



SAILING THE OPEN SEAS

Understanding and employing the digital piracy community as a means of marketing.

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Master Thesis
Culture, Communication, and Globalization
22nd September, 2016

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Subjects: (tick box)	Project	Synopsis	Portfolio	Thesis X	Written Assignment
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Study programme:	Culture, Communication, and Globalization.	
Semester:	10	
Exam Title:	Master Thesis	
Name and date of birth/ Names and dates of birth of group members:	Name(s)	Date(s) of birth
	Lars Hviid Jensen	10-10-1990
Hand in date:	22-09-2016	
Project title /Synopsis Title/Thesis Title	An examination of the influence of the FARC-EP on the economic development of Colombia	
According to the study regulations, the maximum number of keystrokes of the paper is:	180.000	
Number of keystrokes (one standard page = 2400 keystrokes, including spaces) (table of contents, bibliography and appendix do not count)*	103,439	

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Abstract

In 2015, Game of Thrones became the most digitally pirated show for the fourth consecutive year (Torrentfreak, Dec 27, 2015). The finale of the fifth season was reportedly illegally downloaded 14.4 million times, through the digital piracy website BitTorrent alone. This figure seems extreme compared to the 8.1 million viewers during the initial, domestic release (Game of Thrones, 2015). The example of Game of Thrones highlights the prevalence of digital piracy in contemporary online activity. Previous research on the subject has largely focused on the behavioral tendencies of those who choose to illegally download or stream material. Additionally, research has attempted to generate concise definitions of the financial impact of digital piracy on the movie and TV business.

Despite the efforts within academia to understand the negative impact of digital piracy, recent developments suggests that some positive outcomes can be achieved through the digital piracy community. This is exemplified in a statement from the HBO programming president, Michael Lombardo, who stated that the status of Game of Thrones as the most pirated show was “a compliment of sorts” and “it certainly didn’t negatively impact the DVD sales” (Torrentfreak, 2013).

This research aimed to bridge the gap between previous research on the behavioral tendencies in the digital piracy community, and the contemporary defining of word of mouth. Bridging this gap will provide valuable information for marketers in regards to considerations needed when attempting to employ the digital piracy community as a means of marketing. In doing so, it can be concluded that the mentality within the community is highly resistant to outside actors. As such, it is necessary for marketers to fully understand the nature of the target community. Further, due to aforementioned resistance, it is also necessary to approach the digital piracy community through subtle means, as an overt approach is likely to result in negative responses from the community.

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1. Introduction

In 2015, Game of Thrones received the ostensibly unfortunate title of most digitally pirated show for the fourth consecutive year (Torrentfreak, Dec 27, 2015). The finale of the fifth season was reportedly illegally downloaded 14.4 million times, through the digital piracy website BitTorrent alone. This figure seems extreme compared to the 8.1 million viewers during the initial, domestic release (Game of Thrones, 2015). To this it should be noted that digital piracy relates to all online activities of acquiring material illegally. However, the Home Box Office (HBO) who produce and distribute Game of Thrones have shown little concern with the illegal activity surrounding their show. Programming president Michael Lombardo noted that the status of most pirated show is “a compliment of sorts” and “it certainly didn’t negatively impact the DVD sales” (Torrentfreak, 2013).

The example of the pirating tendencies of Game of Thrones and the attitude of HBO’s programming president represent a number of concerns within academia and the entertainment industry. Traditionally, literature and discussions on the matter of digital piracy has been centered on the potential negative impact of piracy and how to effectively combat it (White, Rao, and Minakakis, 2010; Ogren, 2009; Yang, 2011; Lodderhose, 2014). In contrast, recent studies and sentiments such as that of HBO’s Mr. Lombardo has highlighted the need to further understand the true nature of consumption through illegal channels and the potential increase in sales through the exposure generated by the “pirates”. The academic approach to understand the matter of piracy has primarily focused on the mentality of the individuals who engage in digital piracy and the nature of online communities which discuss and distribute ideas and media files. Additionally, research and theories on word of mouth (WoM) has been key in understanding the marketing opportunities in communities in the past.

1.1. International considerations

For this research it should be noted that elements pertaining to digital piracy will be considered as internationally focused. This is based on the similarities in previous research on the subject, conducted within specific countries (Hennig-thurau et al., 2010; Cox and Collins, 2014; Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Additionally, using the example of Game of Thrones, the

show was distributed through illegal channels to a large number of countries, including countries in which the show was subject to a delayed release or not released at all through legal means (Game of Thrones, 2015). It is therefore argued that the concept of digital piracy is enabled through the availability of the internet, and therefore only subject to limitations in regards to the reach of the internet.

1.2. Digital Piracy

In order to fully understand the contemporary definition of digital piracy it is necessary to first outline previous academic work within the field. Firstly, academic research on the subject of anti-piracy measures has yielded conflicting results in regards to the actual positive impact on digital distribution revenues. Peukert et al. (2013) found that apart from major blockbuster titles, who saw a minor increase in revenue, most movies generated a decreased amount of revenue following the shutdown of the popular streaming website Megaupload.com. Megaupload.com was a website which enabled users to stream uploaded material, and had over 100 million users (Megaupload, 2016). Alternatively, Danaher and Smith's (2013) research on the same case concluded that revenue rose by ~7% across all titles following the Megaupload.com shutdown. The conflicting findings on the case of Megaupload.com exemplifies the central issue in researching the impact of digital piracy. Danaher and Smith (2013) note that part of their limitations is the notion of spread of word of mouth following a case such as the Megaupload.com shutdown, in part due to the level of media attention the case received. This emphasizes the problem of restricting digital piracy due to the flexibility and possibilities inherently found in the Internet. New websites will quickly replace any service that shutdown (Jacobs, et al., 2012).

The inability to effectively combat digital piracy has led to alternative business measures (Sudler, 2013). For example, Apple has implemented a feature to its iTunes service which will scan the user's hard drive and provide access to any song found, regardless of its legality, as well as provide suggestions to similar artists (Sudler, 2013). Through such measures, companies are seemingly starting to grasp the potential positive impact of pirated material. The findings of previous research and the increasing acceptance of digital piracy as a potentially means of

marketing has led to the inclusion of Word of Mouth (WoM) theory in this paper. The theoretical background and research on WOM will be presented later in the theory section.

1.3. Problem

As mentioned, much of the previous research on the matter of digital piracy has focused on the social and psychological elements which leads to an individual engaging in such behavior. Several schools of the social science have produced relevant approaches to measuring and understanding DP. For marketing, Hennig-thurau et al. (2007) employed a modified version of Rochelandet and Le Guel's (2005) utility theory in order to determine the intentions and behaviors of digital pirates. Their research produced evidence pointing to a direct, negative impact on revenue in the movie industry as a result of digital piracy; due to research participants choosing to illegally download movies rather than visiting theaters or purchasing/renting DVDs. Further research with marketing was conducted by Sinha and Mandel (2008), in regards to the tendencies of illegally downloading a product. Through their research, Sinha and Mandel (2008) were able to highlight three key factors which affected the willingness to digital piracy, those being: (1) positive incentives (e.g. increased functionality and penetration of the internet), (2) negative incentives (e.g. risk), and (3) consumer characteristics (e.g. consumer's stimulation level).

On the background of previous research and discussions, this paper will focus on the nature of combining piracy motivation and communities with research on the use of electronic word of mouth (eWoM) in order to fill the gap between the two approaches to analyze and understand the contemporary nature on digital piracy. In doing so, the aspect of direct financial impact of piracy will be omitted from this paper due to the focus on the underlying framework of piracy and potential beneficial use of digital piracy communities as a means of marketing. To this, the problem formulation of this research is as follows.

1.4. Problem formulation

How should marketers approach digital piracy communities as a mean of marketing?

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. The Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) consists of a number of subjective determinates or beliefs regarding engaging in a particular action or behavior. These determinates consist of: *behavioral belief, attitude towards behavior, normative belief, subjective norm, control belief, perceived control*, resulting in *behavioral intention*. In order to understand the foundation, strengths, and weakness of the TPB a summary of its components will follow. Additional theories will also be presented in order to offer alternative views, as well as theoretical elements which strengthen and critique the TPB.

2.1.1. Behavioral belief

Behavioral belief is defined as an individual's subjective understanding of results of engaging in a given behavior. This understanding or perception is based on previous experiences with a given or similar behavior (Azjen, 2012). As a given behavior is capable of producing multiple results, a person is able to hold more than one behavioral belief towards a single action. Commonly, this has been exemplified in previous research on the consumption of alcohol and drugs among U.S. college students. A high number of respondents noted that the behavior made them "more sociable" and "makes me feel good"; however, the same respondents also noted negative results such as "poorer physical health" and "becoming dependent on it" (Armitage et al., 1999). This ability to predicting expectations through subjective beliefs has previously been found to be a major strength for the theory of planned behavior (McConnon et al., 2011)

2.1.2. Attitude towards behavior

As mentioned, a person can hold multiple behavioral beliefs regarding a given action. It is, however, assumed that not all consequences are perceived equally. Azjen (2012) notes that: "beliefs links the behavior to an outcome, and each outcome has a certain subjective value" (p. 4). Behavioral beliefs and the subjective understanding of the potential consequences are therefore combined in order to generate a personal positive or negative attitude toward the behavior (Sparks et al., 1997). Peak (1955) extended this notion by hypothesizing that the

attitude towards behavior is a function of the probability of positive or negative outcomes, as well as the severity of the expected result. That is to say that the attitude towards a behavior is based on a subjective understanding of positive and negative results. The connection between personal belief and attitude towards a behavior is visible in figure 1.

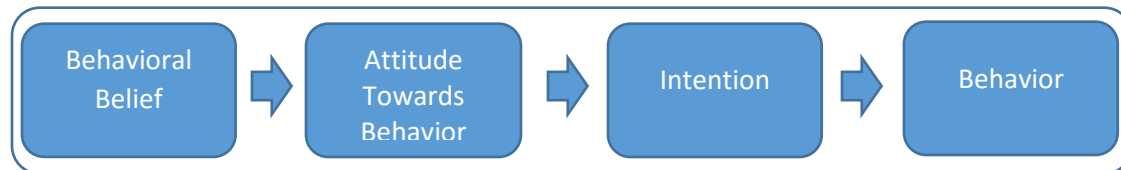


Figure 1 Relationship between behavioral belief, attitude towards behavior, intention, and behavior.

In regards to the notions of personal beliefs and attitude, it should be noted that effects such as personal understanding of knowledge of laws and the illegal nature of digital piracy has failed to yield substantial evidence on reduces motivation in quantitative research (Jacobs et al., 2012). The qualitative approach of this research will be able to provide additional information on the effects on motivation.

2.1.3. Normative Belief

Normative belief refers to the subjective perception of social normative, or personal referents pressure to perform or refrain from a particular behavior (Azjen, 2012). As such, pressure from friends, family, spouses etc. are assumed to directly influence a person to engage in a given behavior (Douglass, 2006). The normative belief of a person is therefore a collective understanding of exterior actors' attitude towards a behavior. The potential impact of outside actors has previously been noted as highly suitable in predicting intentions to engage in a behavior (Huchting et al., 2008). However, it should be noted that the normative belief influence is a result of a person's willingness to abide by the referents desired behavior (Azjen, 2012).

2.1.4. Subjective Norm

"Subjective norms are conceptually independent of attitudes toward the behavior. People can, in principle, hold favorable attitudes toward a given behavior, yet perceive social pressure not to perform it; they can hold negative attitudes toward the behavior and favorable subjective norms; or their attitudes and subjective norms may coincide" (Azjen, 2012, p. 6).

The quote from Azjen (2012), conceptualizes part of subjective norms. In practice, this means that while personal attitudes towards a behavior and the normative pressure from outside actors can differ in nature. However, prior research has found that subjective norms are likely to follow a coherent relationship with normative beliefs (Douglass et al., 2006). The subjective norm pertaining to a given behavior is therefore likely to be influenced by the normative belief on the community around an individual. The relationship between normative beliefs and subjective norms is visible in figure 2.

