7 November 2012), "Dealing with Panic Attacks & Anxiety," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-iNOFDZ7G4>.
17. Zoella (4 January 2014), "Goodbye 2013, Hello 2014," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkBeFc3R0EY>.
18. Zoella (15 May 2016), "Social Anxiety & Prank Call | #AskZoella," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1FYIRXWSLw>.
19. Zoella (22 April 2012), "VLOG: My week with Louise (feat. FleurdeForce & Baby Glitter)," at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRTBe_BbfA1.
20. Zoella (26 April 2013), "1 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS!" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKXN110ZKfo>.
21. Zoella (24 February 2013), "50 Facts About Me," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NGOm933Mc>.
22. Zoella (14 April 2013), "Draw My Life," at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6fwey65M>.

Appendix B: 76 video samples collected from Zoe Sugg's main channel Zoella

Video title	Video URL	Date of upload	Video category
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
Collective Haul: Topshop, New Look, Soap & Glory, Style Compare, Orange Circle & Vintage	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-bb2L_Y6-GQ	3 February 2012	Haul
Big Drugstore Beauty Haul Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jatRSik_eM	20 January 2013	
Home "Stuff" Haul Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1ouSXGeg10	2 February 2014	
Clothing, Homeware & Beauty Haul Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALsSVK2j1R8	18 January 2015	
Huge Boots Haul Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TY0PSoq1w8	15 February 2016	
Huge Drugstore/High-Street Haul & First Impressions Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1lqhe-3y6f00	23 January 2017	
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
Favourite Beauty Products of 2011	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAgRzBsOZTg	26 January 2012	Collection
My Favourite Beauty Products of 2012 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6dub2oW5fo	6 January 2013	
February Favourites Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyps1q9J4eI	5 March 2014	
2014 Beauty Favourites Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mo24eMwGAP4	11 January 2015	
January Favourites 2016 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mkNxyfERA	7 February 2016	
January Favourites 2017 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4R4ezK17Q4	30 January 2017	
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
What's In My Bag? (Winter Edition) Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VGE-N_CogOMY	9 December 2012	Personal Item Showcase
What's In My Bag? Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x59eFPFaY	27 January 2014	
What's In My Handbag 2015 Edition Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckcQV_0RXY4I	15 March 2015	
What's In My Bag 2016 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esReh4mYalg	23 November 2016	
My Current Skincare Routine	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POGAoYgySlw	8 September 2011	Beauty Experience
My Ombre Hair Care Routine Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMHK6ESTRBe	16 October 2012	
My Pamper Evening Essentials Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TusEA5KUTA	19 February 2013	
Skincare Chat & Natural Makeup Look Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0n_9z5uCl	2 July 2014	
My Festive Pamper Routine Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_eHHuIDY	8 December 2015	
My Everyday Makeup Routine Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PNUhH2BPx1I	18 January 2016	
My Makeup Routine For Problem Skin Days Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VgLeqkDJI	1 May 2017	Beauty How-to
How To: Messy, Voluminous Top Knot Bun Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uvyrdHA0fzq	25 May 2012	
How To: My Quick and Easy Hairstyles Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mys2Bd6aYrg	5 June 2013	
How To: Halo Braid Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H082H2zwSK2s	19 February 2014	
Drugstore Valentines Makeup Tutorial Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2geil_03izge	8 February 2015	
Spring Pinks Makeup Look Show & Tell Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euGp77apn-s	16 March 2016	
Highstreet/Drugstore Foundation Review #1 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQJlhlGhpfiQ	3 June 2012	Product Review
NEW IN BEAUTY: Blogger Mail 1 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSVrkAWubw0	23 April 2016	
Halloween Cupcakes with PointlessBlog Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psuq_47LRA	21 October 2013	DIY
Baking Macarons with Tanya Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4hlSd1mEYA	19 January 2014	
Funfetti Cupcakes Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNMcOAA_NQ	16 August 2015	
6 Quick & Easy Easter Treats Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pxKJPk2GX4	25 March 2016	
How To: Easter Chocolate Cupcakes With Mark Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXrEImBGSmq	13 March 2017	
How I Wear/Style Maxi Skirts	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzqfRbA9J	3 April 2012	
Autumn LookBook Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h54pM_wardw	30 October 2013	
Girls Night In With Tanya Barr Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvumR5rHmI4	16 March 2014	
Get Ready With Me: Beach Walk Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkKp70z2Y	4 January 2015	
Autumn Lookbook 2016 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALiYJmJm5HU	16 October 2016	
The Suggs Christmas Past Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EANXW30fVcQ	22 December 2013	Reaction
Old Embarrassing Photos Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otn_bN0PLz4	13 July 2015	
Looking Through My Memory Boxes Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llOghm3EgAs	25 July 2016	
Reacting To Zalfie Edits Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FyCErh4PE	16 January 2017	
Spiffing Makeup Tutorials (i.e., Look Your Worst)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEtSkfd-3g	17 August 2011	
My Brother Does My Make-up	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6-axi3jmfE	8 February 2012	
My Brother Does My Makeup (Take 2) Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maRVclLV28E	10 March 2013	
"Most Likely To" Sibling Edition Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1JdzerJLgT0	16 February 2014	
Best Friend VS Boyfriend Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aalyr7y0t14	23 February 2015	
Boyfriend VS Brother Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al_P1ZG-spfw	24 January 2016	
Boyfriend VS Brother Part 2 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5peRAhI_sse	28 February 2017	Topical Chat
Our Blogging Tips & Advice	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REG0f1ZYeA	10 July 2011	
Dealing with Panic Attacks & Anxiety Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-iNOFDZ7G4	7 November 2012	
What Guys Look For In A Girl Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ES9NEFw2A_1	27 January 2013	
Getting A Puppy: Tips & Advice Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GfOrfG8-GY	18 July 2016	
Goodbye 2013, Hello 2014 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkBeFc3R0EY	4 January 2014	
Goodbye 2016, Hello 2017 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezWJ03CVh8a	23 December 2016	
***	The video is now set to private by Sugg, no details of this video will be shared in this paper	***	
The Best Friend Tag	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3D-1n81ZuLQ	22 March 2012	Q&A
Meet My Best Friend Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3Jh6L_CX_8	13 January 2013	
Dancing Guinea Pigs #AskZoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1C1C-osxq50	9 February 2014	

