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## **DOCTORAL THESIS**

The Nature of Gen-Z's Influence on the Future of Printed Surf Magazines

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**BOND  
UNIVERSITY**

**The Nature of Gen-Z's Influence on the Future of Printed Surf Magazines**

Craig Sims

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

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## ABSTRACT

The digital versus print narrative is inescapable in any analysis of today's rapidly evolving media ecosystem. The general consensus revolves around predictions of the wholesale abandonment of traditional print media by youth, in favour of digital media. Within the sport media category, magazine closures are becoming increasingly common, and magazines related to the sport of surfing, a quintessentially youthful pursuit, have not been excluded. Addressing a paucity of recent scholarly work about how youth view magazines, the aim of this study was to analyse the media choices and perceptions of Australian Generation Z surfers to advance theory and identify what functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors.

Applying a combination of three conceptual lenses in generation theory, uses and gratifications theory and media substitution theory, this study utilised a mixed methods approach. This approach commenced with an online survey of 1639 participants and concluded with 17 in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

Findings revealed that despite Gen-Z's prolific and habitual social media use, this generational cohort of Australian surfers have low levels of trust in social media and high levels of trust in surf magazines. Surf magazines were also found to exert influence on individual and group identity, and were effective in delivering liminoid experiences for readers through their travel content. Ultimately, four factors that contribute to the functional differentiation of surf magazines in the modern media landscape were presented: trusted expertise, identity influence, travel escapism and emotional attachment.

Contributions to theory include an extension of McQuail's (1983) four-motive typology of media uses and gratifications; an application of the dialectic model of media interaction by Adoni and Nossek (2001) that facilitated a deeper understanding of media consumption in an Australian youth context; and a response to Bonner and Roberts' (2017) call for more research into the role Gen-Z could have in determining the future of print magazines in this digital age. Contributions to practice include a hierarchical typology of Gen-Z surf content preferences, and the media platforms that are best suited to their delivery; a model explaining the role surf magazines play in supporting the underlying drivers of demand for surf brands; and finally, the four factors that contribute to the functional differentiation of surf magazines in this digital age. The

research findings will be relevant to scholars interested in the content needs and media channel choices of the demographic cohort known as Generation Z, as well as industry practitioners such as sport magazine publishers, and sport governing bodies and commercial organisations that target youth and niche sport markets.

## KEYWORDS

Media, Surf magazines, Generation Z, Media substitution, Uses and gratifications, Media trust, Surf culture

## DECLARATION BY AUTHOR

This thesis is submitted to Bond University in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Research.

I declare that the research presented within this thesis is a product of my own original ideas and work and contains no material which has previously been submitted for a degree at this university or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement has been made.

Name: Craig Sims

Date: 7 April 2022

## DECLARATION BY CO-AUTHORS

Not applicable.



## RESEARCH OUTPUTS

No research outputs.

## ETHICS DECLARATION

The research associated with this thesis received ethics approval from the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethics application numbers 16164 and CS03290.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Generation Z	Gen-Z
Generation Y	Gen-Y
Uses and gratifications	U&G
Surfing Technique and Equipment	Technique
Interviews and Profiles of Famous or Iconic Surfers	Interviews
Surf Conditions or Forecasts	Conditions
Surf Travel Destinations	Travel

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Wolfgang Riepl (1913) posited that newer, more developed challengers seldom replace incumbent media; instead, the field converges, and new patterns of use emerge. In today's rapidly evolving media ecosystem, proponents of Riepl's law argue new media will not usurp old media because newspapers never replaced books, radio never replaced newspapers and television never replaced radio (Kilian et al., 2012). The term, new media, has been around since the 1960s and is used to "encompass an expanding and diversifying set of applied communication technologies" (McQuail, 2010, p. 39), which has attracted "intense interest, positive and even euphoric expectations and predictions, and a general over estimation of their significance" (p. 136). There is no doubt that the Internet and digitisation of media have fundamentally changed and disrupted traditional business models across a broad array of media-related industries, including the newspaper industry (Karimi & Walter, 2015; PwC, 2021); the communications, information, media, and entertainment (CIME) industries (Gimpel & Westerman, 2012); and, the magazine publishing industry (Bonner, 2015; Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Cox et al., 2005; Haniff, 2012; Randle, 2003; and others). On the whole, magazine publishers have been slow to adapt to the disruptive effect of digital media (Bonner, 2015; Mowatt & Young, 2005; Pérez-Latre, 2012; PwC, 2021; Sax, 2016; Surfline, 2017, 2018). As a result, magazine closures have become increasingly common (Deloitte, 2020; PwC, 2021; Roy Morgan, 2021, Samir, 2021).

