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Olympic Channel Social Media Analysis:

A Case Study of the Winter Youth Olympic Games Lausanne 2020

Juan Mijangos

University of Tsukuba, Japan

Introduction

- Limited research has focused on the Youth Olympic Games, the smaller version of the Olympics and review of the literature suggests that the specific nature of the YOG could provide different characteristics for analysis.
- The Olympic Channel has become a powerful multiplatform to provide a continuous exposure of sports on the Olympic program before, during and after the Olympic Games period and its role as a key stakeholder of the IOC deserved special attention to conduct a on social media.
- In order to do this, the study examines the activity and engagement of the audience in the content published on social platforms of the Olympic Channel during the Winter YOG Lausanne 2020.
- This research will contribute to a better understanding of the use of social media and the participation of the audience in the YOG.



Significance of the Study

- The Olympic Channel has transformed the landscape of digital media which produce high quality content and would be interesting to analyse.
- Determine the level of fan interest in the YOG and optimize the strategies of social media.
- Future research, as a contribution for researchers in social media and Olympic Games.

Methodology

Mixed method will be conducted for this study

Sample

- Posting activities on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram during the Winter YOG. 14 days; January 9th -22nd, 2020.

Data collection and analysis:

- For quantitative analysis, the sample as a secondary data set will be extracted using a tool called FanPage Karma, which allows measuring social media usage and engagement.
- In the qualitative analysis, content analysis will be undertaken using NCapture, a software for organizing and analyzing qualitative data.

Literature Review

Review of the literature is divided into three major fields:

- The relationship between the Olympic and Youth Olympic Games and social networks; evolution and strategies of the IOC to connect audiences (Koop, 2011).
- The new nature of the communication of social networking sites (Lee & Fischetti, 2000; Veá, 2013);
- Social media content analysis and audience engagement (Fernández Peña 2016). In this research, engagement is defined as "a behavioral manifestation toward the brand" (Verhoef et al., 2010:247).
- An analysis of social media is important because it helps to better understand human social behavior as it takes place in a virtual environment; it also enables us to better understand the social phenomena (Arnaboldi et al., 2015).

Table 1. Summary findings in this study about the relationship between the Social Media platforms and Olympic Games.

| Olympic Games Edition | Social Media Features |
|---|--|
|  | IOC first connected millions of unique users through the YouTube platform. |
|  | Social media (Facebook and Twitter) was officially used as an independent initiative with the Organizing Committee. |
|  | Considered to be the first social Olympics, when the use of social media had a global reach. Instagram emerged and had a remarkable impact to attract fans. |
|  | The IOC's approach was to connect the organizers, sponsors, athletes, fans, in collaboration and integration with different social media platforms and Olympic actors. |
|  | The most social Olympics label became with record audience participation. The formats have innovated with the use of Facebook Live, 360 Degrees Videos and Live Streaming. |
|  | The widespread use of social media platforms recorded a higher percentage among followers under 35 years of age. |
|  | The live streaming events were a key driver of social platform viewership. |

Table above shows some of the most relevant characteristics of the official social platforms of the IOC and its key media stakeholders during the different editions of the Olympic Games and YOG.

Expected Results

- This study will evaluate how organizations like the Olympic Channel achieve engagement with their audience to determine what type of social media content produces the highest audience participation.
- It will provide recommendations, and contribute to increasing the effectiveness of social media.
- Finally, this study will provide an example of good practices in the management of social networks during the Olympic Games.

CONTACT: juanma2683@gmail.com