

Free Fall Engagement Strategies at Skateboarding Events

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The research questions the study is trying to answer include:

RQ1: How do people targeted by Free Fall engagement strategies at skateboarding events perceive those strategies?

RQ2: How do people differ in their perceptions of Free Fall engagement strategies based on gender, age, and religious affiliation?

The research paradigm used in this following study is interpretive paradigm, which will focus on qualitative content analysis data, mainly structured in-depth interviews. The results from these interviews will be compared to the content and recruitment strategies that Free Fall executes. Both Jenny Zhengye Hou & Macnamara (2017 and Marmor-Lavie & Stout (2016) practiced qualitative content analysis by constructing 20+ in-depth interviews. One of them selected an equal opportunity sample from multiple organizations and practiced cross-case analysis methods (Marmor-Lavie & Stout, 2016), while the other only selected professionals in communication, public relations, media, and marketing departments who analyzed social media posts over a semester (Jenny Zhengye Hou & Macnamara, 2017).

Qualitative data is typically used for theories involving recruitment and marketing strategies as it is the most efficient way of achieving the results of which group is impacted the most. These specific methods are helpful in exploratory analyses to visually see how certain variables impact results (Liu-Thompkins & Malthouse, 2017). Advertising also practices social science theories and methods as it provides a more direct approach (Nelson, Ham & Ahn, 2017). Utilizing the methods of conducting in-depth interviews as a qualitative content analysis method helps obtain exact insights from the people that Free Fall is looking to target.

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview technique was utilized amongst the 4 interviews with different sex, age, and religious status. The interview guide questions ranged from thoughts and opinions of engagement strategies, Free Fall's content, and events that interviewees have attended or watched passively on social media. The open questions used included numerous descriptive ones to understand their relationships with Free Fall and engagement strategies, along with follow-up questions to allow the interviewees to elaborate on the comments stated. With these characteristics in mind, convenience sampling was chosen as Free Fall consists of an active and engaging community.

Each interview was done either virtually or in an agreed-upon location that was audiotaped and transcribed to achieve accurate quotes. When deciding the criteria for what to include, interviewees needed to mention the community aspect, gender inclusion on social media, their thoughts on religion, and how their age relates or does not relate to Free Fall. Exclusions consisted of unclear answers or rambling that occurred during the interviews. One interview, in particular, lasted about 45 minutes total. While plenty of information was obtained, there was rambling that did not relate to Free Fall or their engagement strategies.

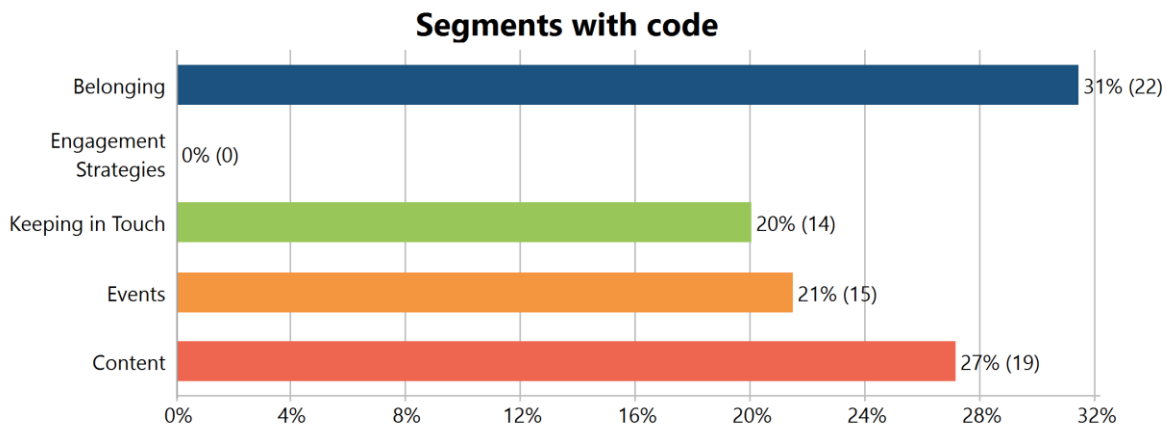
Data Analysis

Once interviews were documented, the files were uploaded into MAXQDA to analyze the data more efficiently. The questions in the interview guide were inspired by other research, one of them being "Consumer's Insights About Spirituality in Advertising" (Marmor-Lavie & Stout, 2016). Specifically, the questions, "Do you feel this commercial could have any influence on our own personal life?" and "How much do you identify with the messages portrayed in the commercial?"

After reading through the data, inductive codes were derived from the information, which included the codes “Belonging” and “Engagement Strategies” that held the subcodes titled “Keeping in Touch,” “Events,” and “Content.” Code definitions were also added in MAXQDA for each of them to decipher the use and need for them. Once created and defined, the data was read through and coded until it reached data saturation.

Data Findings

RQ1: How do people targeted by Free Fall engagement strategies at skateboarding events perceive those strategies?



According to the code frequency visual, a sense of belonging was brought up the most during interview with a total of 22 times. A theme that the interview guideline brought up was questions specific to events. For example, “What specific marketing strategies of Free Fall have you encountered or noticed at these events?” and “How do you think other attendees at skateboarding events perceive Free Fall’s marketing strategies?”

Code System	Belonging	Engagement Strategies	Keeping in Touch	Events	Content
Belonging				4	1
Engagement Strategies					
Keeping in Touch				3	1
Events	4		3		3
Content	1		1	3	

The overwhelming majority provided a similar response to these questions in the events section. The responses brought up the mention of a sense of belonging that many have felt during their time at Free Fall events. One example was a response from a mother stating, “They seemed to be well planned out and made for everyone. Lots of different types of people could be seen at these events. I saw families, teenagers, and even younger/middle-aged adults that have friends that visit there and like to skate. A range of a community.”

RQ2: How do people differ in their perceptions of Free Fall engagement strategies based on gender, age, and religious affiliation?

	Gender = Female	Gender = Male	Age = 20	Age = 21	Age = 32	Age = 40	Religious Status = Catholic	Religious Status = Lutheran	Religious Status = Non-religious	Total
Belonging	13	9	3	8	6	5	3	8	11	66
Engagement Strategies										
Keeping in Touch	8	6	2	5	4	3	2	5	7	42
Events	10	5	3	6	2	4	3	6	6	45
Content	11	8	5	7	3	4	5	7	7	57
SUM	42	28	13	26	15	16	13	26	31	210
# N = Documents/Speakers	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (25.0%)	2 (50.0%)	4 (100.0%)

There was a consistent and positive response when it came to marketing strategies based on gender. One example was shared by a 20-year-old male participant, “I find they do a great job with appealing to any gender. Their advertisement is very catchy with multiple colors and myself being a male, I still engage with them.”

Engagement strategies proved successful for all ages. A 40-year-old participant shared, “For me, I look at it as a way for my son to enjoy what he loves doing around people that support it and want them to succeed. During these live shows, parents can enjoy some music while their child can do an extracurricular activity. It seems like there is something for everyone.”

Lastly, not promoting Christianity in Free Fall’s engagement strategies is found to help them and not hinder a sense of belonging. A 20-year-old male participant stated, “I think not having it as a prominent thing is nice. Obviously, they are free to express their beliefs but I think some people get intimidated by outwardly strong religious presentation. However, when I went to their events, they came off more relaxed, so that would definitely persuade my opinion.”

References

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