There are many opinions about new media's effect on legacy or traditional media, and a prominent feature of this discourse is the digital versus print debate, with the consensus being that there will be a wholesale abandonment of traditional print media by youth, in favour of digital media (Bonner & Roberts, 2017). The 2021 PwC Media and Entertainment report supports this, stating, "The reality is that many younger consumers simply have little awareness of – or interest in – traditional media" (p. 6). Some scholars agree (Bennett et al., 2008; Bolton et al., 2013); however, others suggest the demise of print is neither universal (Loda & Coleman, 2009) nor conclusive (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Webb & Fulton, 2019). Currently, it seems there are more questions than answers as to whether the death of print is a *fait accompli* or merely moral panic.

Moral panic is a term that first emerged in the literature when it was proposed by Cohen (1972) and is said to occur when a particular group in society, displays attitudes



and practices which are perceived to conflict with societal values and norms (Garland, 2008). This divergence is subjected to intense media focus, which, couched in sensationalist language, amplifies the apparent variance (McQuail, 2010). So, the term moral panic refers to the form the public discourse takes rather than to an actual panic amongst the populous (Bennett et al., 2008). The broader analytical context of moral panic is the study of social reaction. Social reaction can vary in intensity, duration and impact; some are minor and transient while others are major and transform whole social landscapes (Garland, 2008). The moral panic surrounding the so-called death of print appears to be in the latter category, so it is not an insignificant issue in these times.

In the early twentieth century, magazines played important social, cultural and political roles. In a sport and lifestyle context, magazines have played a seminal role in the maintenance and dissemination of social norms and subcultural values (Wheaton, 2019), especially in surfing (Booth, 2008; Ford & Brown, 2005), a lifestyle sport generally associated with youth (Pearson, 1982; Wheaton, 2013). Yet, despite their enduring presence, the weakness and uncertainty surrounding magazines have led to a general neglect by communication researchers (McQuail, 2010).

This research project addresses a call for more research on the future of printed magazines (Bonner, 2015; Bonner & Roberts 2017; McQuail, 2010; Randle, 2003) and aims to separate fact from the general discourse by researching the media preferences of a sample group of Australian surfers in order to advance theory and provide practical guidance to surf industry stakeholders – particularly surf magazine publishers that face displacement from digital disruption. The predictive value of the research findings will be relevant to sports magazine publishers, sports administrators, commercial organisations, and academics targeting youth and niche markets.

This chapter will introduce the research context, discuss the research problem, explain the research parameters and reveal the research questions. The chapter will then show how the study's findings build on the scholarly works that come before it, and provide practical implications for industry stakeholders.

## 1.2 RESEARCH CONTEXT

Sport and media have both undergone wholesale transformation since the turn of the century, with both developing extensively and rapidly, and both playing a significant part in structuring and informing people's lives, on both local and global levels (Saini, 2015). The sport and media industries are tied together in a close symbiotic relationship. As Saini (2015) noted: “the wellbeing of particular sports or, indeed, sport as a whole has become linked to income generated directly or indirectly from the media” (p. 320). Sport is one of the most valuable forms of content in the global media marketplace. The proliferation of digital media platforms, second and third-screen media consumption, and time-shifted viewing practices have disrupted broadcast programming schedules and increased its commercial value exponentially (Hutchins et al., 2015). Disruption in sport media is not limited to television. Sport magazines, including those related to the action sport of surfing, have not been excluded. The most notable examples were the closure of two pillars of global surf culture - America-based *Surfing* (2017) and *Surfer* (2020) magazines. These closures sent shockwaves through the surfing world and ignited fresh debate about the future of magazines in the surfing world (Warshaw, 2017; Doherty, 2020). Indeed, Warshaw (2017) declared the closure of *Surfing Magazine* after 53 years in publication as “ending the reign of a goliath in surf media and signalling the imminent and cold, ‘Print Is Dead’ future” (para. 1).