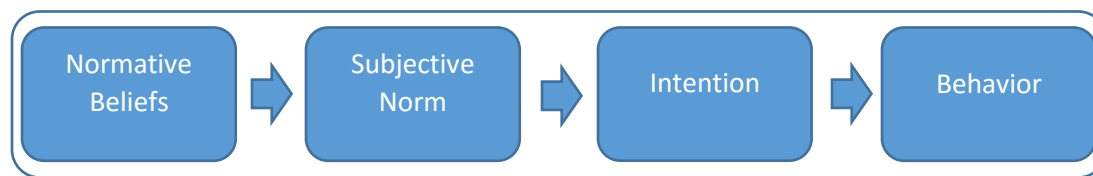


Figure 2 Relationship between normative beliefs, subjective norms, intention, and behavior

2.1.5. Behavioral Control

The ability of an individual to perform a behavior is the subject of many external and internal factors. These factors are able to impair or facilitate the level of performance as they can be related to: availability of informative, the extent of social support, physical and psychological abilities, eternal barriers etc. (Azjen, 2012). Therefore, an individual is able to engage in a given behavior to the extent that their own competences facilitate and by the ability to succeed in dealing with external limitations. As a result, it is assumed that the subjective behavior control is affects the intention to engage with a behavior.

It can therefore be said that, behavior that are subject to few, if any, restrictions are likely to be performed solely on the basis of intentions. However, if the degree of control increases, the perceived control will interact with the intentions of the subject to affect behavioral performance (Azjen, 2012).

2.1.6. Perceived behavioral control

While behavioral control refers to actual abilities and hindrances regarding the performance of a behavior by an individual, the perceived behavioral control relates to the subjective understanding of a person's control. To this, Azjen's Theory of Planned Behavior

burrows from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). A significant aspect of the SCT is the notion of self-efficacy, which refers to the subjective understanding of one's own mastery of a given skill or ability (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) describes self-efficacy as: "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations".

To this, Azjen (2012) emphasizes the similarities between self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control, in regards to the personal understanding of what is possible to achieve and control in performing certain behaviors. It should, however, be noted that Bandura's definition of self-efficacy, and the similarities to the concept of perceived behavioral control, is largely conceptualized under predictive circumstances (Bandura, 1997). As such, both self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control are used in order to predict behavior, rather than understand post-behavioral tendencies. The flow of influence perceived within the theory of planned behavior is visible in figure 3.

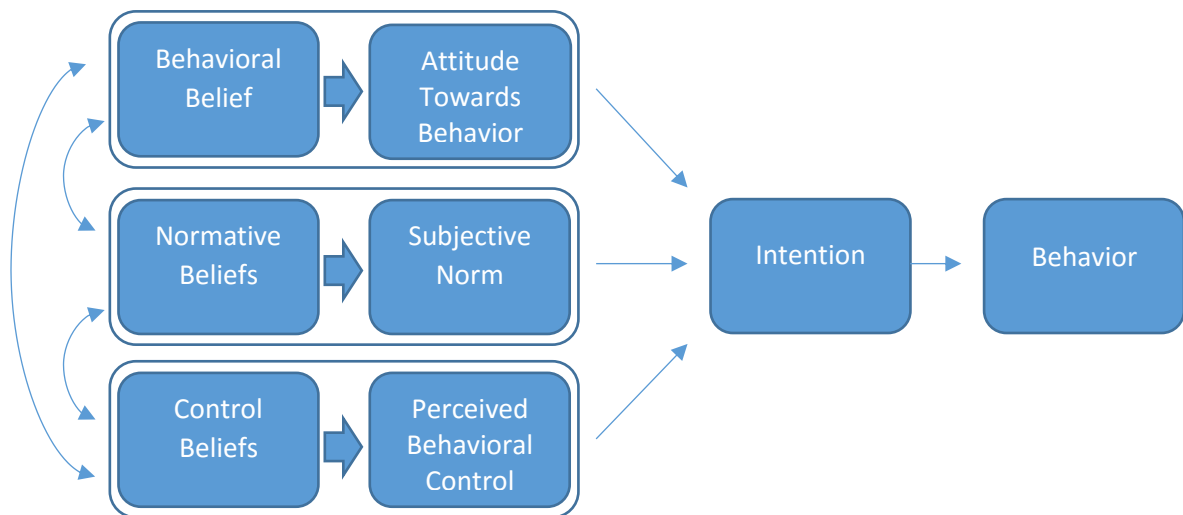


Figure 3 The conceptual flow of influence within the theory of planned behavior

2.1.7. Model of Goal-Directed Behavior

Taylor, Ishida, and Wallace (2009) suggests the use of a modified version of Perugini and Bagozzi's (2001) Model of Goal-Directed Behavior (MGB) in order to generate a deeper understanding of digital piracy behavior.

The MGB extends the TPB by applying elements such as Frequency of Past Behavior (FPB) in strengthening the perceived behavioral control. Additionally, the MGB presents anticipated emotions (AE) in order to predict the goal pursuit, and motivation in the form of desire. Research conducted by d'Astous, Colbert, and Montpetit (2005) highlighted the notion that FPB influences the subjective norm and attitude towards behavior, in addition to perceived behavioral control, as the subject generates a greater personal understanding and positive perception of the behavior through repeated engagement.

The MGB also deepens the TPB by including personal emotional responses of engaging in a given behavior. Anticipated emotions are therefore related to the “subjective” value from Azjen’s (2012) notion of attitude towards behavior, in regards to the potential positive and negative emotional responses to succeeding or failure in engaging in a behavior (Taylor et al., 2009). As a result, AE directly influences the desire to engage in a given behavior. Perugini and Bagozzi (2004) notes the difference between Azjen’s (2012) definition of intention and the concept of desire, as the latter is based on personal connectedness with the action, and the temporal framing.

2.2. Word of Mouth

In addition to generating an understanding of the personal attitude and motivation to engage in digital piracy through the Theory of Planned Behavior and its supplementary theories, this paper will strive to employ the notion of word of mouth to describe the online communities surrounding digital piracy. Through theoretical frameworks and peer-reviewed research on the matter of electronic and “normal” word of mouth, this paper will be able to understand the nature of the digital piracy communities, as well as the potential for marketers to employ these groups and tendencies as a marketing tool. However, before such analysis and discussion can be conducted, it is necessary to provide a comprehensive overview of general ideas with the concept of word of mouth due to the extensive research and theoretical background found within academia on the subject. Additionally, recent and contemporary research on the matter of electronic word of mouth and online communities will aid in provide a greater understanding of the ties between the personal attitudes found within the aforementioned theories of TPB, MGB and FPB, and the nature of online communities.

For ease in presenting and understanding the theoretical framework and peer-reviewed academic work on the matter of word of mouth, this section will be divided into three aspects: The use and impact of WOM, the motivation to engage in WOM, and the online communities which enables effective WOM.

2.2.1. Impact

Contemporary technology has made it possible for information about products to spread unlike anything previously available (Plummer, 2007). This has led to a tendency for consumers to focus less on traditional means of advertising (McDonnell, 2005; Nielsen, 2007). The increased focus on WOM as a means of spreading and receiving information about products has been accredited to the boom in social media use in recent years (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010), which facilitates WOM through its definition as “informal communication between private parties concerning evaluations of goods and services (Anderson, 1998)”.

Accordingly, researchers have highlighted the growing understanding of the potential power of WOM, among marketers and organization (Kilby, 2007; DeCarlo et al., 2007). Much of the recent interest in WOM stems from the concept of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) which enables consumers to share opinions and experience through blogs, discussion forums, and social media sites (e.g. Twitter and Facebook) (Cheung and Lee, 2012). Additionally, in contrast to traditional WOM, eWOM allows for asynchronous exchange of information as recipients are not required to be physically present at the moment of exchange. This ability for eWOM to spread information through the internet is strengthened as most of the text-based information is archived and therefore accessible at any time to anyone with an internet connection (Hung and Li, 2007).

However, while the potential power of WOM is undisputed in recent among recent research, the practice of actively generating and employing WOM has been described as notoriously difficult for marketers. For example, Kozinets et al. (2010) found that bloggers and community member who were approached in regards to WOM marketing campaigns were both flattered and insulted by being selected. Hennig-thurau et al. (2010) found similar potential beneficial or damaging effects of WOM. The ability for WOM to empower and multiply the

marketing messages of a brand, while also being able to interfere and disrupt them was noted in regards to brand image control in a new media setting (Hennig-thurau et al., 2010).

Much of the previous research has tried to measure WOM as a function of the frequency and number of people reached (Eliashberg et al., 2000; Liu, 2006). However, Sweeney et al. (2009) underlines the imperfections of such research as seen by the mixed results and inability to provide conclusive evidence of these studies. This study will adhere to Sweeney et al. (2009) notion of alternative measures used in understanding the power and impact of WOM as a function of the characteristics of messages such as: discursive elements, contents, and expressiveness of messages (Allsop et al., 2007; Gabbott and Hogg, 2000; Mason and Davis, 2007).

2.2.2. Motivation

In addition to understanding the potential power, as well as benefits and faults, of using WOM as a marketing tool, researchers and marketers have focused on consumer motivation to spread and receive WOM messages. In their study on identifying the motives behind WOM communication, Balasubramanian and Mahajan (2001) constructed a framework of three motivational categories: (1) focus-related utility, (2) consumption utility, and (3) approval utility. Focus-related utility refers to the utility a consumer generates by contributing to the community. The need to receive such utility from the community relates to the consumers desire to help the community in exchange for the position of a valued or leading member of the community (Balasubramanian and Mahajan, 2001). Consumption utility is understood as the ability for consumers to approach an online community in order to seek answers or advice in regards to a task or product. Approval utility becomes relevant in online websites and services which enables community evaluation of a particular comment or contribution. One example is Yahoo answers, where readers are able to mark the usefulness of a given answer.

In their review of Balasubramanian and Mahajan's work, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) supplemented the framework with the motivational category of "homeostase utility", which refers to the need for consumers to share extremely positive or negative experiences. Consumer-opinion platforms become means of sharing strong feelings in order to satisfy the psychological need to express, rather than due to ulterior motives.

The utility of eWOM is therefore described through the possible benefits consumers are able to receive through sharing and receiving messages from online communities. However, Sweeney et al. (2012) highlight the discursive elements of these messages as central to the potential power of WOM and eWOM. The persuasive capabilities of message contents is established through Aristotle's "three artistic proofs": Ethos, Pathos, and Logos (Aristotle, 1924). The persuasiveness of message contents is therefore a function of the speaker's ethical and personal appeal (ethos), emotional stance (Pathos), and logical argument (logos). In their study of the power of individual WOM messages, Sweeney et al. (2012) expanded on Aristotle's artistic proof by constructing three communication characteristics: *Valence*, *emotion*, and *cognitive aspect*.

Firstly, *Valence* refers to the impact of negative and positive messages, and how these are formulated. Recent research has found that negative and positive messages or reviews are equally influential (East et al., 2007). However, the valence of a consumer who chooses to share messages on a product or experience dictates the characteristics and delivery of the messages. For example, an individual may be motivated to share a negative experience out of spite or vengeance, but the same experience could be shared in order to assist an organization in making improvements through constructive feedback (Sweeney et al., 2012). The message content is therefore shaped by the motivation, or valence, of the consumer.

Secondly, the *emotional aspect* relates to richness and vividness of messages (Sweeney et al., 2012). Mazzarol et al. (2007) highlighted the tendency for speakers to use thought-provoking and attention-drawing discourse in their messages, which correlates to traditional psychological notions of such messages being more memorable and heavily influential in cognitive judgement (Herr et al., 1991). Additionally, the emotional enthusiasm behind a message is seen as central to the desire to share and receive WOM (Söderlund and Rosengren, 2007). In conventional WOM, the emotions and enthusiasm of the speaker is linked to body language, which partially explains the use of expressive and vivid written messages in eWOM as physical communication is omitted (Allsop et al., 2007).

Finally, the *cognitive* aspect of message content supports the notion that WOM has a rational and factual dimension (Sundaram et al., 1998). Apart from emotional responses to extreme examples of service or product experiences, WOM remains largely cognitive in nature (Dabholkar, 1993). For example, consumers will share information pertaining to functionality and metrics on products such as electronics. Through detailed reviews and messages, WOM receivers are able to general rational and factual understandings of products and services (Allsop et al., 2007).

2.2.3. Communities

In order to understanding the theoretical background for online community interactions in regards to WOM, it is necessary to highlight change in the nature of WOM distribution. For this, Kozinets et al. (2010) presents the historical evolution of WOM in three models, through peer-reviewed material from the past century. It is crucial to note that the theoretical development of WOM does not mean that one model has replaced another; all models of WOM coexist (Kozinets et al., 2010).

Firstly, the organic interconsumer influence model consists of the natural conversations and discussions regarding a product or service. As seen in figure 4 the flow of information in this model follows a strictly consumer to consumer dynamic, without direct interference from marketers. The influence of this model of WOM was noted as early as a diffusion study by Ryan and Gross (1943), who noted that consumers are influenced by conversation between buyers to a higher degree than marketing communication.

