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Decoding Youth Event Attendance Intention on Instagram: A Funnel Perspective On Content Formats and Attributes

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Abstract : *In the modern landscape of experiential entertainment, social media- predominantly Instagram- has cemented itself as the final commonplace view-point for event discovery, engagement, and decision-making. Basing off the applied insights garnered from the end-to-end experience at Wild High Nights- an artist management, entertainment, and live events company in Kerala- this paper analyses the observable influence of different categories of Instagram content- Reels, Stories, static posts, and atmosphere videos; versus different content dimensions- entertainment, event logistics, artist appeal, and social proof- on the consumers' expressed intent to attend live events and concerts. Using a descriptive quantitative research approach through the empirical survey of a sample of 100 active Instagram users and event goers, this paper seeks to explore the data-inconsistency between vanity metrics at the top-of-the- orifice (views and reach) vis-à-vis the desired bottom-of-the-orifice action (attendance). Findings identify short-form video (Reels) as the format of choice for front-end attention (38% preference) closely followed by event- atmosphere videos (27%), interactive Stories (20%), and static Posts (15%). While entertainment (82%) and artists (71%) attract the initial platform interest, it is the perceived behavioral control, precisely the clarity in event-related information- dates, venues, timings, and ticketing- that triggers actual attendance (76%). Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Stimulus-Organism-Response model, an integrated content-funnel is proposed, along with practical recommendations for independent promoters to effectively reallocate their digital marketing budget and induce higher box-office sales.*

Keywords: Instagram Marketing, Consumer Intention, Event Attendance, Short-form Video, Theory of Planned Behavior, Wild High Nights, Social Proof.

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital-first consumption and algorithm-driven content curation has revolutionized the dynamic of a user's discovery, engagement and ultimately, consumption of an experience. For live music, concerts and cultural event audiences, discovery never starts with a user's inquiry via a search engine or ticketing platform – instead a user's intent is ignited by an organic or advertising-driven piece of stimulus on social visual (and increasingly visual-led) media, led by Instagram. A viral 15 second Reel of a high energy artist performance, a transient short-form Story feed with a countdown sticker, or footage from the event of the crowd's reaction and participation serves as an experiential touchpoint on a new metric of distracted attention – the attention economy.

For event organizers and entertainment management agencies, marketing communication is fundamentally different from traditional marketing of products. Live events are time-bound, immovable, but intangible service products with high involvement and perceived risk. Consumers are unable to inspect the 'product' physically before consuming; they are compelled to imagine the situational atmosphere, the social prestige, and the experiential benefits through visual

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representations on the virtual Instagram platform. Here, Instagram is not a communications channel; it has evolved into an integrated entertainment and social shopping platform that combines aesthetic storytelling, peer endorsement and direct-response utility.

This research is conducted in the organizational context of Wild High Nights (WHN), a boutique business who functions in the domains of artist management, live shows and curated concerts in the state of Kerala. WHN takes to the digital space through Instagram marketing campaigns targeted towards college students and professionals (aged 18 to 28) who frequently travel to cities such as Kochi, Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram for work. While WHN's short-form videos break records in terms of reach and engagement, marketers in the live entertainment industry often face an acute commercial challenge with regard to ticket purchase confirmation. This paper looks at this dilemma of conversion in the context of consumer minds shifting from passive reactions to actively confirmed attendance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, social media marketing is no longer one-way broadcast of brand messages, but a multi-dimensional communication landscape combining information, entertainment and social interaction. As defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2019), social media are a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological principles of Web 2.0, that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content (UGC). Related to live events, Voorveld et al. (2018) found that consumer engagement is platform- and format-specific and that consumers bring different types of cognitive and emotional minds to different types of short-form visual formats than to static, textual formats.

This research is based on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991), which states that our actions are driven by three considerations: Attitude toward the Behavior (our assessment of the behavior, e.g., going to the event is fun/appealing); Subjective Norms (our perception of what others think we should do; feels like others support it); and Perceived Behavioral Control (our perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior, including cost, distance, and availability of time). For instance, on Instagram, Shabani, Sahebi, and Arab (2019) found that aesthetic content as a high-production implementation of the event influences positive attitude, but that the person will not take action until they sense they have the ability and ease to buy a ticket and plenty of social proof, including friends' and other people's shares.