The introduction of youth into the sport and media dynamic has compelling research implications. Due to their favourable predisposition towards change and innovation, youth are enthusiastic users of new media technologies (Boyte, 2016; Kilian et al., 2012; Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017). New media use is prolific among action sports participants, whose profound engagement with media related to their chosen action sport depends on their understanding of the latest media technologies (Bennett et al., 2003; Bennett et al., 2006). Action sports, such as surfing, skateboarding, BMX, and snowboarding, are non-traditional, media-driven sports, which are risky in nature, and generally not team-based (Bennett & Hensen, 2003; Humphreys, 1997; Stranger, 1999). O’Brien (2021) states that the migration from traditional sports such as football and basketball towards more unstructured lifestyle sports such as skateboarding, climbing and surfing is recognised by Haikowicz et al. (2013) as one of six megatrends destined to impact the future of Australian sport in the coming decades.

One such action sport, the sport of surfing, has been dominated by a youth demographic for decades (Pearson, 1982; Wheaton, 2013). There is some debate about whether surfing is a sport, artform or lifestyle (Brennan, 2021), but less disputed is the sense that it is a subculture (Ford & Brown, 2006). A sport subculture is defined by Jary & Jary (2006) as, “any system of beliefs, values and norms which is shared and actively participated in by an appreciable minority of people within a particular culture” (in Ford & Brown, 2005, p. 59). As a subculture, surfing’s influence upon mainstream society is felt well beyond its size, with evidence of this dating back to 1959 with the first Hollywood surf movie, called “Gidget,” which began an accommodation of, and empathy for, the surfing subculture (Stratton, 1979). The Australian public’s fascination with surf culture is supported by McGregor (1966), who described the extent to which surf culture pervaded Australian mainstream consciousness at the time:

All the mass media and channels of publicity have thrown their weight behind the surfies: the Sunday newspapers carry surfing supplements, disc jockeys plug surf music remorselessly, the advertising agencies flatter and glamorize the beach life. They know what the coming thing is (p. 296).

The hedonistic characteristics of “the beach life,” both piques public interest and affords the surfing subculture a modicum of status within the dominant culture (Stratton, 1979), and the ability to influence the ‘social mood’ (Humphreys, 1997).

This research project seeks to examine the media uses of a group who fall into the categories of: (a) youth; (b) action sport participants; and, (c) members of the surfing subculture. The research group has a combination of contextually useful characteristics, which include: (a) the early adoption of new technologies; (b) a sport that involves voracious media use; and, (c) a subculture that enjoys status and exerts influence within the dominant culture. Due to the unique confluence of categories and characteristics described above, media related to the sport of surfing – surf media – are among the first to feel the effects of media-related change, and can therefore be a useful prognosticator of what the future holds.

### 1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

As already noted, the steady demise of printed magazines is underway, as print publishers struggle to counteract the disruptive effects of digital media on their businesses. It appears this is no less true for the subsector of sport magazines. Magazine publishers need to navigate a successful path through this period of great uncertainty in order to avoid obsolescence. The rise of “the digital natives” as media consumers, is an integral part of the narrative about the challenges faced by print publishing (Bonner, 2015). In this context, “digital natives” are people who are born around 1980 (Prensky, 2001), and form part of the generational cohort known as Generation Y (Gen-Y) (Bonner, 2015; Hamlin & Gillespie, 2011; Prensky, 2001; Pew Research Center, 2010). There is no shortage of studies examining Gen-Y and the choices they make, however, there is a paucity of research about the media choices of the generation that follows it - Generation Z (Gen-Z) - especially in respect to their relationship with printed magazines. The study by Bonner (2015) finds that despite their inextricable ties to digital media, Gen-Y still has an attachment to print, but Bonner’s Gen-Y respondents believe Gen-Z will most likely force print media into the digital-only realm. Bonner concludes by calling for more research on the media choices of this emergent generation, stating that Gen-Z, “will inevitably dictate the course of the [print magazine] industry through their collective consumer behaviour in the coming years. Therefore, the motivations behind their use of such media are of more importance than ever” (Bonner, 2015, p. ii). This study answers Bonner’s call by providing new insights into the media choices of a small but significant segment of the emerging Gen-Z cohort. The resultant insights advance theory and also hold significance for industry practitioners such as magazine publishers who must make appropriate strategic decisions to secure their long-term future.

