

ONLINE CONSUMERS AND THE APPLICATION OF USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

Case Study: The Kaskus Website

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Abstrak

Dalam kehidupan keseharian, kita tidak dapat terhindar dari perkembangan teknologi komunikasi yang semakin cepat terutama di bidang *new media*. Akses untuk *website* dan *internet forum site* merupakan salah satu benefit yang ditawarkan dari *new media* yang paling diminati oleh pengguna internet di Indonesia. Bertambahnya *internet forum site* yang memberikan kemudahan secara *online* untuk para pengguna internet untuk dapat melakukan percakapan dalam bentuk pesan yang *di-posting* juga menambah keramaian penggunaan internet di Indonesia. Penelitian ini ingin mengungkapkan bagaimana keberhasilan salah satu *internet forum site* yaitu Kaskus sebagai situs lokal yang paling sering dikunjungi dan mempunyai anggota terbanyak sehingga menempati posisi keenam dalam peringkat *10 Top Sites in Indonesia*. Penggunaan teori *uses and gratification* diperlukan untuk menganalisis perkembangan situs kaskus serta *consumer online* yang sifatnya aktif dan dinamis. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif menggunakan *in-depth interview* baik terhadap para pengelola situs Kaskus maupun pengguna situs sebagai sumber data. Hasil yang dicapai dari penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa keberhasilan situs Kaskus tidak jauh dari fitur teknologi web 2.0 yang dapat memfasilitasi komunikasi interaktif di antara pengguna dan konten situs yang memang dihadirkan berdasarkan kebutuhan para pengguna situs tersebut.

Kata Kunci: media baru, khalayak aktif, komunikasi interaktif, teori *uses and gratification*, situs forum internet.

Abstract

In day-to-day life, we cannot avoid the fast development of communication technology especially in the field of new media. Access to websites and internet forum site is one of the benefits offered by new media that are in high demand among Internet users in Indonesia. The growth of internet forum sites that provides online convenience for Internet users to be able to have conversations in the form of posted messages also intensify the number of Internet users in Indonesia. This study is intended to reveal the success story of one of the internet forum site: Kaskus as the most frequently visited local website with high numbers of members which has led the site to rank as the sixth out of 10 Top Sites in Indonesia. The utilization of uses and gratification theory is applied in this research to

analyze the development of Kaskus websites along with its online consumers that are active and dynamic. The research method used is case study with qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with the management of Kaskus and Kaskus users as the data source. The result of this study stated that the success of Kaskus site is facilitated by Web 2.0 technology features which supported the idea of interactive communication between users and also the site content itself is constructed based on the needs of the users.

Keywords: *New Media, active audience, interactive communication, uses and gratification theory, internet forum site*

Introduction

Nowadays, we are constantly exposed and bombarded with information from media. Based on research results obtained from broadcast regulator Ofcom's annual Communications Market Report in 2010: "We now spend almost half of our waking hours either online, on the phone, or watching television". It is also stated that "the average adult is awake for 15 hours and 45 minutes every day and 45 per cent of that time is spent using a proliferation of technology" (Thomas & Revoir, 2010). One form of emerging proliferation of technology in mass media today is the Internet or the so-called new media.

New media is defined as "interactive forms of communication that use the Internet, including podcasts, RSS feeds, social networks, text messaging, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds and more.." <http://aids.gov/using-new-media/basics/what-is-new-media/> (Accessed 11 May 2011). How do new media benefit most people? "New media makes it possible for anyone to create, modify, and share content and share it with others, using relatively simple tools that are often free or inexpensive" <http://aids.gov/using-new-media/basics/what-is-new-media/> (accessed 11 May 2011).

Medium considers as new media are: "Web sites, streaming audio and video, chat rooms, e-mail, online communities, Web advertising, DVD and CD-ROM media, virtual reality environments, integration of digital data with the telephone, such as Internet telephony, digital cameras, mobile computing" <http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/W/>

[Web_2_point_0.html](#) (accessed on June 27, 2011).

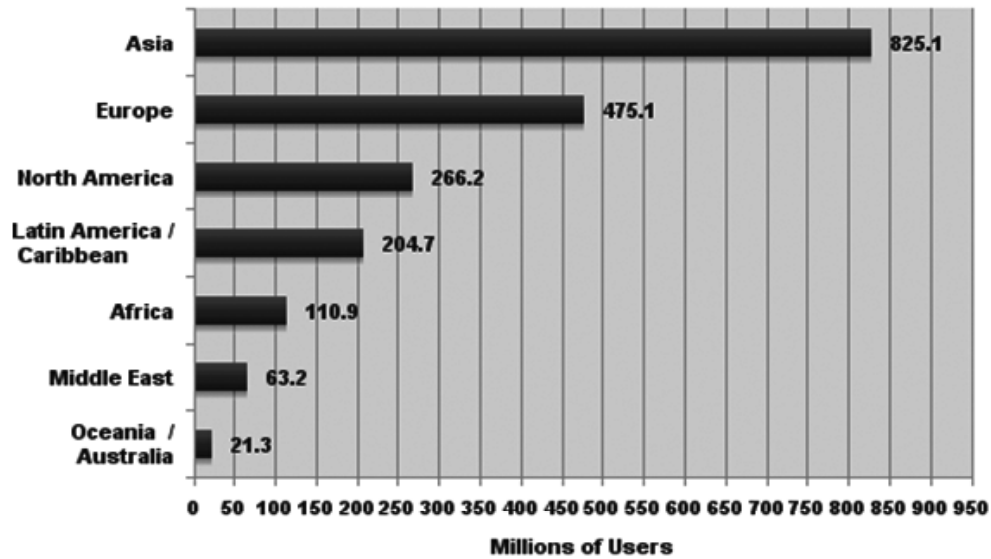
From the above explanations, we can conclude and refer to the importance of "the internet" as a main source for new media. The emergence of internet users in the world grow rapidly as society moves to "always connected" concept embedded into their lives.