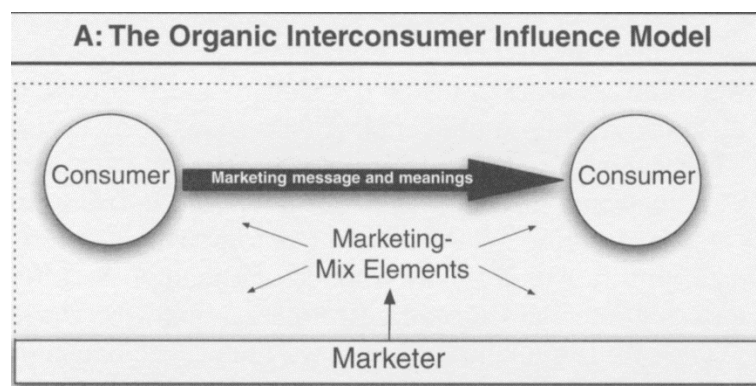


Figure 4 The Organic Interconsumer Influence Model

Secondly, the linear marketer influence model gives rise to the notion of opinion leaders within WOM. Through their review of previous research and theorizing, Kozinets et al. (2010) identify these individuals as persons of particular interest for marketers. The interest is due to the notion that certain community members possess a position of notoriety and influence within a given community. Li and Du (2010) highlight that the identification and formation of these opinion leaders occurs through two distinct means. Firstly, similar to the previously discusses notion of utility driven motivation (Balasubramanian and Mahajan, 2001: Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004) to engage in online communities, individuals are able to become opinion leaders due to their continuous involvement and content of their messages (Li and Du, 2010). The second distinction refers to a person or group who are able to generate a following and subsequent community of which they are the focal point. This distinction is often seen in new media such as blogs, Twitter, and Facebook (Li and Du, 2010). The relationship between information flow between marketers and within the community is visible in figure 5.

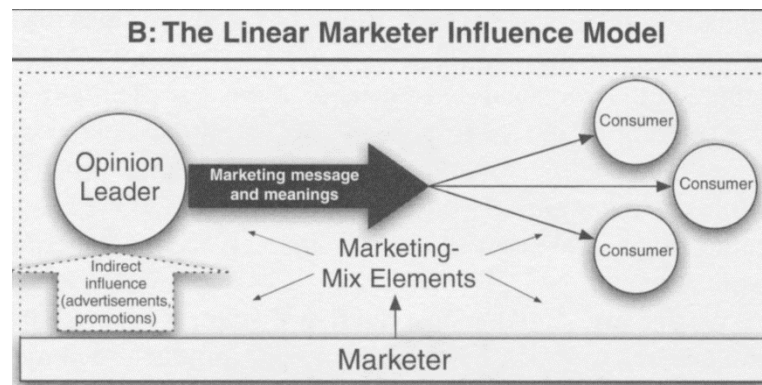


Figure 5 The Linear Marketer Influence Model

Finally, the network coproduction model refers to the contemporary understanding that information flow is not unidirectional, but rather a collective effort within a community (Kozinets et al., 2010). Additionally, as seen in figure 6 this model allows marketers to directly influence consumer or opinion leaders through personal seeding. However, as mentioned early, some opinion leaders may have adverse reactions to direct contact from marketers. Kozinets et al. (2010) describe this reaction as a general tendency within spreading WOM through online communities. Just like individuals who are approach by marketers, communities are like to react negatively to obvious attempts at spreading information on the behalf of an organization

or company (Kozinets et al., 2010). This reaction to direct influence from marketers underlines the need for WOM communication to follow cultural and communal norms within the community in order to possess the desired trust which is the central appeal of WOM.

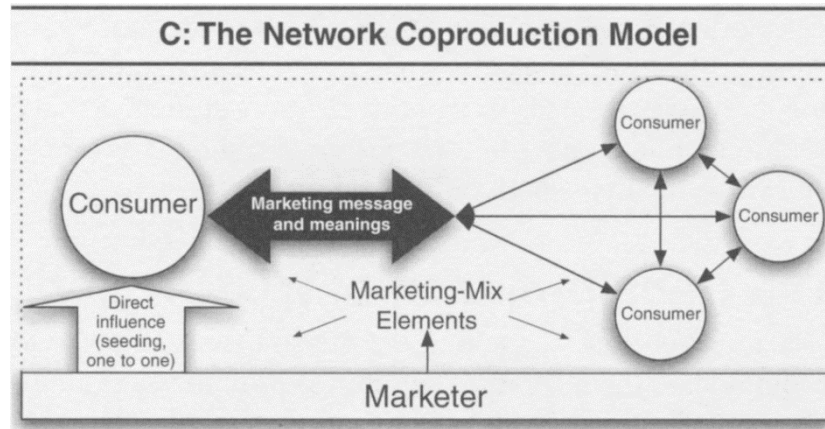


Figure 6 The Network Coproduction Model

3. Methodology

3.1. Philosophy of Science

3.1.1. Epistemology

The epistemological stance within research considers the question of what is acceptable knowledge within the framework. The contemporary understanding of epistemology is defined by Guba (1990) by asking “What is the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known? (p. 108)”. This definition is extended and clarified for Bryman (2012) who noted that epistemology asks what knowledge is, the process of realization, and the relevance of the knowledge in regards to a given subject. These considerations become key in terms of whether the social world can and should be studied according to the same procedures, principles, and ethos as natural sciences (Bryman, 2012, p. 27).

Traditional epistemology has presented as two major schools: *interpretivism* and *positivism*. *Interpretivism* relates to examining the social actions through subjective meaning (Bryman, 2012, p. 712). Alternatively, *positivism* employs methodologies which strive to understand social actions through natural sciences and objective knowledge. For this paper, the

interpretivist stance will be adopted in order to understand the human and social behavior in an international setting through the responses of the actors within it. This stance will be further underlined by the use of *hermeneutic* ideas and notions. The use of hermeneutics in interpretivism relates to the focusing on the written and implicit sources of social interactions and practices in order to analyze these aspects to generate an understanding (Bryman, 2012, p. 560). The use of hermeneutics in this research will be further understood in the data analysis section

3.1.2. Ontology

Along with epistemology, ontology is a central consideration to the philosophy of science. Ontology refers to “What is the nature of ‘reality’ and what can be known about it? (Guba, 1990, p. 108)”. Ontology is therefore concerned with the nature of social entities. Bryman (2012) offers the consideration of whether: “social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built from the perceptions and actions of social actors (p. 32)”. This outlines two schools of thought regarding the ontology of research and social understanding: *objectivism* and *constructionism*. The first part of Bryman’s definition relates to objectivism, which considers social entities as being beyond influence from actors. Constructionism, however, refers to the notion that social entities and constructs are the result of perceptions and actions of social actors (Bryman, 2012, p. 32). As the focus of this paper is nature and interactions within the online community surrounding digital piracy, the stance of constructionism is adopted as the subject matter is almost entirely the result of the community members and their actions.

3.2. Research design

As mentioned, previous research on the subject of behavioral tendencies in individuals who choose to stream and download material illegally has focused on quantitative studies. However, in order to attribute to the academic understanding of these behaviors, this study will adhere to qualitative research considerations. In addition to the ontological and epistemological stance of *constructionism* and *interpretivism*, this paper will draw on a **case study** of the community of digital piracy. This type of design is commonly used for research

which is concerned with complex phenomenon which requires an in-depth exploration of the subject matter (Bryman, 2012, p. 66). Case study design has been connected to asking “how” and “why”, in regards to studying contemporary phenomenon in which the researcher has no influence over the results (Yin, 2004). Bryman’s (2012) definition of a case study relates to a specific location, community, or organization – which is represented in this study by the community surrounding digital piracy.

The use of case studies has been criticized in regards to the inability to generate a general understanding of a phenomenon based on a single example (Abercrombie, Hill, and Turner, 1984). However, through his research, Flyvbjerg (2006) found that previous research conducted through case studies was able to produce sound results. Additionally, in order for case studies to effectively generalize based on the findings, four distinct methods of case study was presented by Flyvbjerg (2006). These case designs each have their specialization as seen in table (x), and consist of: *Extreme/deviant cases, maximum variation cases, critical cases, and paradigmatic cases.*

While each type of case design has different benefits, the case model used for this research will be a **critical case** study. Bryman (2012) notes that the key feature of critical cases is the use of well-developed theoretical frameworks, and choosing a case which is able to produce a better understanding of the general circumstances of a phenomenon. Additionally, the critical case model is said to produce generalizations based on the notion that: “if this is (not) valid for this case, then it applies to all (no) cases.” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230). For this research, the use of a critical case study will focus on generalizing the potential beneficial use of word of mouth generated through the digital piracy community. The research will, therefore, contribute to the general understanding of behavioral tendencies in individuals who engage in digital piracy, as well as the nature and impact of contemporary word of mouth. As no efforts has previously been made to combine findings within the two theoretical frameworks, this research will be able to bridge the gap in research. The generalizations found through this combined theoretical method is designed to provide further understanding of a correlations between the two frameworks.

3.3. Data collection

In order to investigate the behavioral attitudes of the digital piracy community, as well as the influence of word of mouth within the community, **qualitative strategies** will be employed. In doing so, this research will draw on both participant and observational methods of data collection, resulting in a wider and deeper understanding of the phenomenon in questions (Bryman, 2012).

The research question will therefore be answered through examining behavioral tendencies through an **unstructured interview**, **content analysis**, and a **survey**. These methods were chosen in order to generate a holistic understanding of the subject matter, based on the notion of model triangulation (Denzin, 1970).

Triangulation refers to the use of two or more methods of data collection. The terms stems from the use of multiple physical measurements, often employed in maritime navigation and surveying, in order to locate a specific position (Rothbauer, 2008). In social sciences, this means that by employing a multitude of data collection methods, the richness and complexity of human behavior is measured to a greater extent than a single point of reference (Cohen et al., 2007). Campbell and Fiske (1959) note that through triangulation, concurrent validity is demonstrated, especially for qualitative research. Triangulation is therefore key in order for the researcher to be confident that the generated data is not simply the result of a given method of collection (Lin, 1976). On the basis of these considerations, it becomes prudent to understand the benefits and limitations to each of the chosen methods of data collecting.

3.3.1. Unstructured interview method

The use of an unstructured interview in this research became essential as the researcher was able to contact a former digital piracy uploader and torrenting site operator. This became relevant to the research through the opportunity to ask questions about the nature of such an individual's behavior, as well as his perception of digital piracy in general (Appendix 2). The unstructured nature of the interview is the result of desired anonymity of the individual in question.

In terms of use, the unstructured interview was used in order to ask preliminary questions which would provide general understandings of behavioral tendencies and mentality within individuals who engage in digital piracy. This casual and flexible approach to interviewing is regarded as one of the strengths of unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2012, p. 470). The ability to shape the questions based on the subjects responses and willingness to cooperate was central for this research, due to the difficulties for the researcher to address individuals who engage in illegal behavior. As such, the findings of the unstructured interview will largely be used in connection to the findings of the content analysis and the theoretical framework of the theory of planned behavior and word of mouth. By comparing the thematic elements visible in these elements, the survey questions and formulation were generated through a hermeneutic understanding of the phenomenon of digital piracy (Bryman, 2012, p. 560-561).

3.3.2. Content analysis

By analyzing interactions and exchange of information via online piracy forums, further understanding of the online community will be generated. As a result, the findings of this analysis will provide information which will assist in shaping the survey used in this paper. This is achieved through a discourse analysis of the thematic aspects present in online piracy community interactions. For this, it is important to note that discourse analysis only provides results on the themes, linguistic, and rhetorical elements found within the source material, rather than the behavioral attitudes and personal ideals (Fairclough, 1995).

As the results of this analysis will be compared and integrated with notions from the theoretical frameworks, it is prudent to code the initial discursive analysis according to themes found within the theories. The theoretical framework provides the themes of: **personal gain and beliefs** (TPB), **Legal matters** (TPB), **community structure** (WOM), and **recommendations** (WOM). While these themes may appear broad, they provide a starting point for the analytical process.

The forums used for this analysis have been selected on criteria regarding: *Durability*, *popularity*, and *topic*. In this case, durability refers to level of traffic and use a given forum attracts. Similarly, popularity is achieved through forums which are part of or partnered with

popular websites. Finally, topic is understood as the need for a forum to be focused digital piracy, through use or discussions.