One such insight, which is emerging in the print versus digital narrative, is the issue of trust. The rise and spread of misinformation and disinformation, also known as “fake news,” has impacted perceptions of reliability and trust in media (Edelman, 2017, 2018, 2021). This has been exacerbated by revelations of personal data breaches, the most publicly prominent being Cambridge Analytica’s unauthorised use of the personal data of 87 million Facebook users (McKinnon, 2018), and stand over tactics used by Facebook, in early 2021, when the Australian Government proceeded to legislate a

revenue-share payment scheme to news publishers for disseminating their content (Meade, 2021). The prevalence of “widespread, blatant, unapologetic, and often-successful deceptiveness promoted by powerful agents” has resulted in the designation of a name defining the current period as the ‘post-truth era’ (Lynch, 2017, p. 594).

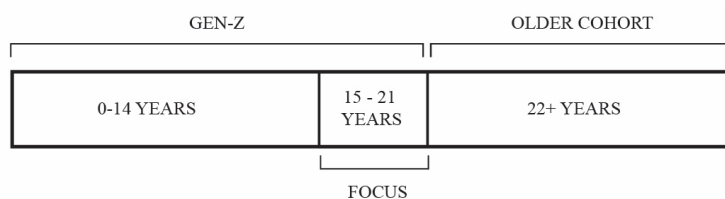
Social media’s meteoric rise was triggered by youth who display an affinity for early adoption of new media technologies, and a willingness to embrace change (Boyte, 2016; Deloitte, 2017; Kilian et. al, 2012); however, the longer-term effects of social media’s prominence on social and psychological behaviour are yet to be fully understood (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017). Similarly, the impacts that fake news and flagrant data security breaches have on media use will only emerge over the course of time. In both cases, early signs of change are likely to be detected in the attitudes, perceptions and actions of the youth, because they are the first to embrace new media and consequently, are likely to be the first to display its effects. This research project adds understanding of, *inter alia*, the impact of media trust on media use among the youth.

#### 1.4 RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION

This research project examines the content needs, media channel choices, and media uses and gratifications of Australian surfers aged 15 and over, for the purpose of understanding whether and, if so, how magazines can differentiate and remain relevant in the digital age. While the focus of this study is on the content needs and media uses and gratifications of 15 to 21-year-olds (Gen-Z), the scope of the study includes older ages in order to provide a platform for comparison, and identify the existence of generational change in media use (See figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1**

*Generational Age Ranges Showing the Focus and Scope of this Study.*



For years, researchers have highlighted the size and spending power of Gen-Z (Deloitte, 2021; Ell, 2019; Reuters, 2019). Reuters (2019) predicted that by 2020 Gen-Z would comprise 40% of all consumers. They are no longer the future market; they have arrived, and their market power is increasing. The population group of 15 to 21-year-old Australian surfers is a small but influential sub-segment of Gen-Z because, as stated, action sport participants are highly engaged with media related to their chosen sport (Bennett et al., 2003; Bennett et al., 2006); and, 15 to 21-year-olds form part of the youth market, a known driver and early adopter of media change and innovation (Bennett et al., 2008; Boyt, 2016; Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Kilian et. al, 2012; ZenithOptimedia, 2015). This group is important because its members could reveal a front-line response to a generational change in media consumption. Examining their media choices will yield early insights about the way Gen-Z uses and perceives print magazines. Such insights enable the development of understanding around the future viability of the printed magazine and make a positive contribution to the on-going print versus digital narrative in the literature, especially in a sport media context.