Before the birth of new media, many people prefer television as their source of activities. These days, many people spend more time on the internet. Activities undertaken will certainly varies but there are some activities that are listed as the most popular, across the board. These activities are: Email, games, social networking, shopping, news, weather info, travel, health info, hobbies and entertainment <http://www.dialupinternet.net/blog/2011/10-most-popular-internet-activities/> (accessed on May 11, 2011).

The hours spent online are quickly replacing those spent watching television. The varieties of activities available are not limited to channels or time of the day. With internet online, you can find what you want, when you want it. These ease of usage surely overcome the battle between internet and television as one of the favorable medium in mass media.

In addition, results from online survey conducted by IBM indicated that television sets are losing ground to the internet when it comes to personal leisure time. Whereas, 19 percent of all respondents stated that they spent six hours or more per day on the internet versus nine percent of respondents spending the same amount of time in front of the television (Cogar, 2007).

Internet Users in the World by Geographic Regions - 2010



Source: Internet World Stats - www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
 Estimated Internet users are 1,966,514,816 on June 31, 2010
 Copyright © 2010, Miniwatts Marketing Group

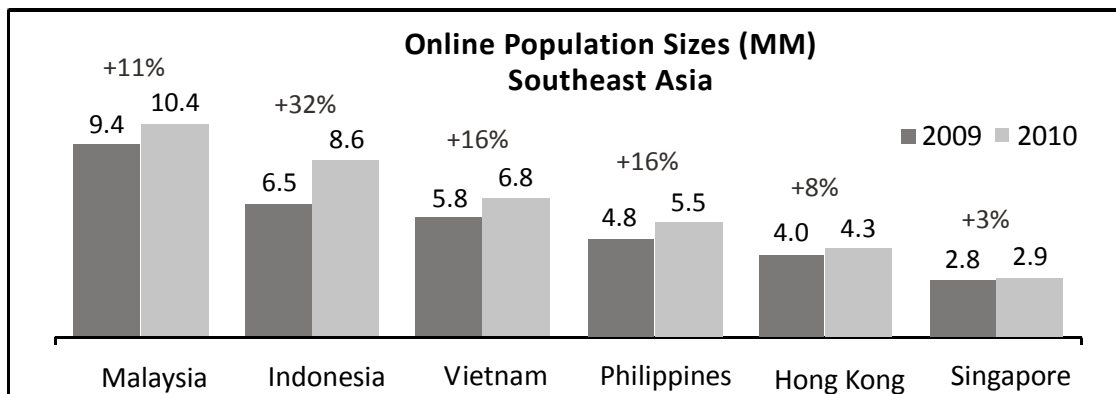
Picture 1. Internet Users in the World
 (Source: Internet World Stats)

In recent years, the Internet usage in Indonesia among its Asian counterparts grows so rapidly. Based on research “Factors Affecting Internet Development: An Asian Survey” conducted in 28 Asian countries, it was

concluded that factors affecting internet growth in a country are: “...a country’s wealth, telecommunication infrastructure, urbanization and stability of the government...” (Hao and Seet, 2009 : 23).

Online Audience Sizes in Southeast Asia, 15+ Home & Work

- Indonesia shows the highest percentage growth over the past year, adding 2 million web users since December 2009
- Mature Internet markets posted significantly lower growth rates



COMSCORE.

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Internet Audience 15+ Scorsing Internet from Home or Work

Picture 2. Online Audience Sizes in Southeast Asia

Internet data centers, Alexa.com record the activity of all Internet users worldwide, including in Indonesia. Interestingly, Kaskus as an Indonesian local web-forum has maintained its position as the 6th most accessed and popular site since 2008. In other words, Kaskus is the number one website forum for sharing and discussion of the most frequently visited places in Indonesia (<http://www.alex.com/topsites/countries/ID> accessed on 11 May 2011).

Kaskus is the site of Indonesia's largest virtual community forum that provides a variety of forums, such as a discussion forum for political issues, lifestyle, or forums for trading in cyberspace (Aristo, 2009). Kaskus, which stands for: "Kasak-Kusuk" (enormous buzz), started from a hobby of a small community that later evolved to the present.

Table 1. Top Sites In Indonesia

Rank	Sites
1	Facebook
2	Google.co.id
3	Google.com
4	Blogger.com
5	Yahoo
6	Kaskus
7	YouTube
8	WordPress.com
9	Twitter
10	4shared



Picture 3. Website Kaskus Logo
(Sourcer: PT Darta Media Indonesia)

About 11 years ago, Kaskus is the internet forum site that was founded by three Indonesian students in the United States: Andrew Dervish,