The analysis of the source forums will be conducted in line with common aspects of discourse analysis, including: *word groups*, *grammatical features*, *modality*, and *evidentialities*. By identifying potential word groups within corpus of the source material, it is possible to determine common features in vocabulary and language use (Schiffrin et al., 2008). Grammatical features, such as “us vs. them” dichotomies aids in identifying the perceived actors in the context of the source material (Taylor, 2013). Additionally, investigating the use of modality will make it possible to identify the use of urgency and need for action through statements of what “could” and “should” be. Finally, evidentialities present in the corpus of the source material will identify common factuality within the online forums surrounding digital piracy (Lakoff, in Schiffrin et al., 2008). The full source material used for this analysis is available in appendix 1.

3.3.2.1. *Personal gain and belief*

In terms of identifying community responses related to personal gain and beliefs, the corpus source material showed that 18, or half, of the responses were in some way related to personal opinions or remarks regarding the community and its activities (Appendix 1, Response 1-6, 8, 9, 11-15, 17, 18, 23, 26, and 27). The community interaction via these online forums is therefore largely consists of discussions on the outside influence on the activities of the forum, as well as personal preferences and means of acquiring products through digital piracy.

3.3.2.2. *Legal matters*

Out of 12 source threads, one was directly related to legal matters (Appendix 1, response 3). In discussing the openness to legal alternatives to digital piracy, responses were largely positive in nature, given the condition that the product would be high-quality and available to download (Appendix 1, response 13-15). In terms of word grouping, the responses to this thread highlights a significant use of technical or colloquial language. Examples like *DRM-free* and *Seedboxes* means little by the “layman” signifying a collective understanding of the processes involved in digital piracy.

3.3.2.3. *Community structure*

In regards to community structure, one thread from the Reddit.com/r/Piracy forum exemplifies a potential “we vs. them” actor dichotomy. Through the title of “KAT is down? Just download a few torrents through these sites to drive traffic up and show the copyright imperialists that nothing they do can touch our community” (Appendix 1, thread 1) a sense of urgency for the community to act together is established. This modality of collective action is further supported by response 3, through encouraging iTunes account holders to take action. This is also visible in the “Is CG closing its doors?” thread from Reddit.com/r/Trackers, in which the owner or operator of the service personally responds (Appendix 1, response 16), followed by a “call to arms” from the community against a perceived wrongdoer (Appendix 1, response 17).

Additional examples of actual structure within the online digital piracy forums is seen in the gratification of recognizable or noteworthy members of the community. Responses 2, 4, 6, 26, and 27 (Appendix 1) all show various levels of appreciation for members of the community.

3.3.2.4. *Recommendations*

Recommendations is a significant aspect of the WOM theory and practical background. To this, it is found that 19 of the responses (Appendix 1, response 4, 7, 19-36), as well as 7 of the threads (Appendix 1, thread 3, 7-12) consist of recommendations on which movies and TV shows to watch. The majority of both responses and threads are therefore concerned with the assisting and strengthening the community through casual interactions which aid in sharing viewing experiences. In regards to the discursive elements of the interaction, the word groupings would suggest a common use of asynchronous but direct language pattern. Examples like “I’ve started watching Preacher, not exactly whats going on but I can’t stop watching (Appendix 1, response 23)” highlight this notion of common conversational language. Other examples, like those found in the Katcr.co forums simply consist of the title of a given TV show or movie. While brief in nature, these responses serve the same purpose of informing fellow community members.

3.3.2.5. Results

Through the analysis of the threads and responses from the corpus source material similar themes to those present in the theoretical frameworks of the theory of planned behavior and WOM. While only one of the sample threads discusses the legality of digital piracy, specifically legal alternatives, a great number of responses were concerned with the outside influence and actions taken against digital piracy. The nature of the responses and language use would suggest a common, underlying evidentiarity within the community which regards digital piracy as an activity that cannot be controlled and is a source of freedom. This is further underline in the findings regarding community structure which highlights a knee-jerk reaction or modality in responses, urging community members to take action in when the websites are shut down, or notable members of the community are “attacked”. These tendencies are reinforced by a common “us vs. them” dichotomy found in the grammatical features of the responses regarding outside influence.

Additionally, the findings on personal gains and beliefs, as well as recommendations highlight the language and nature in common interactions within online forums. As mentioned, the word groupings found in the corpus source material suggests a casual, direct language use, similar to patterns seen in everyday conversations. The prevalence of responses sharing personal opinions, suggests a strong sense of preserving the community interactions through sharing and receiving advice and experiences. Additionally, the frequency of responses consisting of recommendations for future consumption, further underlines this notion of giving to and receiving from the community as an integral part of the structure and nature of community interactions. The findings of this analysis will aid the creation of the survey questions

3.3.3. Survey method

The use of a questionnaire survey in this research relates to the ability to generate personal responses from variety of members within the digital piracy community. Bryman (2012) notes the possibility for questionnaire surveys to generate responses from a wide audience, while allowing respondents to remain anonymous as one of the key strengths of this approach. The use of such a survey became relevant for this research due to the delicate nature

of researching illegal behavior, and acquiring responses from individual engaged in such behavior.

In regards to structure, the qualitative nature of this research was central in constructing the questionnaire survey in order to yield meaningful information. In doing so, a structured interview model was adopted for the questions. The structured interview model allows the research to elicit information pertaining to behavior, attitudes, norms, and values (Bryman, 2012, p. 209), and is therefore well suited for the purpose of answering the problem formulation of this paper. Critique of this model is commonly referred to as the problem of meaning. The argument of meaning refers to the presumption that “survey researchers presume that interviewer and respondent share the same meaning of terms employed in the interview questions and answers.” (Bryman, 2012, p. 228). However, for this research, the triangulation in methods and the hermeneutic considerations allows for sound understanding for the researcher in regards to the language characteristics used in the digital piracy community.

In regards to the questions implemented in the questionnaire survey, table 1 shows the operationalization used in order to produce questions in line with the theoretical framework and methodological triangulation of this research.

Table 1 Survey operationalization.

Themes	Operationalization	Question
Behavioral Belief and Attitude	Personal understanding of positive and negative result shapes the desire to engage in a behavior.	Why do you choose to illegally stream or download?
		How does the illegal status of downloading and streaming affect you?
Normative Belief	The opinion of outside actors, friends and family, influences the desire to engage in a behavior.	Do your friends and family stream and download?
Subjective Belief	An individual is capable of holding personal opinions on a behavior, independently from outside influence.	What is your own opinion on downloading and streaming illegally?

Behavioral Control and perceived behavioral control.	The individual's ability influences the willingness to engage in a behavior, based on the presence or lack of outside restrictions and personal competence.	How easily are you able to find what you want to watch online for free?
		If anything, what might prevent you from finding what you want to watch?
Frequency of past behavior	The amount of experience and frequency of engaging in a behavior influences the perceived behavioral control.	How much, and how often do you stream or download material online?
Word of Mouth - Community	The nature of online community interactions derives from focus-related, consumption, and approval utility.	Do you use online forums or websites to find suggestions on what to watch?
		If yes, do you yourself post to these forums and websites? And what sort of posts would you write?
		When looking for movies or TV shows to watch, do you look to specific users for the best results?
Word of Mouth – real life spread	In addition to word of mouth spread through forums and websites, the individual's motivation to provide recommendations to friends and family is central to the impact of WOM.	Are you likely to share recommendations of TV shows and movies you have watched through downloading or streaming with friends and family?

In terms of distribution, the surveys was, initially, distributed through forums and websites pertaining to digital piracy. Despite the researcher's effort to express and provide complete anonymity for respondents, very few members of the online community were willing to complete the survey. However, the initial contact with cooperative members of the community, allowed the survey to be further shared within the network of these individuals (Bryman, 2012, p. 202). Through this distribution, a total of 10 structured interviews were gathered by the questionnaire survey. Some researchers have noted that research based on a low amount of respondents are unable to support convincing conclusions (Gerson and Horowitz, 2002). However, Warren (2002) makes the argument that based on the richness of an interview, relatively low amounts of respondents does not affect the quality and soundness of the results. It should also be noted that the criteria for survey respondents was previous or

ongoing experience with digital piracy. This criteria was chosen in order to provide information on a wide variety of community members, rather than focusing sub-groups.

3.4. Data analysis

In order to understand the behavioral tendencies within the digital piracy community, as well as the potentially beneficial use of word of mouth generated by the community, qualitative methods will be employed (Bryman, 2012, p. 26). **Thematic coding** will be applied to the survey responses, as well as the unstructured interview and content analysis from online forums. This approach becomes relevant in order to uncover themes pertaining to behavior and tendencies within the data (Bryman, 2012, p. 624). Through this coding, it will be possible to (1) compare the frequency of themes, (2) identify theme co-occurrence, and (3) demonstrate the relationship between the themes. In doing so, the intricacies of meaning in the data will be captured (Guest et al., 2012, p. 11).

This research follows an **iterative approach**, in exploring the data. The approach refers to the notion of going back and forth the theoretical framework and the collected data (Bryman, 2012, p. 26). This was relevant to this research in the preliminary triangulation of the unstructured interview and content analysis. It should be noted that in addition to its preliminary use, the content analysis will also be used to provide further alternative information to the survey analysis. The process of combining the findings from the initial data collection, with the theoretical background of the theory of planned behavior and word of mouth was performed in order to provide a holistic understanding of prevalent themes within the phenomenon of digital piracy. This understanding was then used in order to generate a questionnaire with the aim of providing meaning responses in regards to the potential use of the digital piracy as a means for spreading word of mouth.

Similarly to the iterative approach in investigating the collected data, this research also follows a **hermeneutic approach**. Hermeneutics have generally been described as the concerning the measures need to interpret a text correctly within its context (Schmidt, 2014). Central to this interpretation is the **hermeneutic circle**. "In interpreting a text the interpreter moves from a projected meaning for the whole to the parts and then returns to the whole."

(Schmidt, 2014, p. 103). This notion of interpretation by understanding of the whole through its parts, provides a new picture of the whole, which in turn starts an ongoing learning and understanding process; this is visible in figure 7. For this research, the initial unstructured interview and context analysis, provide a holistic understanding of the general behavior of the digital piracy community. This understanding consists of interpretation of individual aspects of the community behavior, and provides new insight into the context as a whole. As such, the final result of this research will provide possible insights into the necessary considerations made by marketers in regards to approach communities in general, as well as those specifically related to digital piracy.

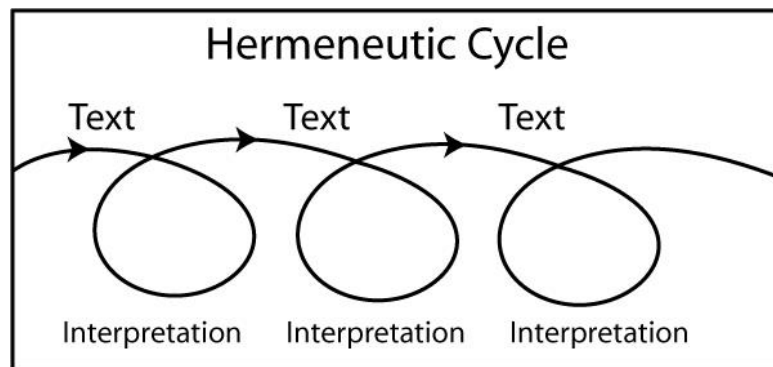


Figure 7 The Hermeneutic Circle

4. Analysis and discussion

4.1. Personal belief and attitude

4.1.1. Motivation

In analyzing the survey responses, it is prudent to start by looking at the personal understanding positive benefits and beliefs regarding digital piracy in the community. 5 out for the 10 responses regarding to the questions of “Why do you choose to illegally stream and download? (Appendix 3.1)” were driven by the lack of financial cost of download and streaming material illegally. The remaining 5 responses were motivated by the ability to access material which otherwise would not be available through legal means within their region, or material which is subject to delayed releases outside of certain countries. Responses such as “It is sometimes difficult to find the movie or show you want to watch. I would have no issue paying

to watch if there was a service that had what I wanted - Netflix etc does not have everything.!(Appendix 3.1, response 5)” Exemplifies the need for community members to access desired material synchronously with its release, as well as the inability of contemporary options such as Netflix to provide this ability.

In addition to convenience, this desire for synchronous access relates to the nature of interactions and use of the internet, as respondents were concerned with TV shows or movies being “spoiled” online before the user has the chance to watch the show themselves(Appendix 3.1., response 3 and 9). The personal motivation for community members is therefore equal measures monetary and convenience through accessibility and timely access.

4.1.2. Past behavior

In addition to the initial motivation for engaging in digital piracy, the survey respondents were also asked to describe their frequency of behavior (Appendix 3.2.). 5 of the 10 respondents noted their frequency as several times per week. The remaining respondents described a situational or rare use of digital piracy. Some individuals responded that their frequency of use correlates with situations such as “In autumn its more since there are a lot of series that gets aired this time of year (Appendix 3.2., response 13)” and “I mostly do if I want some movies for a trip were I know that I wont have any Internet connection (Appendix 3.2., response 19)”. The frequency of behavior in the sample group is can therefore be described as high in half of the respondents, while situational for the remaining half. Responses from the latter half, potentially correlates with the previous notion of a desire to access material synchronously with release dates.