### 1.5 MAGAZINES AND MEDIA CHOICE DEFINED

Media exists in many types and formats. This study seeks to focus on magazines by comparing their use with more recent media types, namely television, websites, and social media. Magazines and television form part of a broad category of media known as old media, also referred to as traditional media and legacy media. Websites and social media form part of a collective known as new media, also known as digital media, because they are delivered using internet or mobile technologies (Menke & Schwarzenegger, 2019). While the difference between old and new media is the Internet and the interactivity it affords, the lines of distinction between old and new media are no longer clear as many old media now have digital representation. For example, most magazines, once only printed on paper, now have websites, digital editions and social media channels allowing them to meet and interact with their audiences wherever they may be. Thus, some scholars argue there are no old media as their positions in the media ecology are constantly being reconfigured and renegotiated (Lesage & Natale, 2019; Natale, 2016a).

A byproduct of the digitisation and resultant fragmentation of media is that “the balance of power” has shifted from the producer to the consumer, who now has the power of choice, as an active user taking control of their media experience (McQuail, 2010, p. 40). In this context, media choice is defined as the media channels selected to access desired content. Media channels are defined as the delivery mechanisms by which content is delivered, and can include, but are not limited to, television, radio, magazines (print and digital formats), newspapers, social media and websites.

The focus of this study is on the prospect of printed magazines (about surfing) and as such, the term magazines and surf magazines are applied to this narrow characterisation of magazines. This study also refers to a broader conceptualisation of magazines as multimedia brands grounded in a printed product. This broader characterisation of magazines is applied to contextualise the narrower characterisation of the magazine within its own media-sphere.

## 1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary research aim is to identify emerging Gen-Z media choices and perceptions and use this information to advance theory and identify what functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors. To facilitate this aim, consideration was given to the *what* (content needs), *how* (content sources), and *why* (motivations for choices) before formulating the following three research questions.

**Research Question 1a:** *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1b:** *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1c:** *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise the use of these media sources?*

**Research Question 2:** *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 3:** *How can printed surf magazines achieve functional differentiation in the digital age?*

To facilitate this inquiry, a two-phased, explanatory sequential mixed methods research design was developed, starting with an online cross-sectional survey followed by face-to-face in-person semi-structured interviews. The two phases are briefly described below.

1.6.1 PHASE ONE STUDY

This is a quantitative research design targeting Australian surfers aged 15 years and over. An online self-reported survey was used to collect data about the following: (1) demographic information; (2) a hierarchy of each respondent's content needs; (3) where this content is currently accessed; and, (4) the extent to which the media sources gratify six predetermined needs. Once captured, data were processed, grouped and statistical analyses were conducted.

1.6.2 PHASE TWO STUDY

Phase two of the study comprised a series of semi-structured interviews that sought to elicit a deeper level of understanding behind the quantitative results that emerged from the phase one study, and to identify real and perceived differences between the media sources presented. The sequential nature of the study allowed the qualitative phase to provide more explanatory and interpretive depth to the findings from the quantitative phase, thus enhancing validity and reliability (Jogulu & Jaloni, 2011).

1.7 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

There are many theories concerning media choice and the ways in which an incumbent media format can respond to the arrival of a disruptor, however, uses and gratifications (U&G) theory and media substitution theory are the two theoretical approaches that underpin the research questions emanating from this inquiry. U&G



theory posits that people make conscious choices to use certain media to fulfil particular needs (Katz et al., 1973); and, media substitution theory considers how the media landscape is impacted by new patterns of media consumption that result from the arrival of a disruptive media type (Kaye & Johnson, 2003). To the extent that this study focuses on the generational cohort known as Gen-Z, the theory of generations is an overarching third theoretical paradigm used in this research project.