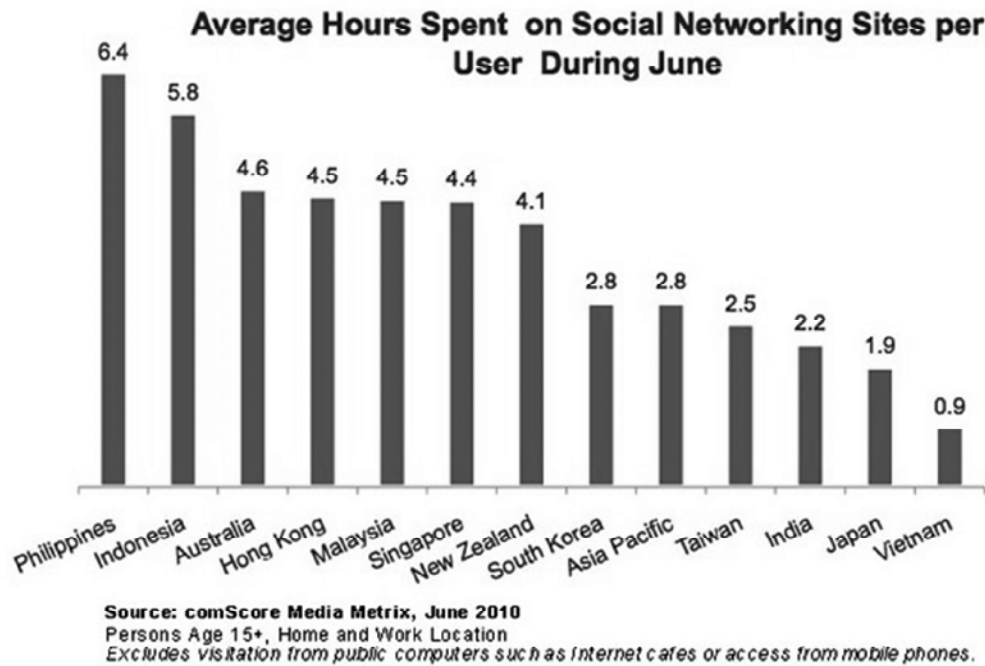
Ronald Stephen, and Budi Darmawan in November. Initially, this site was established as a media release flavor for Indonesian students abroad.



Picture 4. Kaskus Front Page (Source:<http://img512.imageshack.us/img512/5746/kaskushotthreadsmall.jpg>)

How powerful is Kaskus among Indonesian people? Kaskus has more than 2.7 million members and soon will become a “social-commerce” site which will be able to reach at least 75 percent of Internet users in Indonesia (Christie, 2011). Social commerce has been defined as “Helping

people buy where they connect and connect where they buy” (<http://socialcommercetoday.com/> accessed 11 May 2011). In this case, social commerce depends heavily on the use of online media as a place where people buy and sell products and services.



Picture 5. Average Hours Spent On Social Networking
(Source: comScore Media Matrix)

As a social commerce site, many business ventures set their eyes on collaborating their businesses with the site. This year, one of the business moguls in Indonesia, Djarum group has announced the expansion of its businesses by collaborating with Kaskus (Widiantoro, 2011).

Kaskus’s success is not without experiencing challenges, especially the decision in developing and improving the site. In the beginning of its establishment, the site was known as an underground site with having no supervision that eventually lapse into containing negative contents such as gambling and pornography. Then, in 2008 the founders of Kaskus’s site decided to transform the site into a more positive and valuable for its users and in turn able to avoid negative content that was positioned at first. These changes ought to be examined

related to the development trend of communication technologies, especially Internet users that are known to be very dynamic and active audiences.

Considering the facts and achievements for Kaskus website as the most active site in Indonesia, it is evident that Indonesians are spending more time to actively seek information through the internet in comparison to other medium, such as television and radio. Kaskus website visitors are considered as active audience due to the fact that it offers interactive communication between users as well as content that can be originated and composed by users based on their needs.

In this research, we will examine and explore how Kaskus website is able to maintain its position as the most favorable and most vis-

ited website in Indonesia. Also, this research will explore efforts made by Kaskus in order to managed and acquire its members as online consumers.

Literature Review

Active Audience and Interactive Communication

The concept of active audience is very much connected with the birth of new media. New media is known to benefit audience with function, such as: on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, and an interactive user feedback, creative participation and the formation of community around media content (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_media, accessed 11 May 2011).

There are several studies in which researchers observed and studied the use of television and viewers that reveal interesting information about how we use media in our daily lives. According to Mediascape (<http://www.mediascape.com/>, accessed 11 May 2011):

“Viewers are not ‘passive sponges’ who just absorb the content and messages of television and other media. Audiences actively filter, react to, and interpret messages they see on TV. Individuals use the media in many different ways (even very young children).”

Interactive communication between users as well as from sender to and from users gives an edge over the growth of the Internet as a form of new media. According to Wood and Smith (2005: 41), “the Internet allows for interaction among its communicators”. In addition, The Oxford English Dictionary defines “Interactivity” in regards to new media as “allowing a two-way flow of information between it (a computer or other electronic device) and a user, responding to the user’s

input.” From both definitions, it is well underline the importance of interaction that allows users to conduct two way flows of communications using devices as a way of responding.

