Managing the uncontrollable: Empirical studies of user-generated content online

Lee, H.H.

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is probably the easiest and the most difficult part to write in my thesis. During the process of searching for PhD positions, Dr. Stephen Tagg at the University of Strathclyde encouraged me greatly and provided valuable feedback to my research proposal. It was your generous support, guidance and recommendations that I managed to secure several offers at the end, for which I thank you. Along the way, I was feeling guilty of betraying the promise to devote myself to campaigning for animal welfare. I would like to thank Dr. Christine Moinard at the University of Edinburgh, who always seemed to understand my decision on departing from animal studies, shared her great passion of doing research with me, and inspired me to continue on my own journey. If it was not your reassurance and understanding, I would not have been as resolute as I was. Thanks to you two, I actually started the pursuit of a PhD.

Looking back over the past five years, I sometimes wonder how come I didn’t quit or wasn’t fired. I owe much of this, more than words can describe, to my advisors Prof. Ans Kolk and Prof. Willemijn van Dolen. Thanks to your great patience and continuous belief in me, even when myself had lost it, I managed to complete this journey. I also want to thank you for putting up with me during the past years, with my at times (which is probably more like “frequent” or “always”) wacky research ideas, over-complicated thinking, disconnected thoughts and incomprehensible writing. I have benefited greatly from your expertise. I consider myself very lucky to have advisors like you, who kindly allow me to stubbornly try and fail, as many times as I wish (not that I prefer), make progress in my own pace, and unwearily wait till I finally learn to accept feedback and suggestions. I appreciate that you are forever honest and straightforward with your comments and critics, and also constantly remind me to speak up my mind. The collaboration with you, especially Willemijn, with whom I have more frequent contact, has been truly inspiring. Thanks to you, despite the bumps along the way, I still enjoy and aspire doing more research.

I don’t like bothering people and hence rarely ask for help. One thing I have learned though during the trajectory of my PhD is that, most of the times, the only way to move forward is to seek help. This thesis would not be completed without the fruitful
discussions and insightful comments that I have received from Prof. Charles Weinberg, Prof. Dr. Alan Muller, Dr. Jonah Berger, Prof. Jeff Murray, and Dr. Michael Trusov. I thank you for spending your precious time on critiquing and reviewing my work. Thomas Akkerhuis and Lei-Ming Ma, thank you for your advice and guidance on modeling and programming. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers from the journals and conferences that I have submitted my work, and all the audiences who attended my seminars in past years. Based on your feedback and questions on many of the earlier versions, I was able to develop my research ideas further.

In addition, I would like to thank all the committee members, Prof. Deanne den Hartog, Prof. Jozef Tettero, Prof. Adam Lindgreen, Dr. Peeter Verlegh and Prof. Ko de Ruyter, who have spared their time to evaluate my thesis.

My time at Amsterdam Business School has been overly wonderful; thanks to all the friendly colleagues. I was fortunate to share some great time with many of you, even outside working hours. It was a scary thought at the beginning, to move to a country where I did not speak the local language (and with regret I still only manage a little, wat jammer!). I would like to especially thank the fellow PhDs, Francesca, Pawan, René, Hung-Yao, Frederik, Joris, Liselore, Karianne, Monika, Daniel, Nicole, Anouar, Hella, Nesrien, Inge, Bram and Zhe. Many of them have received their degrees already and should be addressed with “Doctor” by now (forgive me for not doing it). It was the wonderful company, small talks, necessary distractions and random discussions that you have kindly shared with me during all the coffee breaks, lunches, drinks, and dinners that keep me going. Thank you also for proofreading my work, brainstorming with me for the research, listening to my complaints, and sharing many happy moments.

Lastly, I would like to thank family and friends who are truly dear to me. I have never been good at keeping friends. Most of my past friendships stopped at the moment I moved on to another stage in my life, which was largely my fault. It is particular easy to live in an isolated cocoon, trying to finish the PhD. There have been many people generously offering their unconditional friendship to me during the past years, but I would like to especially thank Peggy and Angela, for your impossible love to never abandon me even though I tend to cut out communication and disappear from your life from time to time. Your never-ending positivity and laid-back cheers have made the challenges during the trajectory seem doable and bearable. Marlene (who was also a
fellow PhD and now a doctor), you are like a sister to me in this strange city. Thank you for showing me my way around, both in academic and in my personal life, from the very beginning of this great adventure. I’m forever grateful that we get to share some precious moments in life with each other, getting married, getting the degree and getting a baby! I would also like to thank my two dear paranymphs. Yang, thank you for taking care of me over the past years and always offering to help, even when I was too stubborn to ask. You are one of the most generous and mature people I’ve ever known. Hao-Hsin, thank you for being always so cheerful and understanding. I enjoy all the talks that we have had about life beyond academia, which always remind me to stay focus and set priorities in my more and more isolated life routines. Thank you for helping me put a pause sign when the stress level is just too high.

I believe it is close to impossible to get a better family than the one I have. I would like to thank my extended family. Thank you for your understanding, love and support that I stay schooling without a “real” job for more years than I am probably supposed to. I want to thank you for always putting a smile on your faces when listening to me talking about my research, which makes me believe that what I am doing is indeed very interesting. I also want to thank you for reassuring me of being smart and strong enough to never give up. Μάνα, μπαμπά, και Δημήτρη, σας ευχαριστώ για την ειλικρινή σας αγάπη. Σας ευχαριστώ για την υπομονή σας με την ατελείωτη δουλειά που έχω κάθε φορά που σας επισκέπτομαι. Είσαστε τα καλύτερα πεθερικά που θα μπορούσα να έχω. Γιαγιά μου, θα σε έχω πάντα μέσα στην καρδιά μου.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Panos. Thank you for giving up your comfort zone and relocating to the unknown from Greece, just so I can pursue my dream. Thank you for bearing with me (and my academic friends) at social gatherings in the past five years, during which the only topic at the table tended to be PhD research and supervisors. Thank you for being my biggest supporter and the first reader of all the words that I have ever written. Thank you for making me laugh every time I burst into tears. My sweet daughter, Faye, you have taught me more things than I probably ever will learn since the day you were born. Thank you for showing mama how to let go. Thank you, for being in my life.