Furthermore, Przybylski et al. (2013) results on social-media-based FOMO build upon the appeal of visual life experiences to stimulate the motivation to be part of the act. De Veirman et al. (2017) and Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) evidence how event appeal is made up of meaningful crowd behaviour and perceived credibility of digital influencers. The recurring concern raised by Hudson et al. (2015) is the presence of digital 'lurkers' who are very active on event-related social media by liking and saving post contents to indicate cultural affinity to reference groups, who despite high engagement levels are often not in the market to buy. This suggests a need for measures of vanity and meaningful activity.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study applies a descriptive quantitative research design to conduct a systematic exploration of the fans' preferences for different content forms on Instagram and the correlates of their intention to attend live entertainment events. Standardised web-based questionnaire, which was completed by the followers of event, nightlife and music contents on Instagram, and active users of the social platform in the urban hubs of Kerala and downstream student pockets.

The questionnaire comprised three operational sub-domains: (1) demographics and IG engagement; (2) content format by 4 major typologies: Reels (short-form algorithmic videos), Event Atmosphere Videos (recap of performance atmospheres and crowds), Interactive Stories (polls and stickers), Static Posts & Carousels (visualized static data/info graphics); and (3) content attribute by 7-point Likert scale of entertainment, informational authenticity, artist magnetism, social evidence, and respondent's attendancy propensity on a 5-point scale of Very Unlikely to Very

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Likely. The data was recorded, divided into cell counts and percentage distributions, analyzed, and interpreted through attribute rankings and cross-tabulations to generate empirical and managerial insights.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main goal of this study is to determine which content type-Instagram Reels, Stories, static posts, or even event videos-has the greatest impact on consumers' self-reported likelihood to attend a concert or live entertainment event.

Secondary Objectives: The supporting secondary objectives are as follows:

1. To assess how often attendees use Instagram and determine how they utilize the platform.
2. To determine how important each content element: (a) produced ratings of those content elements: entertainment versus information, artist versus primary driver, social proof versus none.
3. To determine the level of peer-to-peer amplification (Saving & Sharing) driven by each content type.
4. To design a strategic, funnel-driven digital marketing framework for small event management companies to be able to convert their social engagement to box-office.

V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The empirical findings derived from the survey dataset (N = 100) were analyzed across demographic parameters, format preferences, content attributes, and behavioral attendance intentions.

Table 1: Demographic Profile and Instagram Usage Frequency (N = 100)

Dimension / Variable	Classification Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age Group	18–22 years	58	58%
Age Group	23–27 years	27	27%
Age Group	28–35 years	11	11%
Age Group	36 years and above	4	4%
Instagram Usage Frequency	Daily Active User	58	58%
Instagram Usage Frequency	3–5 times per week	27	27%
Instagram Usage Frequency	1–2 times per week / Rarely	15	15%

Availability of the youth database as illustrated in Table 1 indicates the proportion of the population sample maintains high demographic control as the collegiate and early career youth population group has 85% within the 18 to 27-year age bracket, yet 58% of users indicate daily visitation to Instagram and 27% of users indicate 3 to 5 visits per week. Indicating Instagram as an established leisure discovery media environment for youth.

Table 2: Content Format Preference and Attendance Intention Breakdown (N = 100)

Instagram Content Format	Stated Preference Share (%)	Primary Consumer Function	Identified Strategic Role
Instagram Reels (Short-Form)	**38%**	Attention capture, viral hook, audio alignment	Top-of-Funnel Discovery
Event Atmosphere / Recap Videos	**27%**	Authentic crowd proof, emotional vibe validation	Mid-Funnel Experience Validation
Interactive Stories (Polls / Countdown)	**20%**	Ephemeral reminders, direct booking link taps	Bottom-of-Funnel Conversion Urgency

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Static Informational Posts / Carousels	**15%**	Reference guide: dates, venue transit, ticket tiers	Perceived Control / Friction Elimination

As indicated in the table below, short-form video (Reels) is the piece of content most likely to ignite consumer interest (38%), closely followed by 'event atmosphere videos' (27%), revealing that consumers need authentic validation before investing emotionally in the event and committing to the narrative for the event's 'main event.' When given the hypothetical scenario of consuming the content above, 48% of respondents said they would 'highly' be interested in attending the event, 32% said 'moderately', and 20% said 'low', representing another large volume (80%) of latent demand that can be unlocked via existing lower funnel informational touchpoints.