4.1.3. Behavioral control

In addition to the frequency of engagement for the sample group, the ability for individuals to find what they want to consume through digital piracy becomes relevant (Appendix 3.6.). All but one of the respondents said that they were fairly or very easily able to find anything they want (Appendix 3.6., response 51-58, 60). Responses like “Google top 5-10 results will give me what I want every time (Appendix 3.6., response 52)” exemplifies the general ease with which individuals are able to access almost anything through illegal means.

However, for one respondent the ongoing efforts in removing digital piracy websites presents problems. "It's not easy for me and once I find a good site, they shut it down and then I have to find a new one. It frustrates me and thats why I give up easily and choose to watch something on Netflix (Appendix 3.6., 59)". Despite the difficulties in restricting online piracy through shutting down websites that facilitates the behavior, it is at least partially effective in some instances.

4.1.4. Behavioral belief

So far, the motivation and frequency of behavioral engagement for the sample group has been presented. However, in line with the theory of planned behavior, the personal understanding and perspective on a given behavior can differ from the actual motivation and willingness to engaging in it. Respondents were therefore asked: "What is your own opinion on downloading and streaming illegally? (Appendix 3.5.)". For the majority of the respondents, a general understanding of the negative effects of the behavior is present: "I understand artists rights to getting paid for their work, but at the same time, I believe that movies and music are overpriced and that people should have better access to them, especially people who don't necessarily have the money to purchase it (Appendix 3.5., 43)" and "I understand that there is a loss of revenue that otherwise would have been avoided. However, much like traditional store theft, there is room in the budget and financial side of the business that allows for a few bad guys (Appendix 3.5., 49)". These responses highlight an understanding of the effects, while disregarding them on the basis of personal beliefs regarding the actual impact of digital piracy and prices of legal means of consuming material.

In addition to these aspects of the effects and justification for digital piracy, 3 of the respondents directly refers to the ongoing theme of availability of material online, or lack thereof, through legal means. This is visible in responses such as: "Sometimes you have to, if you really want to see something and you can't get it through conventional means, e.g. perhaps it's not available in your country (Appendix 3.5., 45)" and "I think that it's morally wrong but it's free and convenient. Also if you miss a new episode of a show it's easy to catch up (Appendix 3.5., 48)". The personal understanding and opinion of digital piracy of the survey respondents is largely homogenous. This is visible in the discursive modality of digital piracy as a natural aspect

of accessing material which is visible in the responses. Further, respondents seem aware of the potential negative impact of digital piracy, while these considerations are practically ignored due to personal opinions and beliefs.

4.1.5. Subjective and normative belief

Finally, the outside pressure and behavior of those closest to an individual is able to attribute to the willingness and motivation to engage in a behavior, described in the theory of planned behavior through subjective norms. In order to examine the presences of such effects, respondents were asked: “Do your family and friends illegally stream and download? (Appendix 3.4)”. All of the respondents identified their friends as being engaged in illegal streaming or download, while 4 of the respondents note that their family did not. Responses like “not my parents though I feel that they are ‘too old’ (Appendix 3.4., 35)” and “My family are all fairly computer illiterate, so they don’t really do either (Appendix 3.4., 39)” exemplifies a potential effect on the motivation and willingness to engage in digital piracy based on age and proficiency. From the survey, it is clear that all of the respondents are to a certain degree part of a community or environment in which digital piracy is common and accepted to the point that it is something to talk about and share with one’s peers.

4.1.6. Personal belief and attitude discussion

Through the analysis of the survey respondents, their answers regarding personal gain and belief regarding digital piracy, a number of themes and features become clear. Firstly, regarding the personal belief and attitude towards digital piracy, it is evident that the respondents are somewhat aware of the negative financial impact piracy can have on the industries and artists (Sparks et al., 1997). However, the majority of the respondents were able to disregard such impact, on the basis of subjective justification. In line with the theory of planned behavior, the personal belief of the outcomes of digital piracy leads to an attitude towards the behavior that is formed through the personal gain outweighing the negative affect on the industries and artists that produce the pirated material (Azjen, 2012). That is to say that the respondents have accepted digital piracy as a natural part of consumption, as their personal needs are satisfied, despite the possible negative outcomes of the behavior.

The notion of accepting digital piracy as a natural part of consumption, or normal activity, leads to questions regarding “how and why” such behavior becomes normalized in such a way. To this, it is prudent to understand the social norms presented by the respondents. By asking respondents “Do your friends and family illegally stream and download? (Appendix 3.4.)” It was possible to gather information regarding the outside pressure, which generates the normative belief perceived by the individual. From the responses, it became clear that all of the respondents (10 out of 10) had friends who also engage in digital piracy. In line with Azjen’s (2012) notion of normative belief, this means that the respondents consider digital piracy socially acceptable through a subjective perception of the behavior of friends and family.

The general normative belief within the community is potentially correlated with the fact that all respondents to the survey were in the 24-30 age bracket. Further understanding of any correlation between digital piracy and age, would require extensive analysis of a multitude of effects such as Internet use, income, etc. in order to provide a full picture (Peak, 1955). Naturally, these results may differ from those collected from a general population sample, as the survey used for this research was designed and distributed to members of the digital piracy community. However, a general social understanding of digital piracy as normal behavior is potentially part of the prevalence of online means available to consume illegal material.

Due to the normative and subjective belief of digital piracy as acceptable behavior, it is necessary to understand the personal belief and motivation to engage in the behavior (Douglass, 2006). From the analysis, it becomes clear that the motivation to consume material through illegal means consists of equal measures financial freedom and accessibility. The general motivation and belief of the respondents is therefore exemplified in one of the responses which states that “(...) the Internet and information sharing it provides, it gives the opportunity to do so, and one would be stupid not to use said opportunity (Appendix 3.5., 43)”. Azjen’s (2012) notions of personal belief and attitude towards behavior highlights the idea that the subjective gains of a behavior is able to shape the motivation to engage in the behavior. In other words, for the respondents, the personal belief and attitude towards digital piracy consists of the availability of means to consume what they want, when they want, and without cost.

Outside of the responses to the specific question of “How does the illegal status of downloading and streaming affect you? (3)”, none of the respondents referred to the fact that digital piracy can lead to severe legal actions and fines. While the specifics of the legality will be analyzed and discussed later on in this paper, it should be highlighted that none of the respondents noted possible negative implications of digital piracy, despite questions of how and why the respondents consume illegal material, as well as general attitude towards the behavior. The general positive attitude towards digital piracy, as well as the absence of considerations of potential backlash provides valuable insight into the personal belief and attitude of the respondents (Douglass, 2006). It would seem that community members are either unaware of the possible legal implications of digital piracy, or largely unaffected by them (Jacobs et al., 2012). As mentioned, legal matters will be analyzed and discussed later.

Through the analysis and discussion of the personal beliefs and attitudes of the respondents, regarding digital piracy, it has become clear that general acceptance of this behavior is perpetuated through the perceived normative and subjective norms (Douglass, 2006). From the analysis, it was found that the frequency of engaging in digital piracy was weekly for half of the respondents, while the other half used illegal means occasionally. Additionally, almost all of the respondents were fairly or very confident in their ability to find the material their desire online without difficulties. These findings point to Azjen’s (2012) notion that high levels of self-efficacy is generated and reinforced by perseverance, i.e. ongoing willingness to engage in a behavior. Perugini and Bagozzi (2001) extend this notion with the model of goal-directed behavior, and which includes frequency of past behavior in order to predict and understand motivation for behavioral actions. By combining these notions with the findings of the analysis, it should be noted that the frequency of behavior and behavioral control of the respondents results in the perceived behavioral control of engaging in digital piracy (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001).

However, for the findings in this research, it can be argued that perceived behavioral control is not only related to the respondents’ behavioral control and self-efficacy, but also the subjective justification for participating in digital piracy. This is supported by the notion of anticipated emotions (Perugini and bagozzi, 2001). For the respondents, it is clear that the

emotional response to digital piracy is almost solely related to the personal benefits of perceived free and easily accessible material, with little considerations for the victims of streaming and downloading or legal ramifications. The model of goal-directed behavior, therefore, offers a deeper and clearer understanding of the behavioral tendencies, which the theory of planned behavior is incapable of through its lack of emotional considerations.

4.1.7. Personal belief and attitude conclusion

In summary of the responses from the survey, a number of tendencies regarding the personal beliefs and attitudes of the respondents was found. Firstly, the majority of members of the digital piracy community, represented by the survey respondents, were quick to dismiss any negative emotional influence from the illegal nature of their behavior. The ability to disregard the negative impact of the behavior was facilitated through a subjective justification based on perceived high pricings for legal means of consumption, as well as unfair distribution of revenue within the affected industries. Additionally, the respondents were motivated to engage in digital piracy based on high levels of behavioral control, due to the amount of material which is available through illegal means of downloading or streaming. The ease with which members of the digital piracy community is able acquire desired material was also found to be central for respondents who chose to illegally stream or download rather than consuming through legal means.

As a result of the perceived convenience and benefits of consuming material via illegal means, members of the digital piracy community generate subjective norms in regards to streaming and downloading as a natural activity. This notion was further highlighted as being self-perpetuating due to the normative belief generated within the community. The normative belief of digital piracy as a normal activity was visible in the findings of the analysis as all respondents noted that their friends were also engaged in digital piracy.

4.2. Legality

From the analysis and discussion of the personal beliefs and attitudes towards digital piracy, it became clear that the survey respondents were very comfortable with their abilities and reasoning behind engaging in such behavior. In order to further understand this notion of

justification and self-efficacy, it is necessary to highlight the general perception of the influence of the illegal status of digital piracy.

In order to do so, respondents were asked “How does the illegal status of downloading and streaming affect you?” Four of the ten respondents noted that the legality of the behavior had no effect, at all, on them. These responses likely refer to lack of effects related to the mentality of digital piracy as acceptable behavior, as well as legislative measures taken against them, in this context. However, one respondent highlighted that the illegal nature of digital piracy led to difficulties in acquiring desired material as “I tend to give up searching for a show or movie that I want to illegally download because the links are broken, too many popups, or ask me submit my credit card information”. This example provides information on the impact of the ongoing legal measures which have been taken in order to shut down popular streaming and downloading platforms. This is also the only response which mentions the technical implications of the illegal status of streaming and downloading.

However, five of the ten respondents highlighted a sense of discomfort in engaging in digital piracy. While similar in nature, it should be noted that some respondents seemed to be affected by guilt, exemplified in responses such as: “I am uncomfortable participating in it, but I understand why it is illegal” and “(...) when I stop and think about it, illegally streaming is basically just as bad as stealing a sweater in a store. When I think about that way, I instantly get a guilty conscience”. The latter comment could be compared to a similar response from the question on the respondents’ personal opinion of digital piracy which stated that “(...) much like traditional store theft, there is room in the budget and financial side of the business that allows for a few bad guys”. While the attitude of the two responses differ, the intention of comparing digital piracy to traditional, physical theft, remains the same.

In addition to a sense of guilt in a few of the respondents, the effect of the illegal status of digital piracy also influences the respondents in other ways. Two of the respondents were, at least partially, affected by the possible legal ramifications of downloading and streaming illegal material. However, both of the responses were also quick to dismiss the potential implications, as seen in their comments “It makes me nervous to download so I prefer to stream, but it is

worth the risk” and “Its in the back of our mind, but as a minor playing the grand scheme, I doubt that people like me will ever get in any kind of trouble”. As seen, both respondents exhibit partial hesitation in regards to digital piracy due to the risk involve, but largely unaffected in regards to their willingness to engage in the behavior.

4.2.1. Legality discussion

In regards to the direct and perceived effect of the illegal status of digital piracy, a number of themes becomes evident. Firstly, a large number of the respondents were entirely unaffected by the legality of their behavior. For these individuals, a complete lack of emotional influence drives their personal beliefs and perceived behavioral control, as subjective justifications and absence of legal ramifications allows for a high sense of self-efficacy (Azjen, 2012).

In addition, it should be noted that the actual legal actions taken against platforms which enable digital piracy and individuals who engage in the behavior was only effective in influencing just one of the respondents who noted difficulties in finding desired material due to the ongoing efforts to shut down illegal websites. It can therefore be argued that the legal efforts employed by distributors from the affected industries, have been largely unable to hinder individuals who engage in digital piracy, seen in the sample responses.