Ultimately, this thesis uses a synthesis of these three theories that were applied to achieve three main conceptual contributions. First, Bonner (2015) called for more research exploring the crucial role Gen-Z could have in determining the future of print magazines in this digital age. This research project focused on identifying emerging Gen-Z media choices and perceptions with a particular emphasis on the future of printed surf magazines. Second, this project advances U&G theory by extending McQuail's (1983) typology of media use. Third, the study's findings also extend media substitution theory by identifying ways surf magazines might achieve 'co-existence', one of three possible outcomes advanced by Adoni and Nossek (2001). Finally, the study's outcomes offer empirically grounded practical guidance for industry practitioners. Indeed, the increased understanding derived from the study's theoretical advances will be of value to sport magazine publishers as well as to sport organisations and businesses seeking to understand ways to connect with Gen-Z consumers.

## 1.8 THESIS STRUCTURE

Following this Introduction (Chapter 1), a review of the relevant scholarly literature is presented. Chapter 2 outlines the state of the magazine publishing industry, the three theoretical perspectives that underpin this study, and three pertinent concepts that often surface in print versus digital discussion. Chapter 3 explains the overarching research paradigm and the methods used to address the research questions. Additionally, Chapter 3 examines issues relating to the researcher's positionality, as well as, validity, reliability and ethical considerations of the study. The subsequent four chapters address the research data. Chapter 4 presents the quantitative data used to address the research questions. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the results and accompanying discussion for each of the three research questions. Since the research questions are sequential in nature the research project culminates in Research Question 3 (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 concludes

the thesis and contextualises the study's findings, demonstrating the theoretical and practical relevance of the findings, as well as the study's limitations and recommendations for future research.

## 1.9 CHAPTER ONE CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a contextual background to the research problem was provided before introducing the main theoretical and practical justification for this research project. The researcher revealed the two-phased research project plan and introduced the three research questions, concluding with how the findings aim to contribute to the print versus digital debate, extend theory, and provide practical value to surf and sport magazine publishers looking for ways to survive the disruptive effects of digital media technologies. The following chapter will review the core literature that underpins the research aim.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

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## 2.1 CHAPTER TWO INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to identify emerging Gen-Z media choices and perceptions and use this information to advance theory and identify what functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors. Accordingly, this chapter begins with an analysis of the state of print media with an emphasis on magazines. Then, three theoretical perspectives that underpin this study are presented: media substitution theory, U&G theory and generation theory. This will be followed by a review of the literature about four pertinent concepts: liminality, identity, media trust, and, habit. The chapter concludes with the proposed research objective and the three research questions that will facilitate achievement of this objective.

## 2.2 THE FUTURE OF MAGAZINES

There are many forms of media that individuals can choose to access their information via either print or digital media platforms (Krishen, Kachen, and Haniff, 2016). Much has been written about the effect of new media technologies on traditional media channels of print, radio, and television, and the narrative is consistent: traditional media business models have been decimated and the incumbents have been slow to adapt (Mowatt & Young, 2005; Pérez-Latre, 2012; PwC Global, 2021). Print media has been especially impacted since 2007 when the sector began a “free fall that still continues today” (Bonner, 2015, p. 7). This free fall is widely considered to be attributable to the fact that newspaper and magazine content can be obtained much faster, and often at no cost, on the Internet (Austin, Barnard & Hutcheon, 2015; Bonner & Roberts, 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2015; Pérez-Latre, 2012, PwC, 2021; Statista, 2021).

The declining popularity of print media is supported by the Global Technology Media and Telecommunications report (PwC Global, 2021), that showed newspaper and consumer magazine revenue declined by US\$23.5bn between 2019 and 2020, with this pattern set to continue until the end of the forecast period in 2025 (PwC Global, 2021). A key fact in this report suggests that a significant tipping point for magazines is looming. The report found that magazines’ digital advertising revenue will exceed print advertising revenue by 2023; however, this highlights the declining demand for print

advertising, rather than the accelerating demand for digital advertising (PwC Global, 2021). This is significant because while print advertising is losing popularity, digital advertising is not predicted to fill the gap due to intense competition from digital media giants like Facebook, Google, Snapchat, and TikTok (PwC Global, 2021). Ultimately, from a global perspective, this means the magazine category's ability to attract advertising revenue is forecast to shrink, meaning more closures are inevitable.