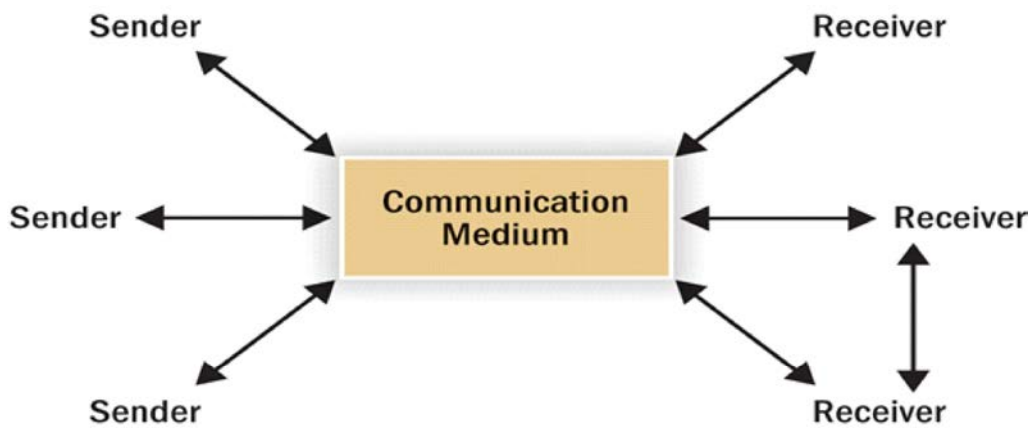
According Luna, Peracchio and Juan (2005 : 259), when it comes to relating online consumers, it is argued that interactivity engages consumers in elaboration, which increases their perception that the site’s information is needs-relevant. This perception in turn increases the likelihood of processing and attitude formation (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989).

Web Communication

Further understanding on interactive communication process offered by new media helps us to see communication model that can be applied and gives us better understanding of the process. Keep in mind that an online user or consumer is in a proactive state during the communication process especially in new media environment.

Communication models are known for its purpose to give better understanding of the flow of ongoing communication process. Based on Deutsch (1952) cited by Severin and Tankard (2010 :47), a model is “a structure of symbols and operating rules which is supposed to match a set of relevant points in an existing structure or process”. Severin and Tankard (2010 : 47) also suggest that a model suggest relationship and provides frame that can unites the natural and social sciences.

The below model explains clearly how new media has encourage communication flows from senders to the communication medium, in this case new media such as the internet. The communication medium that transmits messages to its receivers would allow interaction between receivers. Thus, interactivity is encouraged in this updated model.

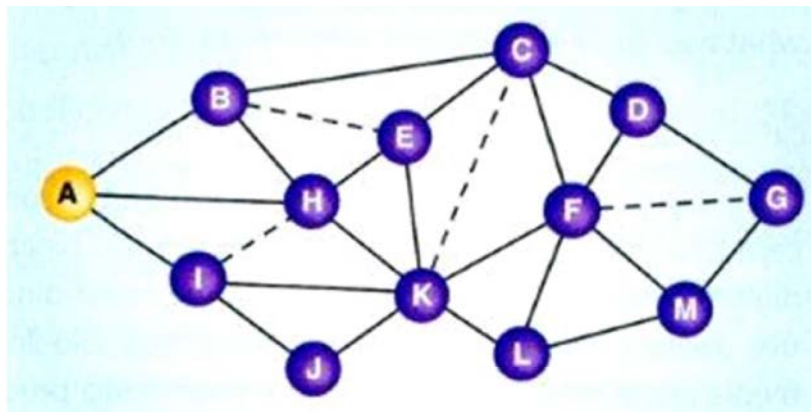


Picture 5. Updated Communications Model
(Source: Solomon, 2008)

When it comes to web communications, Vivian (2011 : 47) suggests points model whereas the control of web communication through mass media to the recipient are no longer managed to consecutive presentation of messages. He

believed that receivers of web communication can switch almost instantly to dozens, hundreds even, of alternatives through a weblike network that, at least theoretically, can interconnect every recipient and sender on the planet.

Web Communication



Every point in the network can send and receive messages. The receipt has acces to every transmission point and controls what is received

Picture 6. Web Communication Model
(Source: Vivian, 2001)