Playground Films & The Perfect Pizza #AskZoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qf4KNFFgDac	26 January 2015	
Social Anxiety & Prank Call #AskZoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1FYjRjXWShw	15 May 2016	
The Questions I've Never Answered Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Y9hldcZ7Es	15 February 2017	
Vlog: Joe & Alpacas	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=101CHy5fayg	1 August 2011	
VLOG: My week with Louise (feat. FleurDeForce & Baby Glitter)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRTfBj_Bf0AI	22 April 2012	Documentary
My Office Tour 2016 Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTUj5iUqQ_0	9 November 2016	
T W E N T Y S I X Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9BzrfmScw	21 July 2017	
1 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS! Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKXN1HOZKfo	26 April 2013	Channel Celebration
50 Facts About Me Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NGOm9i33Mc	24 February 2013	Self-facts
Draw My Life Zoella	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xq6fivery65M	14 April 2013	Draw My Life

Appendix C: Thematic analysis results and process examples

Table 1: Examples of deductive coding results from a Sugg Q&A video ¹ Note: * = Content coded by description; ** = Content coded by transcription.	
Main codes	Examples of described and transcribed content assigned to main codes.
Interaction	Sugg made this video to answer viewers' questions sent on Twitter.* Sugg asks viewers' opinions (03:27): "Let me know in the comments, who you would like to see in a YouTube girl band.**"
Information offers	Sugg provides information about her Twitter handle on screen for viewers to follow (09:31).* Visual end card appears with related information including Sugg's other videos (09:43).*
Rewards	Sugg asks viewers to like the video for more similar content (09:21): "So, give this video a massive thumbs up if you want me to do more of these more often."**