However, while legal efforts have been generally unsuccessful through direct impact, the presence of these actions have been able to affect the mentality of the community (Jacobs et al., 2012). This is seen in the analysis of the survey responses in regards to individuals who have a tentative approach to digital piracy due to the possibility of legal actions. In line with the *model of goal-direct behavior* it should be noted that the anticipated emotions of some individuals towards the outcomes of digital piracy has been formed through the subjective perception of risk involved in the behavior (Perugini and Bagozzi, 2001). While such emotional response has been able to generate doubt and uneasiness which may deter some individuals, for the sample responses, the temptation of perceived free and easily accessible material outweighs the perceived risk.

This notion of the positives overshadowing the negatives is further visible in the remaining respondents. For these individuals, a general sense of guilt is present through a subjective understanding of the financial implication for artists and other victims of digital piracy. However, as described earlier, most respondents were able to disregard any emotional responses related to guilt (Jacobs et al., 2012). This is achieved through a subjective prioritization of one's own needs over the negative implications for other, or justification of one's actions through a subjective understanding of the financial distribution of means within music, TV, or movie industries. In line with the theoretical approach of TPB and MGB, it could be argued that the personal beliefs of the respondents have been shaped by the subjective and normative norms of digital piracy (Azjen, 2012). This is further supported through the previous discussion on personal beliefs, in which it was determined that all of the respondents were part of a personal community of friends who all engage in digital piracy. Legality in these cases is, arguably, disregarded due to a shared sense of security through common actions, without repercussions.

4.2.2. Legality conclusion

It can be concluded that the community in general is unaffected in regards to their behavior. It should, however, be noted that all respondents were aware of the illegality of the behavior. Despite this awareness, almost half of the respondents perceived no subjective influence by engaging in digital piracy. However, for one of the respondents, the ongoing legal actions taken in order to shut down digital piracy websites and platforms was central to the legal repercussions of illegally streaming and downloading. Lastly, half of the respondents were emotionally affected by the implications of digital piracy. Regardless of the subjective influence from the illegal nature of their actions, none of the respondents were effectively influenced in regards to hindering their intention to engage in digital piracy. The perceived behavioral control of the community members is therefore strengthened and perpetuated by a collective sense of justification and disregard for potential legal actions.

4.3. Community structure

While the previous thematic chapters have dealt with the personal beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals engaged in digital piracy, it is necessary to generate further understanding of the interpersonal aspect. This will be achieved through understanding general aspects of community structure, through both real life interactions and online mediation, within digital piracy. For this paper, the analysis which has previously been used in the triangulation of the survey questions will be used as part of the discussion on community structure. However, it is also necessary to understand in the subjective understandings of community influence and presence, through the survey respondents.

Despite the fact that none of the survey question inquired about the community structure within digital piracy directly, it is still possible to derive some meaningful tendencies from the responses from various questions. From the previous analysis and discussion in the paper, it was made clear that the majority of the sample respondents thought of themselves as competent in acquiring desired material through digital piracy. This becomes relevant in regards to the community structure, as one of the respondents noted that “I know in my friend group as ‘the guy who can get stuff’... so for movie nights there is a high chance that I will be responsible for getting the movie” (Appendix 3.3., response 23). Such responses highlight the notion that the community structure outside of the online setting relates to sharing illegally acquire material with friends and family. This will be analyzed and discussed further in the following chapter on the notion of recommendations and what role they play in online and real life communities.

While little can be analyzed about the community structure surrounding digital piracy from the survey respondents, the analysis of online forums used for the triangulation of the survey questions offers valuable information. Firstly, it was found that through discursive elements and comments a sense of modality of community members having to take action and work together was visible. This was exemplified in comments such as: “Everyone do your part and report the Twitter account https://mobile.twitter.com/shadyguy__ for revealing personal information” (Appendix 1, response 17) and “If you are an iTunes account holder, take some action to show them we don't appreciate what they did” (Appendix 1, response 3). In addition

to this modality, as general “us vs. them” dichotomy was established, between individuals who engage in digital piracy and any organization or person who tries to hinder such behavior.

Further, it was noted that members of the online community tended to collectively and individually show gratification for noteworthy community members. This tendency is highlighted in comments such as: “Bless those who have donated to help make it work” (Appendix 1, response 6) and “Thanks so much, misterroop! Got it! I hope you and others continue to post links to our favorite shows. It is SO much appreciated!” (Appendix 1, response 27). As seen in these examples, gratification is directed at both individual members as well as general displays of appreciation for a collective of members who aids the community.

Through the analysis of the survey responses, as well as online comments from digital piracy focused forums and website, the community structure can be described in line with a number of tendencies. From the survey responses it was found that the unmediated interactions found in real life community structure manifests through certain individuals being labeled as “experts”. These individuals are subsequently referred to by their peers as particularly capable of acquiring material through digital piracy. Such tendencies are also visible in the online setting of forums and websites which are dedicated to digital piracy. This is determined in regards to the gratification of certain members of the online community due to their status noteworthy status. Lastly, a central tendency within the online community relates to the notion of collective actions to preserve the community and the possibility to continue acquiring material through illegal means. In doing so, a dichotomy between “us vs. them” is visible in large number of the online comments.

4.3.1. Community structure discussion

Through the analysis of the corpus source material, a general understanding of the community structure has been established. Firstly, the noteworthy presence of resistance towards outside forces, based on the previously mentioned dichotomy between “us vs. them”. In regards to impact of this mentality within the online community is arguably related to the notion of resistance from online community members when approached for marketing purposes. Previous research (Kozinets et al., 2010; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010) highlighted

similar responses from bloggers and online communities, who were likely to respond negatively to being approached by marketers etc. who wanted to employ online channels and the word of mouth generated through it.

While the findings of Kozinets et al. (2010) and Hennig-Thurau et al's. (2010) research refers to marketing of products or services which are legal, the findings from the digital piracy community and its similarities with those found in previous research highlights general tendencies within online communities. Due to the general sense of resistance to outside influence from organizations or individuals signifies the difficulties in using online communities as a marketing tool (Kozinets et al., 2010; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). However, it should be noted that this notion is possibly related to blatant efforts to promote a product or service. The potential means of employing digital piracy communities will be analyzed and discussed in a later section on the impact of recommendations, which traditionally has been key to word of mouth spread and influence (Hung and Li, 2007; Cheung and Lee, 2012).

Aforementioned difficulties in effectively penetrating the market through online communities is arguably partially due to the nature of these communities themselves. As mentioned, a general sense of struggle between the community as a whole and outside forces is present in the analysis of both survey respondents and online communities. This resistance is further visible in the tendency found within the online digital piracy community in regards to a modality of a collective effort to protect the community and attack those who seek to stop illegal means and platforms which facilitates digital piracy. This tendency relates to Balasubramanian and Mahajan (2001) notion of focus-related utility, which highlights the perceived need to strengthen a community through contributions as a key motivational aspect of word of mouth and its impact. It can therefore be argued that the personal need for community members to engage in a community and its behavior is central to the difficulties in effectively employing these communities as a means of marketing.

In regards to employing digital piracy communities as a marketing, this protective nature of the communities becomes problematic due to the difficulties in gaining the trust of members. By achieving trust in the communities, marketers would be able to cross the border

between being regarded as one of “them”, i.e. damaging outside influences, and becoming part of the community. From a discursive standpoint, this relates to the valence and incentive of the messages (Sweeney et al., 2012). It is possible that by mastering the valence used within community interactions, marketers will be able to share information with communities by refraining from being overly evident in their efforts to market a product or service.

The possibility for marketers to employ online communities as a tool can further be understood through the contemporary models on the nature of word of mouth distribution. Previous research offers information which makes it possible to identify the general nature of word of mouth as related to the notion of organic interconsumer interaction (Kozinets et al., 2010). This means that messages and interactions of the online and real life communities appear as being natural in nature, much like casual conversations. From the findings of the analysis and discussions in the paper, marketers are possibly able to employ network coproduction (Kozinets et al., 2010). Through this model, marketers are required to submerge themselves into the cultural and communal norms, found within the communities. In doing so, marketers will become regarded as part of the community, and less likely to encounter resistance and negative responses from the community.

4.3.2. Community structure conclusion

In regards to the community structure found within the framework of digital piracy, it can be concluded penetrating the community is central in order to effectively employing word of mouth marketing. This is based on the mentality found in comments and responses from community members, in which a general sense of “us vs. them” was highlighted. The modality seen within the discursive elements of the responses and comments from community members signifies a collective need to strengthen and protect the community and their behavior. The modality was visible in the general negative responses to individuals and organizations who sought shut down and hinder digital piracy. Additionally, gratification for noteworthy members and general efforts to provide assistance was prevalent within the community interactions. The distinction between community members and outside individuals was found to be central to the traditional notion of resistance in regards employing online communities for marketing purposes (Kozinets et al., 2010; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

4.4. Recommendations

Having analyzed and discussed the structure and nature of the communities surrounding digital piracy, it becomes relevant to further understand the potential use and impact of recommendations generated as part of the word of mouth distribution within the framework. Again, by using survey responses and the analysis of online forums, extensive evidence will be provide regarding both online and real life interactions.

To this, the survey respondents were asked a series of questions pertaining to the nature of their own perception and utility of recommendations. From the responses to these questions, it was found that the majority of the sample group of respondents did not use online forums or websites. Similarly, none of the respondents were engaged in writing comments, and otherwise contributing to online forums or websites.

However, some respondents noted that they would use websites such as IMDB (Internet Movie Database), when looking for suggestions or inspiration. Additionally, four respondents highlighted their own tendency to search out specific sources or users when looking for the best result. This notion is exemplified in responses such as: “Yes, on kickass torrents I always look for YIFY. He always has the best quality movies and links” (Appendix 3.10., response 87) and “There used to be a few very professionel, and trustworthy users on sites like Kickass Torrents, and the pirate bay. Presentation and knowing what you are getting means quite a lot when it comes to downloading, as you never know if someone unloaded some virus or something” (Appendix 3.10., 95)). A sense of wanting to ensure a certain level of quality and reassurance in the integrity of the pirated material is visible.

While the majority of the respondents did not use online platforms when searching for recommendations, the survey provides information regarding the organic and real life word of mouth generated through digital piracy. This was done by questioning respondents on “Are you likely to share recommendations of TV shows and movies you have watched through downloading or streaming with friends and family?” (Appendix 3.11.). 8 out of 10 respondents responded that they would share recommendations with friends or family. The tendency for found in the survey sample provides information regarding the nature of these interactions

through responses such as: “Of course! If I see something I know someone would like I tell them about it and whether they chose to download or stream illegally is up to them” (Appendix 3.11., response 97) and “im talking a lot with people watching movies and series so we share recommendations with each other” (Appendix 3.11., response 99). Unlike the forum or website mediated recommendations, the organic word of mouth generated through members of the digital piracy community is seemingly prevalent. Additionally, it should be noted that a tendency to refrain from mentioning the means by which an individual acquired a given piece of material is found in the respondents. This is visible in responses such as: “Ill talk about it with my friends and family. I may not necessarily mention how I watched it, but anything that I enjoy, ill tell people about” (Appendix 3.11., response 105) and “Yes, but I don’t tell them to illegally stream or download it” (Appendix 3.11., response 106).

In addition to the information regarding the use of recommendations seen in the survey responses, the analysis of the online forums and websites provide further understanding of the tendencies in members who are engage in online interactions. It was found that 19 out of 36 comments and seven out of twelve threads were concerned with providing recommendations of movies and TV shows (Appendix 1).

4.4.1. Recommendation discussion

Through the analysis of the survey responses and the online community interactions found in online platforms, a number of tendencies becomes highlighted in regards to the nature of recommendations. Firstly, in regards to the use online forums and websites surrounding digital piracy, the results of seemed immediately contradictory. While the majority of sample comments and threads from digital piracy platforms (Appendix 1) consisted of recommendations, the survey respondents noted that they do not use such platforms when searching for suggestions. This suggests that the level of engagement in the online communities varies greatly within the general digital piracy community. However, in order to further understand such inconsistencies, additional research would need to be conducted in regards to the community interactions of potential ‘super users’, i.e. exceptionally active members of the online communities. Without such further understanding, the findings of the analysis within this paper would suggest that the online community consist of minority of dedicated users.

However, the inconsistencies in the use of online recommendations does not mean that the word of mouth generated within the general digital piracy community is negligible (Kilby, 2007). For the majority of the survey respondents, recommendations became significant in regards to personal relationships. Sharing, as well as receiving recommendations from friends, was highlighted as extremely prevalent throughout the responses. The notion of organic interconsumer influence model is therefore central to the nature of word of mouth in the general digital piracy communities (Kozinets et al., 2010). The effectiveness and prevalence of this model of word of mouth has conventionally been connected to the trust and valence found in messages from individuals with personal relationships (Sweeney et al., 2012).