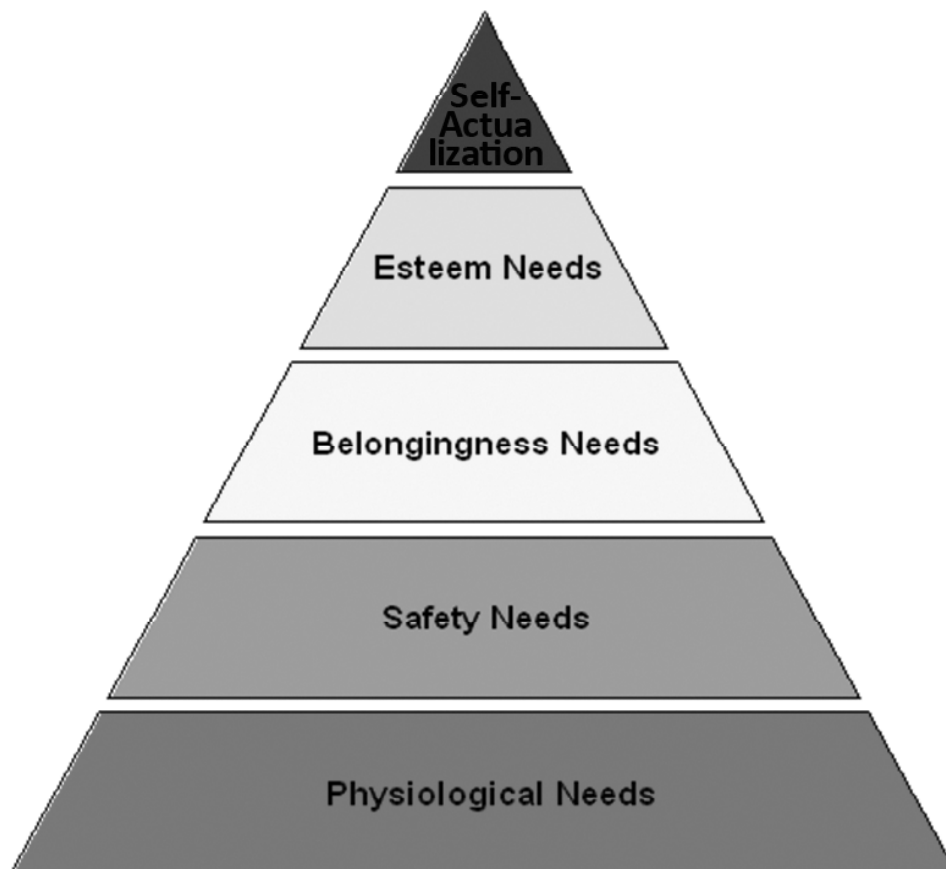
Uses and Gratifications Theory

When it comes to media usage, people have variety of choices to make. After a long hard day at work, one would choose to watch a television program instead of listening to radio. One might also choose to surf the web using his/her personal computer at home instead of reading magazines. Thus, the uses and gratification theory underline the notion that people do have choices when it comes to media usage.

The theory was first introduced by Elihu Katz. In the early 1970's with his two colleagues, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch, they continued to expand the theory. At that time, this theory was considered as contemporary because it contradicted older views or paradigm that assumed the audience of mass communication as passive. The uses and

gratifications theory believe the audience as active, meaning that they actively seek out specific media and content to achieve certain results or gratifications that satisfy their personal needs (Rossi, 2011).

Based on research by Katz, E., Blumler, J. G., & Gurevitch, M. (1974) that "...it is well said that uses and gratifications could try to work backwards, as it were, from gratifications to needs". Earlier we discuss the fact that interactivity as the result of new media, where consumer are active, goal oriented, and chooses media that can satisfy their needs. Uses and gratification theory underline the motivation of people consume from using mass communication. And that the level of reward (gratification) users expects from a given medium or message will be compared with the effort they must make to secure the reward (West and Turner, 2007 : 425).



Picture 7. Maslow Hierarchy Of Needs

(Source: <http://www.shkaminski.com/Classes/Handouts/Maslow.htm>)

With the underline assumption that members of the audience are not passive but take an active role in interpreting and integrating media into their own lives, we can conclude that uses and gratification theory believe that audiences are responsible for choosing media to meet their needs.

There are five assumptions that can be summarized from the uses and gratification theory (DeFleur, 2010):

1. Audience member do not wait passively
2. Consumers of mass communications have a structure of motivating needs
3. Those need are shaped by the individual's inherited nature as well as from learning experiences
4. Audience actively seek specific forms of media content that can fulfill need satisfaction
5. Therefore, audience actively select and choose media content that provide gratifications that fulfill their needs

Method

The approach used in this research is a qualitative approach since it requires acquisition of data in the form of detailed and in-depth stories from informants about the process undertaken by Kaskus. Case study research method was applied in this research. Case study is a research method that uses multiple sources of data (as much data as possible) that can be used to examine, describe, and explain comprehensively concerning various aspects of individuals, groups, a program, organization, or event systematically (Kriyantono 2009 : 65). In addition, researchers applied descriptive case study method. Descriptive case study was chosen because both researchers are trying to explain clearly the efforts made by Kaskus in developing its website.

For data collection techniques, this research applied in-depth interview with Kaskus executive's as well as with Kaskus members. In depth interview with Kaskus's executives were conducted in 30 March, 29 April, 9 June and 27 June 2010 at Kaskus office (PT Darta Media

Indonesia) located in Jln. Melawai X No. 3-5, Jakarta Selatan.

Kaskus executives are the Chief Marketing Officer: Danny Oei Wirianto, the Chief Technical Officer (founder Kaskus): Andrew Darwis, and Public Relations Manager: Lani Rahayu. Danny as the Chief Marketing Officer for Kaskus has contributed highly for the website development especially for having been establishing sponsorship and managing Kaskus brand image and positioning strategy since 2008. He's education background from Kendall College of Art and Design in 1997 and graduated with Honor majoring in Illustration & Marketing fits well with his position as the CEO of an advertising company: Semut Api Colony since 2001. Before 2001, Danny was a Senior Art Director in Agency.com in Chicago, Illinois, United States of America.

Andrew Darwis as the Chief Technical Officer and founder of the Kaskus since 1999 has definitely starts his career in the IT industry since he graduated Art Institute of Seattle in 2003 and continued his study for master's degree in computer science in City University of Seattle in 2008. While studying in Seattle, United States, he had the opportunity to work in the IT industry as Senior Programmers. His love in building website especially forums starts in 1999 where he was just a member of IndoCampus; an online community for Indonesian students abroad. At that time he was not satisfied with the online community because he felt constrained since everyone could not express themselves freely. Kaskus is made on the basis of "Freedom of Speech", because it is the rights of every person.

Lani Rahayu was chosen as informant for this research because she has the educational knowledge as well as work experiences that would contribute highly for data collection. Lani graduated from Padjadjaran University majoring in Communication science specializing in Public Relations. Then worked for five years in Semut Api Colony as Brand Marketing Consultant since 2003 until 2008. After that in 2009 became Public Relations Manager at PT Media

Darta Kaskus Indonesia.

