

Matterhorn Project Review

For my transmedia project I chose to invite my audience to my dad's journey towards climbing the iconic Matterhorn. By using a variety of media that an audience could engage and contribute to, I aimed to build an interactive transmedia world around this journey.

The strategy was to separate the project into three phases: Intro, Build up and Final. The project relied upon Facebook as a hub that felt personal, Instagram for short form content and YouTube for long form content. This combined three of the four most popular social media platforms as a foundation for my project that covered a range of demographics (McCormick, 2022). For the assignment I created content for four different media types: A short YouTube video, a blog post, an interactive image, and a podcast episode. I wanted each form of media to be distinct and yet contributing to something bigger, just as Young identified when coining the term "additive comprehension," (Jenkins, 2007). They also conveyed some of the diversity I was looking for in this project. Watching, listening, reading, and even clicking offers a more rounded experience for my audience. This felt like the essence of creating the immersive nature of transmedia that Jenkins was referring to (2007).

Media Content Review:

My audience feedback came from Judith Low and Matthew Low (family); Scott Beckett and Shauna Steadman (fellow students); and finally Zach Ferguson and Charles Romijin (outdoor instructor colleagues). I used them because they reflected the audience I would be targeting (Family, friends, outdoor/ filmmaking industry).

Video (Low, 2023a)



I wanted to capture the video of both of us climbing without asking anyone else for help. Because I would be looking at creating a minimum of one of these videos a month (in theory), it would be too much to always ask for crew support. The reality of this was challenging because it required going back and forward to set up shots whilst also trying to climb. The two shots of crossing a ridge (Low, 2023a, 0.45-0.52) took almost fifteen minutes because the camera was placed on a tripod so far away.

The feedback for the video was very positive. Everyone liked the personal nature of it and the chance to get to know Matthew in this way. Judith identified that it worked well having us both climbing as I was also going to be on the Matterhorn summit bid. The winter feel (Charles), colours (Scott Beckett) and some of the wide shots (Zach) were particularly popular. Judith did notice some of my regular shots were missing because I was filming and climbing, and questioned whether an extra cameraman would have helped.

The video was quite an engaging process and would have definitely been easier without climbing, so I might invite someone else to climb next time. On the other hand, knowing the process of filming solo is helpful for potential future expeditions I might find myself in.

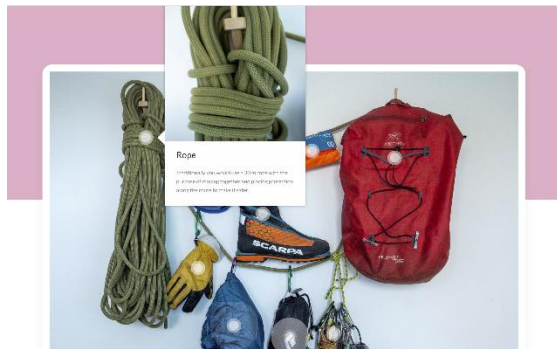
Blog (Low, 2023b)

Considering that blogs felt like they were about to die out ten years ago, it is remarkable to see how popular they have become. When researching I noticed that in the same way vlogs have become more professional and organised, blogs have become less about acting as a journal and more about creating targeted in-depth content that audiences are looking for (Click, 2023). Putting it on Wix reflected how and what blogs look and feel like today.

The blog worked well for everyone who read it. The audience fed back that it was easy to read, and they enjoyed the passion that came through the writing. Matthew also felt that as someone who climbs mountains, the content rang true to him, highlighting the fact that we enjoy engaging with material that communicates how we feel.

Writing a blog felt like the perfect solution for conveying more complex topics. With the positive feedback, I could see it being a great way to get more buy-in and engagement from an audience. I feel that it draws people in more deeply than a reel or picture, and can peak curiosity about what else you have to offer.

Interactive Image (Low, 2023c)



The interactive image was something I felt would perfectly introduce kit to an audience. Finding the best way to make the image do what I wanted took some time, but once I found the right website (interactive image, 2023) it was very straightforward.

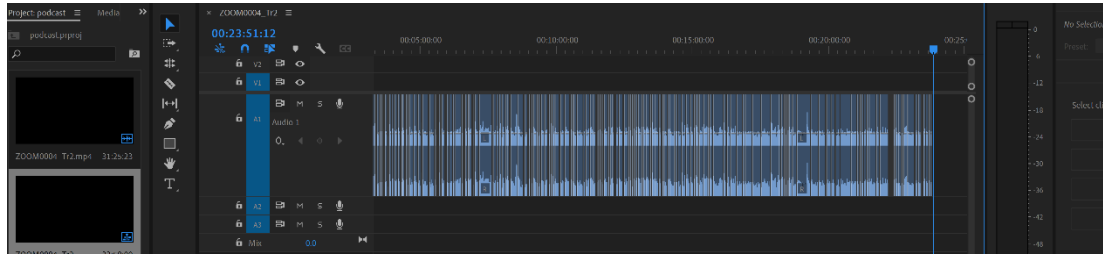
The feedback for the image was a bit mixed. Everyone enjoyed the professional feel and how easy it was to use. There were varying opinions about

the information in each portal, which pointed to the mixed nature of my audience. The people who were less informed about outdoor kit, such as Shauna, felt like it was a perfect introduction. A few people, such as Charles and Judith, felt that some of the descriptions were a bit generic, and they would have preferred more specific information (such as the models of kit, kind of boots, which climbing gear etc.).

This piece of media really highlighted the fact that not everyone will be as engaged with each part of my project. This is OK. There's enough that everyone can engage with, and this picture fulfils a specific task: informing an audience who know little about mountaineering gear. I also really enjoyed the interface and felt like it would have so many different applications and uses elsewhere, such as diving deeper into all the climbing metal work I use and so on.

Podcast (Low, 2023d)

Creating the podcast was relatively straightforward after having tested the method with Sharon in December, during a podcast tutorial. I used a similar set up as before using shotgun mics attached to a Zoom H6 recorder. I had a series of questions I wanted to cover that I shared with everyone before I communicated a rough plan for the episode, including timings. After recording I joined the tracks together before editing the footage to cut out all the gaps and mistakes made during the conversation.



My audience feedback for the podcast was positive. The one exception could be that my wife found it a little boring listening to us talk about risk, climbing and the Matterhorn, but then again, she does hear me talk about these things a lot! Several elements that were identified as positives include the sound quality, accessibility of being on Spotify, and the benefit of having someone on the podcast who knew less about climbing.

I chose to do a podcast because it is an increasingly popular form of media that builds a loyal following (Segura, 2019). I was encouraged by the positive feedback and really enjoyed creating something I could really see myself using in the future.

I came away really encouraged by the quality of the media I created and the feedback it received. It was very time consuming and running a project of this size would require a large amount of commitment to fulfil the strategy. On the other hand, during this project I found that the products I was looking to create came more easily and resembled my expectations more closely than many of my previous assignment projects. I think this demonstrates the progression in my craft and the knowledge of the process involved in creating media content. I also realised the importance of not trying to be too generic and allowing my audience to engage with the bits of the story that suit them. After all, transmedia is about worldbuilding, rather than a linear narrative.

(Word Count: 1248)

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