Table 3: Content Attributes Valued by Event Consumers (Multiple-Response Analysis)

Content Attribute Evaluated	Respondent Endorsement (%)	Impact on Consumer Journey
Entertainment & Visual Appeal	**82%**	Primary stimulus stopping feed scrolling; establishes positive affective attitude.
Clear Event Logistics (Date, Venue, Ticket Tiers)	**76%**	Directly reinforces Perceived Behavioral Control; removes booking friction.
Artist Presence & Performance Appeal	**71%**	Establishes event credibility and core experiential value proposition.
Social Proof & FOMO (Crowd Energy / Testimonials)	**68%**	Activates Subjective Norms; accelerates peer-group decision-making.
Visual Production Quality (Sound, Editing, 4K)	**64%**	Signals professional event execution and safety standards.

Discussion: The survey data on the respondent's preferences for visual features reveals the core managerial challenge that was at play throughout the Wild High Nights internship. Entertainment value (82%) was the key visual feature that prevented the user from keeping scrolling past an ad, but clear event information (76%) was almost as crucial in influencing the tradeoff decision. Additionally, 70% of respondents report they are very or somewhat likely to share or save the event content. Sharing Reels is one easy way for kids to share a referral (Subjective Norms) without also having to carry the mental load of the concrete savings and transit assurance that completes their transaction checkout, while saving static carousels is like a bookmark for when they make their decision to go ahead and buy their tickets.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The key research outcomes from the empirical are as follows:

1. Best method of discovery: Reels Short-form video (Reels) is the most favored format (38%) used for the initial capture of attention and organic algorithmic discovery across youth audiences.
2. Event videos demonstrating genuine crowd behavior, stage production, and venue ambiance are the second priority in trust-building and are irreplaceable social proof that helps eliminate perceived risk.
3. Lack of logistical information (such as dates, access to venue, entry rules, transparent ticket bands) is at 76% of all people and is the most common factor for dropping off on the page.
4. High Peer to Peer Amplification: Over 70% of consumers take action by either sharing or saving content from an event, showing that social media posts are a decentralized peer referral instead of a remote broadcast ad.
5. The Engagement-Intention Decoupling: Engagement metrics (likes/comments) do not have a linear relationship with ticketing behavior. A customer can temporarily engage with an aesthetic piece of video without behavioral intent or circumstance to attend.

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VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Taking the empirical data into account, we can now offer the following recommendations to event managers and entertainment providers similar Wild High Nights:

1. You cannot overweight creative ad spend for event promoters on any one format. Cohesive campaign require to introduce content across the full funnel journey – Reels at the outer funnel for discovery, recap videos at the mid-funnel for experiential proof, static carousels at the inner funnel to showcase logistics, and Stories at the final mile to spur last-minute bookings.
2. All promo video assets must contain a clear, no-detour needed, link to logistical info. Promoter held pins need to profile Carousels with easily accessible, comprehensive transportation guides (Kochi ferry/feeder bus options), parking info, stage timetables and, above all, clear, accessible tables of prices/perceived behavioural control.
3. Use Peer-to-Peer Social Proof & Campus Cohorts: With 70% of consumers sharing post-event media, brands need to deploy formal micro-influencers and campus ambassadors. Offering micro-creators group-booking discount codes ('Squad Passes') exploits Subjective Norms and brings campus peers into the sending coordination.
4. Use direct-response conversion to drive immediate action: Switch from PR promos spent in the last two weeks to daily interactive countdown Stories, which inform of scarcity by each level, with direct link to booking and real-time WhatsApp Business Inquiry messages.
5. Management needs to throw away the frugal vanity metrics (reach, impressions, video views) and keep an eye on the campaigns with the KPIs focussed on conversions; link CTRs, save rate, profile visits and CAC.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This research project, by virtue of my internship at Wild High Nights, Kerala, was set out to create an empirical basis to examine the impact of format and content set on visual entertainment event consumers' purchase intention. We have empirically proved that while aesthetic high-energy short-form video (Reels) excels at pushing to the algorithmic daemons and expanding the brand waters, it is not by itself a sufficient predictor of conversion success. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, we have empirically demonstrated that if the communication campaign concurrently shape positive attitudes (Visual Entertainment), motivate subjective norms (visual crowd social proof and social sharing) and establish perceived behavioral control (clear logistics and clear price tags), social media impression can be channeled into the box office tix. Through this media conversion process, a paradigm shift from virality to holistic, multi-format funnel, SME event management players can forge the conversion funnel, outperform consumer acquisition cost (CAC) benchmarks, and push the box-office throughput to the max.

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