The unit of analysis of this research is non-individual; Kaskus as an organization. This is done when key informant and informant gave researchers the required information, and that they were the representative of the organization or business unit. In this study, researchers will reach the validity of using the competence of research subjects, namely by examining the answers of the questions addressed to the key informant and the informant. By examining the answers, it will then show the subject for its credibility based on the experience and knowledge in dealing with research. Triangulation analysis applied in this research which analyzes the answer key informant to investigate the truth with supporting data such as responses from informants.

For the analysis of triangulation, researchers used a triangulation of sources by comparing the data and information between the key informant interviews and two other informants. In addition, comparing the results of interviews with archival data obtained such as marketing planning of Kaskus, articles and photo documentation.

In the stage of data analysis plan, the two researchers analyze the data to find answers to questions posed in the research project. Furthermore, researchers will perform coding that is the first step to develop the categories, patterns and concepts. The researcher reread all the information that was gathered from interviews and trying to get the outline or general description of the interview. After the researchers made the interview transcripts and then dividing the transcript of the interview into topics. Further topics are separated by category in accordance with the purpose of research. This will facilitate researchers in managing research data.

Findings and Discussion

Interactive Communication

As mentioned earlier in literature review, nowadays audiences are becoming more active,

not merely passive absorbing all information from media. New media also encourage the above concept, whereas audiences have the ability to click and enter a website or not to enter that has no use for them.

Kaskus as an internet forum has the ability to provide interactivity between its users. In April 2010, Kaskus has more than 1.6 million accounts on their servers. What is so special about internet forum? According to pcmag.com (2011), internet forum is consider as "A Web site that provides an online exchange of information between people about a particular topic that provides a venue for questions and answers and may be monitored to keep the content appropriate." Interestingly, unlike a typical discussion board, the Internet forums can include all the extras people expect from the Web, including images, videos, downloads and links, sometimes functioning as a mini-portal on the topic (http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia_term/0,2542,t=Internet+forum&i=57794,00.asp, accessed on June 27, 2011).

When it comes to marketing point of view, internet forum which is synonym to "Discussion Group or Bulletin Board" is where visitors of the online site may read and post topics of common interest (marketingterm.com, 2011). In addition, internet forum can be useful for doing business online, both in terms of reading the content and actively participating in the discussions. Reading a forum's archives can be a good way to obtain a basic knowledge about a topic, and it also provides a historical perspective on trends and opinions (<http://www.marketingterms.com/dictionary/forum/>, accessed on June 27, 2011).

At the beginning of its birth, Kaskus website was not intended as an internet forum. According to Andrew as the Chief Technical Officer:

"We've been using from 2002. Well ... when we started in 1999, Kaskus was like a portal. We were still searching for news, and then we post it. Since 2002 we turned into discus-

sion forums, communities, all to be changed because of the web 2.0 feature embedded in our site.” (Interview on 27 June 2010)

With the ability of having internet forum discussion between users, Kaskus has become so popular that it has won awards from various major companies like Microsoft and Indosat, and also received awards as the most popular community site for two consecutive years of year 2005-2006 from PC Magazine Indonesia.

How many forum does kaskus website has? Below are the listed main forums under Kaskus website:

1. KASKUS CORNER: is a group who are willing to share all kinds of information and interests, hobbies to communities of interest. For ideas, experiences and tips.
2. CASCISCUS: specialize for those who want to gossip, vent, or just for fun discussions of all the info, from around the lifestyle, the latest trends to the latest news updates from Kaskusers
3. LOE-KE-LOE: forum Kaskus place where users can find and discuss specific topics, such as hobbies, lifestyle, and what they like. Literally, the meaning of “to-Loe Loe-” is “From you, for you”
4. REGIONAL, forum Kaskus place where users can communicate with each other and get together with other Kaskus users still in residence in the same region
5. FORUM JUAL BELI, Kaskus forum where users can sell or buy a desired item. This forum is one of the main forum Kaskus, can be seen from many sub-forum contained in this forum. Goods sold in this forum is very diverse, ranging from T-shirts for \$ 50,000 (Fifty Thousand Euro) to the right of ownership of land for the Rp260.000.000.000 (Two Hundred and Sixty Billion Rupiah)

It is interesting to examine that all of the above forum that made Kaskus no 1 site in the country rely heavily on Web 2.0. What makes

Web 2.0 a cutting edge feature for Kaskus? According to Andrew Darwis as the Chief Technical Officer of Kaskus:

“From 2002 Kaskus has been using Web 2.0, which is user generated content. User Generated Content (UGC) is the web 2.0. Other websites such as CNN, TIME Magazine give all kinds of contents that are generated from their editors or reporters. In the User Generate Content (UGC) all contents are derived from the user, for example just like Facebook, they just continue to provide application platform where user can enter photos, comments, status updates of all information. That is the meaning of web 2.0.” (Interview on 27 June 2010)

Lani Rahayu as the Public Relations Manager for Kaskus website also agreed with the beneficial feature of web 2.0. She added:

“It is certain that it is two way, we do use its format: web 2.0. So it has been two-way communication. Umm ... what is it called ... so it is already generated content. So what information do we convey , yes it is the feedback we get from the user. Like when we are rebranding Kaskus website layout and design where we get the opinion of the users. Thousands of suggestions were received, and we were being open to them of what they like or dislike. What they do not like and so on.” (Interview on 28 April 2010)

When asked about the specialty of web 2.0, Danny Oei Wirianto as the Chief Marketing Officer of Kaskus explained:

“I am not a founder of Kaskus. Mr. Andrew Darwis, my partner makes Kaskus. According to Andre’s story to

me, he makes Kaskus as a school assignment. At his school in Seattle, USA, the professor has requested the classroom to create a website but free in the topic. He had many classmates who made the website about each of them, but Andrew thinks he'll make a website which can be useful for many people, especially for Indonesian people. He first created a news portal website, but the lapse of 3 years without any development and then turned out to be Web 2.0. These simple thoughts made Kaskus becomes more attractive and makes people feel of having and become Kaskus users. Based on his story, the sacrifices made by him and his passion for pleasing people to get the unique info and also see the interaction are the things that formed Kaskus website.” (Interview on 30 March 2010)

When asked the possibility of facing difficulties regarding the regulation of RPM Multimedia Content that has been proposed by the Minister of Information Technology and Communication, Titaful Sembiring, Danny argued:

“There are several points in the RPM content that would be a burden to Kaskus with the web 2.0. If RPM is applied content, Kaskus will become the first victim and was definitely because we cannot operate; therefore we must move our servers to serve the millions of Indonesian people who think we are useful to them. There is no other choice.” (Interview on 30 March 2010)

The term Web 2.0 was invented Tim O'Reilly in a 2004 conference dealing with next-generation Web concepts and issues held by O'Reilly Media and MediaLive International. According to O'Reilly stated in techtarget.com (2011):

“One of the most significant differences between Web 2.0 and the traditional World Wide Web (retroactively referred to as Web 1.0) is greater collaboration among Internet users and other users, content providers, and enterprises.

Originally, data was posted on Web sites, and users simply viewed or downloaded the content. Increasingly, users have more input into the nature and scope of Web content and in some cases exerts real-time control over it.” (http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,,sid9_gci1169528,00.html, accessed on June 27, 2011)

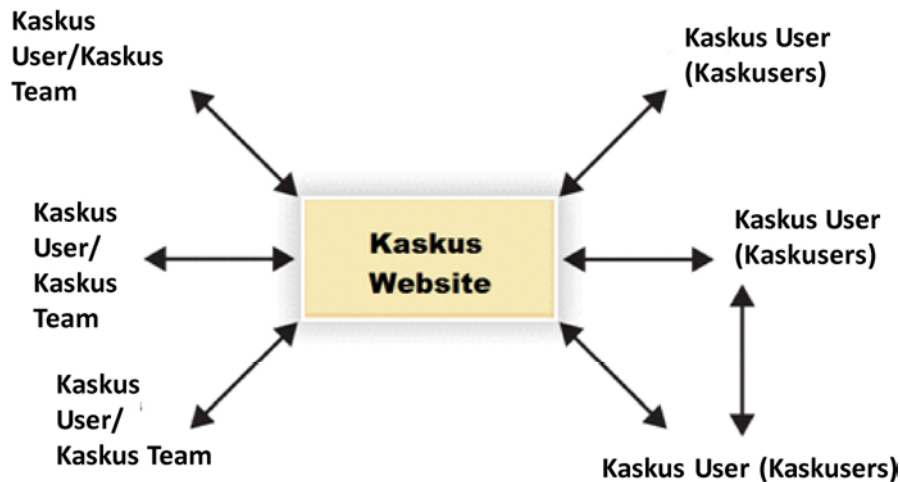
Another source that described Web 2.0 as a tool that emphasizes the importance of users sharing information on the Internet is [webopedia](http://webopedia.com):

“... As a second generation of the World Wide Web that is focused on the ability for people to collaborate and share information online. Web 2.0 basically refers to the transition from static HTML Web pages to a more dynamic Web that is more organized and is based on serving Web applications to users. Other improved functionality of Web 2.0 includes open communication with an emphasis on Web-based communities of users, and more open sharing of information.” (http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/W/Web_2_point_0.html accessed on June 27, 2011)

From the above concepts and understanding of web 2.0 as the basis feature of Kaskus, we can indicate how the web has actually facilitated the interactivity of users in its website. Thus, the interactivity communication that benefit the concept of web

2.0 is can be describe with the updated communication model by Solomon (2008) that

is elaborated in earlier chapter in literature review.



Picture 8. Application on Updated Communication Model for Kaskus Website

Earlier, we have also indicated how interactive communication due to the emergence of new media from Wood and Smith (2005: 41) has stated that “the Internet allows for interaction among its communicators”. From the statements indicated by Andrew, Lani and Danny as the informants from Kaskus, we can summarize the importance of web 2.0 as Kaskus main tool to enhance interactivity communication between senders of message to Kaskus web site as the medium and also from receivers to other receivers as well. Without having to be limited with time, space and place this web 2.0 has become a very powerful tool to generate information from audiences in the new media. So much as a powerful feature of Kaskus, we can see that Danny even had the thought of moving the server to other country if the regulation of RMP multimedia content should be imposed in the future.

After examining the feature of Kaskus website on having equipped web 2.0 that can actually enhance and facilitate user’s interactivity, now we will explore how “active” is Kaskus users, or we might say “Kaskusers”. First, we will examine the demographics of Kaskus users. According to Lani (2010), mostly

male with the age range varies from 18-35. However, the most active age of 18-25 years old. Most of them are college students, job seekers, newlyweds. However, Lani also explained that Kaskus is trying to balance their users with the possibility of having more women, whereas women are only 30% of their current users.