In regards to the survey respondents, the tendencies to share and received recommendations with friends and family is likely related the trust and valence found in messages from personal relationships (Söderlund and Rosengren, 2007). The effective of these messages are therefore subject to richness and vividness generated through the personal knowledge of a friends experiences (Sweeney et al., 2012). In regards to these considerations, members of the digital piracy community seek to receive recommendations from individuals who they perceive as noteworthy, due to their personal relationship or knowledge. This is visible in responses from the survey such as: "I watch is mostly what my friends recommend. They are heavy users, so they watch most of the shows I would be interested in" (Appendix 3.10., response 88) and "im know in my friend group as 'the guy who can get stuff'" (Appendix 3, response 23). Through these responses, the notion of community leaders is highlighted in personal relationships within the digital piracy community (Kozinets et al., 2010).

The presence of community leaders relates to word of mouth in regards to the linear marketer influence model (Kozinets et al., 2010). As such, the importance of these noteworthy members of the community becomes interesting due to their potential influence within a given community (Balasubramanian and Mahajan, 2001: Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Additionally, the importance of these community leaders is relevant in the responses from the survey, in which some respondents noted the presence of influential members (Appendix 3.10., response 88; Appendix 3.10., response 87 and 95). The presence of community leaders, established through social interaction, as well as Internet mediated platforms, is central to the potential

advantageous use of digital piracy communities (Li and Du, 2010). However, as previously discussed, directly engaging individuals or the community in general has previously been met with resistance. It is therefore crucial for marketers to reach community members and leaders without overt means.

4.4.2. Recommendation conclusion

It can be concluded that community interactions is divided between online and real life mediation. By comparing results from survey respondents and the analysis of online platforms surrounding digital piracy, it was found that a minority of the general digital piracy community adheres to online interactions in regards to recommendations. Alternatively, for the survey respondents it was found that the word of mouth was primarily spread between friends and acquaintances. The findings within online and real life communities is suggests that the most prevalent method of word of mouth spread is related to the organic interconsumer model. This is further underlined with the previously highlighted idea of “us vs. them” in which the community looks to other members for recommendations through a collective sense of trust and understanding.

However, additional findings suggest that the community leaders were present in both online and real life community interactions. Respondents highlighted that some individuals will be regarded leaders through their personal expertise and experience with digital piracy. Similarly, when engaging in digital piracy, some respondents were likely to search for specific users in order to acquire high quality material as well as ensure the integrity of downloaded material. These tendencies suggest that in addition to the organic interconsumer model of word of mouth generation, the linear marketer model is potentially effective in describing and employing community interactions

For marketers, the findings regarding the nature of community interactions and recommendations suggests a need to appeal to community members without overt means. This is due to the general resistance to outside and obvious attempts to employ the community for marketing purposes.

5. Conclusion

Past research on the subject of digital piracy has largely been focusing on understanding the negative financial impact. However, recent statements such as those of the programming president of HBO, Michael Lombardo, highlights the potential for positive implications from the word of mouth generated by the digital piracy community. Considering this notion, researchers have started to extend research on the use of word of mouth within similar communities (Allsop et al., 2007). However, there are still gaps in the research, in regards to understanding the correlation between behavioral tendencies within the digital piracy communities, and the use of word of mouth as a means of marketing. This research aimed to bridge the gap between previous research and contemporary notions of digital piracy impact.

Through analyzing and discussing the findings of data presented in this research, a number of conclusions can be made in regards to the behavioral tendencies of the digital piracy community and the potential use of word of mouth. Firstly, by analyzing the behavioral beliefs, attitudes, and intentions of survey respondents, it can be concluded that the nature of the community is the result of the personal beliefs of its members. The subjective understanding of digital piracy behavior is based personal justifications for the use of illegal means of acquiring material online. The justifications of survey respondents were based on subjective opinions on the financial inequality in terms of pricing and the convenience of digital piracy. Through these subjective justifications, the survey respondents were able to negate any personal beliefs regarding the negative implications of piracy. These findings are similar to those of previous quantitative research (Jacobs et al., 2012). Additionally, the complete disregard for the legal implications of digital piracy was present in survey respondents. In regards to the theoretical framework of the theory of planned behavior, the personal beliefs and attitudes of community members perpetuates a high level of perceived behavioral control.

Secondly, the resistance to outside actors perceived in the digital piracy community is central to understanding the context. This resistance was seen on an individual level, through difficulties in gathering survey respondents, despite complete anonymity. Additionally, the collective modality of “us vs. then” distinction was prevalent in the online community. The

distinction between members and outside influence was seemingly the results of efforts to protect the community from individuals and organizations who seek to hinder their behavior. For marketers, the skeptical nature of the digital piracy community means that in order to effectively engage and employ the community, it would be necessary to use extremely subtle means, or become an accepted part of the community through alternative means.

Lastly, the potential use of word of mouth marketing within the digital piracy community seems warranted. This is supported by the prevalence of comments and threads on digital piracy platforms, pertaining to sharing recommendations of movies and TV shows. Additionally, the survey responses highlighted a general tendency of sharing recommendations between friends and family, including those who do not engage in digital piracy themselves. Noteworthy for marketers is the notion of community leaders in this context. In regards to online activity, it was found that community members sought out well-known users when looking for quality assurance. Additionally, for real life interactions, a number of respondents noted that friends relied on them for recommendations and acquiring material. The notion of these community leaders allows for a potential opening for marketers to penetrate the digital piracy community.

In conclusion, marketers need to have a deep understanding of the communities they seek to approach for marketing purposes. In regards to digital piracy communities, the resistance to outside influence is a key limitation to employing effective word of mouth marketing. However, if successful in approaching the community, the potential impact of the word of mouth spread is significant. The research in this paper, provides a starting for future research in regards to the necessary considerations needed in approaching specific communities.

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Appendix

Appendix 1- Content Analysis

Forum	Titles of the threads	Top responses
Reddit.com/r/Piracy:	KAT is down? Just download a few torrents through these sites to drive traffic up and show the copyright imperialists that nothing they do can touch our community.	1. I'm surprised that there hasn't been more discussion about WHY IT WAS THE DHS that took them down? What the hell does internet piracy have to do with terrorism? 2. Wow, 1337 is awesome, it's exactly what I loved about the KAT layout but better 3. If you are an iTunes account holder, take some action to show them we don't appreciate what they did. Isn't it a bit hypocritical they claimed to be the bastion of privacy and security when the Feds wanted to get into the phone of a terrorist but had no such qualms when asked to handover transactional details?
	Researcher illegally shares millions of science papers free online to spread knowledge	4. I think this would be a good time to share Aaron Swartz' Guerilla Open Access Manifesto. 5. Proprietary knowledge is the death of science. 6. Bless those who have donated to help make it work.
	Now that KAT is gone, I wrote a small script that automatically hides fake torrents on Pirate Bay based on conditional logic.	7. You might also want to post in /r/TPB & /r/thePirateBay. 8. Just tried it in Chrome, works really well thanks for sharing! 9. If I had this script ages ago, I wouldn't have had to program my brain to do this automatically.
Reddit.com/r/Trackers	Pirate Bay is The King of Torrents Once Again	10. Only by default. It doesn't make it superior. 11. I usually get a database maintenance error whenever I go to check for something there lately. 12. I'll stick with private tracker sites.
	If there was a small payment of say \$30 dollars a month that you could pay and download anything you wanted, legally, would you do it?	13. Yes, but it would have to be very high-quality, DRM-free, and an impossibly large collection. 14. Seedboxes cost me that much, and probably I have a better, therefore costlier Internet connection to be able to download, so the money is not the issue. 15. Download : Yes Stream : No
	Is CG closing its doors?	16. CG is not closing down. The twitter account is not mine. What did happen is that our current hosting service got fed up with the ddos attacks and suspended our server. 17. Everyone do your part and report the Twitter account https://mobile.twitter.com/shadyguy__ for revealing personal information. 18. Can anyone shed some more light on this... I'm freaking out over here.
Katr.co/community/TV	TV show recommendations! We know some really good ones so share your TV show recommendations for others to check out!	19. i highly recommend this (Image of Stranger Things advertisement, ed.) 20. I just downloaded the complete first season. In fact i've read indeed very good comments!! :) :) :) 21. Van.Helsing.S01E01.HDTV.x264-W4F[ettv] <<< just came out on extratorrent
	What TV show are you watching right now?	22. boardwalk empire 23. I've started watching Preacher, not exactly sure whats going on but I can't stop watching. I watched all episodes so far I think ones out soon enough, anyone know the day its on? 24. Mr.Robot S02E03
	MSNBC Shows For discussion of MSNBC's shows - such as <i>MTP Daily</i> , <i>Hardball</i> , <i>All In</i> , <i>The Rachel Maddow Show</i> , <i>The Last Word</i> and <i>AM Joy</i> .	25. Note that this post will be updated with the links for other shows on this date as they become available. 26. Another refugee reporting in! Glad I found you! I've been checking ExtraTorrent and TPB (is it okay to mention them here?) for MSNBC shows torrents, and have only seen LarMer's big-sized ones, so I've been getting mine from Fur Bear's Yanex site due to my slow speed and limited hard drive space. So THANK YOU, Fur Bear, for keeping that site up to date. 27. Thanks so much, misterroop! Got it! I hope you and others continue to post links to our favourite shows. It is SO much appreciated!
Katr.co/community/movies	What Movie did you last watch and what do you think of it?	28. Batman vs Superman - Dawn of Justice (2016) [EXTENDED] 3.8/5 29. The last fighting scene is quite entertaining. Back to the Future Part II (1989) Still a great movie, my rating 10/10 30. Well I watched two movies consecutively. My last two were : Warcraft - AWESOME!!!!!! Finding Dory - loved it.
	What Movie are you watching right now?	31. Vigilante Diaries (2016) 32. The Revenant (2015) 33. Sin City: A Dame to Kill For (2014)
	What are the Best Movies you have ever seen?	34. Requiem For A Dream-10/10 35. Impossible to narrow it down to just one, maybe change the thread heading to 'Top Ten Movies of all time!' or even Top 3 by Genre! 36. Carne and Prevert's Children of Paradise (Les Enfants du Paradis), from 1945. Remarkable script, great direction, fantastic acting. It's got it all.

Appendix 2- Unstructured Interview

Q 1: What is your opinion on digital piracy?

A 1: My honest opinion is that piracy is actually helpful for the movie industry in terms of profits. Just because someone is unable to download a movie for free, does not mean that they automatically will go see it in cinemas or buy the DVD. However, if you show someone a movie for free, and they really like it, they might go see the sequel in cinemas.

Q 2: Have you had any legal troubles as a result of your activities?

A 2: No, but as you can imagine the movie industry was not happy with what I was doing.

Q 3: Did you keep your pirating secret from family and friends?

A 3: No, everyone knew. It wasn't really ever a big deal.

Q 4: Why did you choose to adopt a nickname?

A 4: Uploaders tag our files for the fame.

Q 5: Did you consider what you were doing as illegal, and were you every afraid of the consequences?

A 5: I never really saw this as a criminal thing to be honest. I essentially just went along for the ride as the YIFY name grew. I guess what I am trying to say is, I wasn't smart enough to think ahead of what could the consequences be in the future.

Q 6: Do you think that the success of streaming services such as Netflix, is capable of stopping digital piracy?

A 6: For sure! Look at the music industry and Spotify for example. Can you imagine yourself going to a torrent site and downloading a song you want to listen to? that's a ridiculous concept in 2016.

Appendix 3- Survey Responses

Appendix 3.1

Why do you choose to illegally stream or download?