Table 2: Examples of inductive coding results for "interaction". Note: * = Content coded by description; ** = Content coded by transcription.	
Examples of content assigned to "interaction"	Inductive coding results
Sugg made this video to answer viewers' questions sent on Twitter ² .*	Interaction fulfillment
Sugg indicates at the beginning that the video is made based on viewers' requests (00:02): "Hello everyone, today I am going to do a very requested video that I have done twice before." ^{3**} Sugg indicates that the video was requested by the viewers (00:19): "I get a lot of requests from you guys saying: 'how have you done this, how do you do that?' So, I thought today I would do like, a midweek mini video, showing you how I do one of my many styles that I like to do." ^{4**}	
Sugg asks for video ideas (16:48): "I really want to know what videos you guys would like to see from me in 2015, so if you have any suggestions for those then do leave those in the comments below also." ^{5**} Sugg asks for suggestions about what to put into a newly bought jar (02:03): "I'm not too sure what I'm going to put in these, but I would love your suggestions because I want to put these either in the bathroom or in the kitchen." ^{6**} Sugg asks viewers to recreate her Easter baking (13:26): "I would absolutely love to see which one of these you guys want to make, so make sure you tag me on Twitter and Instagram. My handles are @Zoella, and let's use the #ZoellaEasterBakes." ^{7**}	Encouragement of interaction
Sugg thanks viewers' contributions to her channel (23:55): "I haven't actually addressed the fact that there are now 10 million of us on this channel, like, that is insane [...] I can't even tell you how grateful and thankful I am, that you guys have subscribed, that you're here and you watch my videos and I love you, I love you all very much." ^{8**} Sugg mentions that the viewers have sent her greetings (00:01): "Firstly, I'd just quite like to ask how you are, because I feel like you guys are always asking me how I am, and I would actually quite like to know how you are." ^{9**} Sugg and her boyfriend thank fans for making edited videos of them after reacting to the videos (12:33) ¹⁰ .*	Interaction reflection

Table 3: Examples of inductive coding results for "rewards". Note: * = Content coded by description; ** = Content coded by transcription.	
Examples of content assigned to "rewards"	Inductive coding results
Sugg provided some giveaways sponsored by other brands (identified directly when we were collecting the video during the research). e.g., Zoella (2014, November 9) BooHoo Haul & Giveaway Zoella, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Un2HIIIjzHl Zoella (2015, March 8) Spring BooHoo LookBook & Giveaway ad Zoella, at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKcMK71Vp7M	Product giveaways
Sugg asks viewers to like the video for more similar content (09:21): "So, give this video a massive thumbs-up if you want me to do more of these more often." ^{11**} Sugg asks viewers to like the video for more similar content (13:42): "[I]f this video gets lots of thumbs-ups I'll be sure to do more things like this in the future." ^{12**} Sugg asks viewers to like the video for more similar content (09:20): "If you like this style of video and you want me to do more things like this, then give it a thumbs-up." ^{13**}	Like for more

Table 4: Examples of inductive coding results for "information offers". Note: * = Content coded by description; ** = Content coded by transcription.	
Examples of content assigned to "information offers"	Inductive coding results
Sugg announces her second channel and encourages viewers to check it out (0:13): "I used to do follow me around type of vlogs on this channel and then I realized, kind of doesn't really fit in with the whole, you know, 'beauty', 'hauling' thing. So, I made a second channel where you can watch videos like these [shows video clips from the second channel on the left side of the screen and points at them]." ^{14**} Sugg promotes her Christmas special video series (16:27): "There's not long now until '24 Days of Zoella' starts and I'm very, very excited! Make sure you are subscribed, or you've hit the little notification bell that's just down here somewhere." ^{15**} Sugg provides information about her Twitter handle on screen for viewers to follow (09:31). ^{16*}	Promotion of own video content and social media
Sugg promotes her vlogger friend Louise Pentland's and boyfriend Alfie Deye's video content (10:24): "Louise has also done a video on her channel as well, so I will leave a link to that [...] Alfie has also done a video which went up yesterday." ^{17**} Sugg promotes vlogger friend Caspar Lee's channel (05:35): "Also, while you're there, please make sure you subscribe to Caspar's Channel." ^{18**} Sugg promotes her brother Joe Sugg and her boyfriend Alfie Deye's channel (10:19): "Subscribe to both of these idiots, they are great." ^{19**}	Promotion of other content
Sugg indicates she can leave the link of the baking set she is using in the video description if the viewers need it (00:58): "I can look online for you and see if I can find it and leave a link in the description box if you want to get the kit." ^{20**} Sugg gives links to all of the beauty products that she has shown in the video description. ^{21*} Sugg introduces product prices. Examples: (02:28): "These were a bargain, this was 4.99." (05:58): "The next thing I picked up is for my bathroom and it was also from Home Scents and it was 4.99." ^{22**}	Product information

Notes for all tables

- Zoella (9 February 2014), Dancing Guinea Pigs | #AskZoella, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjCIC-cxq50>.
- Zoella (9 February 2014), Dancing Guinea Pigs | #AskZoella, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjCIC-cxq50>.
- Zoella (27 January 2014), What's In My Bag? | Zoella, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x59GEPEaFY>.
- Zoella (19 February 2014), How To: Halo Braid | Zoella, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hf82HwzSK2s>.
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