When asked the potential of Kaskus users, Danny answered “I saw Kaskus have great potential to become the number one site in Indonesia. Marketplace Kaskus is very active but has not been driven commercially.” Danny’s vision is similar to the fact that the number of internet users in Indonesia has grown significantly.

Danny also added the psychographics factor regarding Kaskus users. He argued that “Kaskus is arguably the community who is very active and happy to help other fellow Kaskusers. If you have any questions, there must be some answer in minutes.”

Entering Kaskus website is not without user’s motives or needs to be satisfied. Interestingly, we can see that joining Kaskus serves different appeals and reasons for its users. Users like Hendra (35 years old) has

been a member since 2001 who spend more than 2 hours each day also added:

“At that time I was looking for motorcycle spare parts Honda NSR on google.com and then from the site suggested links that are directed to a Kaskus website. Then after that I got acquainted with a community of NMC NSR Motorcycle Club in the Kaskus site.” (Interview on 27 July 2011)

Another user Angga (31 years old) who goes online almost twenty four hours a week admitted how he became Kaskus member with a different approach:

“I have joined Kaskus since the beginning ... but I lost my ID password in that year so I created a second account on 26-12-2002. I first join Kaskus not for solicitation or coincidence but I actually join the forum as a rivalry from another website which is kafegaul.com, and that by

joining into Kaskus, I was able to oversee the development of a rival (Interview on 27 July 2011)

From the above testimonial: Hendra and Angga have different reasons on joining Kaskus forum at the beginning. This evidence support the argument by Katz, written by Glenn Sparks (2009: 358): “...the fact that people consume a dazzling array of media massages for all sorts of reasons, and that the effect of a given message is unlikely to be the same for everyone”.

Uses and Gratification Theory

As stated earlier in literature review that the Uses and Gratification Theory underline the fact that audiences are active users and they seek out specific content to generate specific gratification (reward). Below are the reasons for media usage from communication scholars compiled by West and Turner (2007 : 426):

Tabel 2. Uses and Gratifications Typologies

Researcher	Reasons for Media Use
Rubin (1981)	Passing time Companionship Excitement Escape Enjoyment Social interaction Relaxation Obtaining information Learning about specific content
McQuail et al. (1072)	Diversion Personal relationship Personal identity Surveillance
Kats et al. (1973)	Connection with others Separation from others

Interest and hobby are indicated as the two main reasons why people join Kaskus. As Andrew stated:

"Danny got it from research, analysis if he had people visit Facebook to find and search friends we already know. For example I would go to Facebook to find my friends that I already know already know, then just add then add ... add then add ... add .. But if you go to Kaskus, it means enter Kaskus based on interest. For example I like. .. uumm ... auto .. football ...then you enter enter the automotive community, soccer, photography, photography for example ... when I could finally enter see my friends new. So the difference if people enter Kaskus, they could instead add a new friend." (Interview on 27 Juni 2010)

When Danny was asked whether he is afraid of the popularity of Facebook, he claimed:

"When looking at this situation, what we do should refrain from collision. Especially in brand positioning Kaskus with Facebook. With Facebook, we know everyone before. However, unlike Facebook, when we enter Kaskus it is based on the information that we need and that will meet with new friends that have the same interest, hobby and especially to one accord, this is a very high boost of loyalty." (Interview on 30 Maret 2010)

Users of Kaskus were asked regarding the reasons they use Kaskus using the reasons for media usage from West and Turner, Angga indicated that when he was first joining in, he indicated Kaskus as being able to offer him:

"At first, it was for surveillance: as a competitor where I worked before ...Kaskus was like a sleeping dragon...it was predicted that it will become huge...and I join to find out ...why and how they would be able to do that. Second, it was for obtaining information, forum can facilitate us to exchange information and gain more information faster than any local web portal. Third reason would be social interaction, where you can interact with other Kaskus members, especially those who have not yet know your personal website. Lastly, it is for being able to get connection with others. (Interview on 29 July 2011)

Another user of Kaskus; Hendra indicated differently from Angga due to his membership as the community of KPUT (Kaskus Peugeot Usher Threat), where as he claimed his reasons as:

"Firstly, it is for social interaction with the Community of KPUT, and secondly as for personal identity. Third reasons would be for obtaining information especially for classic handphone and other object commodity. Then, as for companionship and connection with others especially due to being community of KPUT." (Interview on 29 July 2011)

From users; Angga and Hendra reasons for media usage varies from one another. Even though it varies, but it is still under the scope of West and Turner's media usage indicators. This result are also consistent with the concept put forward by (DeFleur, 2010) that audience actively seek specific forms of media content that can fulfill need satisfaction. Therefore, audience actively selects and chooses media content that provide gratifications that fulfill their needs.

Conclusion

The results of this study are as follows:

1. Online consumers are active and dynamic type of consumers in which they are always looking for information according to their needs. This conformed to the results of data found in this research both from the results of Kaskus management as well as from the Kaskus users.
2. One important thing that can be highlighted from the Uses and Gratification Theory is that the audience is active and always looking for content that can be rewarding. The results of this study, Kaskus users visit this site with a variety of goals and different priorities .
3. In order to facilitate interactivity, it appears that Web 2.0 features greatly assist communication between users and senders of the message.

This research suggests that with the loyalty of Kaskus members and high expectation among online consumers, Kaskus should recognize the importance of infrastructure that can suit the interactivity of its users. Web communication that is highly interactive will never be static, but dynamic with the ever-changing and ever evolving needs of online consumers.

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