1. Because it is too expensive to go to the movie theater/buy a DVD and some movies I know would not be worth the money, so I chose to not support them.
2. I don't want to pay the amount of money that is charged for games and watching shows. Another reason for streaming illegally, is that the popular streaming services don't always have what I need. The closest I get to a streaming service that can cover half of my streaming needs, is Netflix, the giant of streaming.
3. To be able to watch the latest shows.
If you don't watch a series when it's released you get spoiled on the internet before the show or series will arrive in one's country.
And also it's convenient, once you have a place to download from you know you can get the same time every week..
But it does also give you the freedom to watch the show when you want and not be forced to watch it between 20.00 and 21.00 on any given night.
4. For music, artists tend not to make much, certainly not enough to live on, off of paid for streaming services. Most artists make very little off of full fledged album sales to begin with. I support artists by attending and promoting concerts instead, since that is where their money is made. Regarding movies
5. It is sometimes difficult to find the movie or show you want to watch. I would have no issue paying to watch if there was a service that had what I wanted - Netflix etc does not have everything.!
6. Content isn't available on the services I pay for. Rental/Streaming prices are ridiculous. It costs more to stream a movie in many cases than it does to go see it in the theater, despite the fact that you're paying for the internet service to stream that movie as well as the hardware to watch it.
7. I illegally stream or download to watch TV shows not on Netflix and new movies not on DVD yet.
8. Because it's free
9. Primarily due to convenience. I have a Netflix subscription, but a lot of shows never make it on there, plus most shows are 1-2 seasons behind release dates.
Of course, the fact that it is free is also a huge plus.
10. I think it's due to various reasons. In the beginning I did it mostly because 1.) it was "free" (which is a major score when you're a student and broke) and 2.) it made it easy to watch brand new movies without having to rely on the local movie theater and its schedule.
I think the reason why I sometimes still do it is because it has become a bad habit of mine.

Appendix 3.2

How much, and how often do you illegally stream or download material online?

11. Weekly I stream a movie to watch with my boyfriend or friends for an evening in.
12. I do not download as much as I used to. Mostly because of streaming. Previously I downloaded a lot of movies and tv shows. Now I watch stream every night before I go to bed. Sometimes illegal. Probably 1/3 of the time its illegal streaming. I do not download very often anymore. Must be like once every 3 months maybe?
13. few times a week.. Depens on the numbers of series i follow that are aired at the time.. In autumn its more since there are a lot of series that gets aired this time of year that i follow contra in the spring.
14. rarely these days
15. I never download. Stream perhaps once or twice a month. The odd film or show
16. It's pretty rare
17. It goes in spurts. Some weeks I will watch 2-3 hours of illegal material online and others, not at all. I watched a lot of illegal material while I lived abroad in South America during grad school and now that I'm back in the States where they're more strict about illegal downloads and since I'm busy working, I don't watch as much.
18. Stream tv and movies weekly download music probably 1-2 times per month
19. Weekly. I rarely download, which I mostly do if I want some movies for a trip were I know that I wont have any Internet connection.
20. I believe I do it once a month right now. But it depends on the season.

Appendix 3.3

How does the illegal status of downloading and streaming affect you?

21. It makes me nervous to download so I prefer to stream, but it is worth the risk to me.
22. It does not affect me at all.
23. it dosent, except im know in my friend group as "the guy who can get stuff".. so for movie nights there is a high chance that i will be responsible for getting the movie.
24. No direct affects though I do know others who have had their ISP's cut them off or threaten fines.
25. I am uncomfortably participating in it, but I understand why it is illegal.

26. Not at all directly
27. It makes it hard to find what I want to watch! I'm really bad with technology and lazy, so I tend to give up searching for a show or movie that I want to illegally download because the links are broken, too many popups, or ask me submit my credit card information. I'm really bad at determining what's a "legit" free illegal download. (haha thats a good oxymoron).
28. It doesn't affect me
29. Its in the back of our mind, but as a minor playing the grand scheme, I doubt that people like me will ever get in any kind of trouble.
30. It's quite strange. I keep thinking about this Danish commercial which was showed in the beginning of every Danish movie during the beginning of the 2000's. The setting was set in car dealership, and a Danish actor was bying a new car. The car salesman recognizes the actor and begins to compliment the new movie she is staring in. The conversation is then abrupted by a colleague who tells the salesman to remember he's promised to make a copy of the movie for him. The actor looks at the slaesman, and he justifies his action by stating that "a couple of copies for my friends.. That's fine, right?". Simultaneously, as the conversation proceeds, a truck with about ten brand new cars arrives in the parking lot. The actor then ends the conversation and decides to get into the driver's seat of the truck, turnes her head to the salesman and his colleagues and says: "It's just a couple of copies for my friends... That's fine, right?". The commercial then ends with her driving off with the truck and ten new cars. The strange thing about illegal streaming is that it has become such a "normal" thing to do that you don't really think about the fact that it is illegal and that you're in fact stealing. I would for example never steal a truckload of cars or walk into a store and steal a sweater. I don't even cross the street when there's a red light. I do not consider myself to be a criminal, but when I stop and think about it, illegally streaming is basically just as bad as stealing a sweater in a store. When I think about that way, I instantly get a guilty conscience.

Appendix 3.4

Do your friends and family illegally stream and download?

31. Yes, we don't talk about it on a regular basis but I know all of my friends/family have at least done it before.
32. Yes. All of them stream. Even my parents. My brother and girlfriend are the only ones that stream illegally. My brother downloads illegally.
Most of my friends stream illegally, some of them download a lot illegally.
33. I have some friends that does.
none in my close family does though
34. Yes
35. Yes, not my parents though I feel that they are 'too old' - an age group not comfortable enough with technology to know how to stream.
36. Friends yes. Family no.
37. Yes, but not a lot since everyone has Netflix, Spotify, Amazon Prime, and HBO. I feel like my international friends tend to download illegal material more than my US friends.

38. Yes
39. My family are all fairly computer illiterate, so they don't really do either. They can log into Facebook, and google stuff. That's about it.
Almost all of my friends download or stream, or have done so at one point.
40. I have a couple of friends who do it from time to time.

Appendix 3.5

What is your own opinion on downloading and streaming illegally?

41. I think it is fair, the big production companies don't need all the money anyways. Also, if they were producing better movies I would be more likely to pay for them.
42. It's fine.
43. I can understand that it's a problem for the producers.. but on the other hand with the Internet and information sharing it provides, it gives the opportunity to do so, and one would be stupid not to use said opportunity
44. It's a bit of a gray area. On one hand, you can argue it's wrong to steal from artists who've put time and money of their own into creating a product you enjoy. On the other hand, supporting an ecosystem that, while technically legal, also exploits those same artists isn't exactly a better or more fair option and, in my opinion, only helps to perpetuate an already difficult-to-solve problem.
The best way to support artists you enjoy is by buying their records from them directly, buying merchandise, promoting them, and attending their concerts.
Regarding movies, studios make a majority of their money on box office revenue so royalties from streaming services and individual rentals is, more or less, negligible. I would be happy to pay if renting costed less than a movie ticket. In most cases, especially for HD rentals, it costs more. So you pay more or the same for an at home experience where you provide your own equipment. That's bullshit.
TV shows are a different story. I happily pay for Netflix and Hulu because they provide an Ad free (finally Hulu!) experience with quality content at a reasonable price. I'll only stream a TV show if: A. It's not available yet on Netflix/Hulu and I know it will take a long time before it is, or B. It hasn't ever been and likely never will be an option for me to watch on either of those services.
45. Sometimes you have to, if you really want to see something and you can't get it through conventional means, e.g. perhaps it's not available in your country
46. It's a gray area. On one hand, stealing from someone who put their own time, effort, and money into a product you enjoy is of course wrong. On the other hand, paid streaming services, although legal, are equally as bad about exploiting artists and supporting those services only perpetuates the problem.
The best way to support artists is by buying merch, records from them directly, and attending their shows.

Regarding movies, I gladly pay for Netflix/Hulu as they provide good content, ad free, at a reasonable price. I only stream anything else illegally when those two services will never or won't for a long time, have the content I'm looking for.

47. I feel ambivalent about it. I understand artists rights to getting paid for their work, but at the same time, I believe that movies and music are overpriced and that people should have better access to them, especially people who don't necessarily have the money to purchase it (people I know in South America, poor college students, etc).
48. I think that it's morally wrong but it's free and convenient. Also if you miss a new episode of a show it's easy to catch up
49. I don't think it is much a problem. I understand that there is a loss of revenue that otherwise would have been avoided. However, much like traditional store theft, there is room in the budget and financial side of the business that allows for a few bad guys.
50. I would love to honestly say that I would never do it again, because it's an illegal act. But the fact is that I think many of us do not really think of it as an illegal act; primarily because it's so easy to stream and download movies, TV series, music etc. Again, I'd wish I could honestly say that I would never stream anything illegally again, but because of the availability I think I will still do it from time to time.

Appendix 3.6

How easily are you able to find what you want to watch online for free?

51. Very easily, with almost no problems.
52. Very easy. Google top 5-10 results will give me what I want every time.
53. very easy..
the biggest problem is new cinema releases. but most of the time that's not a problem hence we most of the time go to the cinema to watch new movies a lot.
54. Fairly easy
55. Fairly easily
56. Fairly easily
57. It's not easy for me and once I find a good site, they shut it down and then I have to find a new one. It frustrates me and that's why I give up easily and choose to watch something on Netflix.
58. Very easy
59. Apart from very few exceptions, extremely easily. All it takes is a simple google search, and you'll have 4-5 options to stream almost any movie or TV show. You can even find subtitles, if you feel like watching a foreign film.
60. Very easily. All I have to do is to go on Google, type in the title of the movie or TV series I want to watch, and, more often than not, a version of what I want to watch appears.

Appendix 3.7

If anything, what might prevent you from finding what you want to watch?

61. If it is a neiche movie there can be some issues.
62. That its simply not uploaded yet in a good enough quiality..
I refuse spending time watching a Cam Rip of a movie (A person sitting in the cinema and recording the movie with a camera)
63. Laziness. If it exists, it's out their somewhere. You just have to be willing to find it.
64. Laziness. If it exists it's almost definitely out there. Just have to be willing to find it.
65. So many sites that scam you, are blocked, or give your computer viruses.
66. Subtitles
67. The occational torrenting site being shut down, but that usually gets fixed or replaced within a month at best(Worst). Otherwise I'm able to find anything that is released in the past 40 years within minutes.
68. Either if the movie is too new or if it's a very old foreign movie.

Appendix 3.8

Do you use online forums or websites to find suggestions on what to watch?

69. No.
70. No, mostly recommendations from friends
71. some times.. not all the time though..
mostly i use "new release" sites, for example IMDB with the new release section.
72. Not really no.
73. No, I know what I want to watch and seek it out. I am not the kind of person who will stream any new movie just to see it.
74. Not really. If anything, it would be reddit passively
75. Sometimes, but then I get overwhelmed with contrasting information and give up.
76. No
77. Yes. I will usually check IMDB and Rottentomatoes for official ratings and performance. I will also check the movies reddit, as they will discuss a movie and its success, plus the moderators removes all spoilers before they ruin anything.
78. Yes, sometimes if I need to find inspiration or recommendations I visit IMDB.

Appendix 3.9

If yes, do you yourself post to these forums and websites? And what sort of posts would you write?

- 79. i dont really post on them.
- 80. If anything, it would be Reddit, though I don't actively pursue suggestions from others there.
- 81. No
- 82. N/A
- 83. No.
- 84. N/a
- 85. Very rarely. I am what they would call a lurker, meaning that im just there to read others post while contributing very little myself. However, if I am extremely impressed by a movie, or see someone recommend a movie that I thought was utter trash, I will chime in.
- 86. No, I do not.

Appendix 3.10

When looking for movies or TV shows to watch, do you look to specific users for the best results?

- 87. Yes, on kickass torrents I always look for YIFY. He always has the best quality movies and links.
- 88. No, what I watch is mostly what my friends recommend. They are heavy users, so they watch most of the shows I would be interested in.
- 89. I use IMDB and RottenTomatoes to get a view of how good/bad said movie/series are.. but thats mostly it
- 90. No
- 91. No
- 92. No.
- 93. Putlocker just because it's worked for me in the past but has recently been failing me.
- 94. No, I usually ask friends and family for suggestions or use suggestions from Netflix

95. When torrenting, yes. There used to be a few very professional, and trustworthy users on sites like Kickass Torrents, and the pirate bay. Presentation and knowing what you are getting means quite a lot when it comes to downloading, as you never know if someone unloaded some virus or something.

96. No, I do not.

Appendix 3.11

Are you likely to share recommendations of TV shows and movies you have watched through downloading or streaming with friends and family?

97. Of course! If I see something I know someone would like I tell them about it and whether they chose to download or stream illegally is up to them, but sometimes they may pay to watch it when something is recommended to them.

98. I do it very often. I recommend to both family and friends. Mostly friends though.

99. yeah.. im talking a lot with people watching movies an series so we share recommendations with each other..

100. Yes

101. No

102. Yes

103. Not really.

104. I would recommend to family and friends

105. Yes. Just like any show or movie that I watch, Ill talk about it with my friends and family. I may not necessarily mention how I watched it, but anything that I enjoy, ill tell people about. or rant about particularly bad movies and shows.

106. Yes, but I don't tell them to illegally stream or download it.