From a domestic standpoint, the Australian Entertainment and Media Outlook (PwC, 2021) report found that the revenue position at an industry level remains robust, however, there is variability within the segments that comprise the industry. Newspaper print circulation and print advertising revenue dropped in 2020 by 6.7 % and 24.0 % respectively. This decline is expected to continue through to 2025 but will be ameliorated by a forecasted increase in digital advertising revenues, resulting in an overall decline of 2.3% in newspaper print circulation and print advertising revenue by 2025 (PwC, 2021). There was also significant consolidation of the newspaper industry with News Corp announcing 112 of its print newspapers would stop being printed, stating that 36 would close altogether and 76 would become online only. Nine Entertainment and The Australian Community Media also announced structural changes to reduce costs in the face of revenue challenges (PwC, 2021).

Consumer magazines in Australia experienced a more precipitous decline with a 27.3% drop in print circulation and advertising revenue in 2020. However, the decline was largely due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on the logistics of distribution (PwC, 2021). The outlook for magazines is for an overall decline of 10% by 2025, as magazines are expected to continue to diversify into events, experiences, and partnerships (PwC, 2021). 2020 saw the closure, or suspension, of over 20 titles (Roy Morgan, 2021), with Bauer Media alone closing eight of Australia's best-known magazines.

Despite a long-term decline in market conditions for print media globally, the market that remains is still significant. Print readership in the Asia-Pacific region is the world's most resilient with a forecast compound annual decline of just -0.2% to 2025 (PwC Global, 2021). In Australia, Roy Morgan (2021) reports that 20.4 million Australians, aged 14-years and older, read newspapers, although, only 1.3 million of these read printed newspapers exclusively, 6.3 million read digital newspapers

exclusively, and 12.8 million read the newspaper in both formats. While the pull of free online news content draws print readers away from physical newspapers, printed magazines have been more successful with reader retention (Watson, 2021). The Roy Morgan (2021) report found that, as of June 2021, 15.2 million Australians, aged 14-years+, read magazines in the print or online format, and 12 million of them, read the printed format. While COVID-19 was disruptive for the magazine category as a whole, some magazines experienced significant growth as Australians turned to magazines for entertainment during lockdowns. Categories experiencing readership increases between July 2020 and June 2021 include food and entertainment, home and garden, sport, and travel (Roy Morgan, 2021). Researchers in the US identified a similar trend. The US-based Magazine Publisher's Association's (MPA) Factbook (2020) states, "While the industry still has much to learn about the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, data from the first half of 2020 show that magazines are finding a new importance – particularly among young people and women" (MPA Factbook, 2020, p. iv). This is supported by Webb and Fulton (2019) who found aesthetics were central to the continued appeal of the printed magazine. Samir (2019) sums it up well by asserting that although we live in a digital-first world, there is still a strong sense that print is valuable and cites Terri White, Editor-in-Chief of the film magazine, *Empire*, from the Bauer Media Group, who says:

*The digital space is a hectic, loud, cluttered landscape with bloggers, influencers, journalists, editors, writers, marketers all shouting into the void, their voices surfacing, or not, depending on SEO or algorithms." In contrast, she adds, "The intimacy is unrivalled" when readers hold print in their hands, "a visceral, powerful connection" is created. "In this increasingly digitized world, you cannot underestimate how much people just want to feel something real [emphasis in original]. (Samir, 2019, para. 12).*

Some studies (Bennett et al., 2008; Bolton et al., 2013; PWC, 2021) suggest that print media's general decline was precipitated by the Millennial generation (Gen-Y) who tend to seek information and entertainment from digital sources, where a plethora of media options are available to them. On the contrary, other studies (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Loda & Coleman, 2009; MPA Factbook, 2020; Samir, 2019; Steinberg, 2007; Watson, 2021; Webb & Fulton, 2019), have shown magazines remain relevant to young people. Bonner and Roberts (2017) cited a 2016 MPA report, which revealed that

90% of all American adults reported reading a magazine in the past six months, adding that, “This percentage rises with younger age groups, with readerships of 93% in the under-35 age group and 95% among under-25s” (p. 2). The 2020 MPA Factbook shows little has changed in four years, with 91% of all American adults reported reading a magazine in the past six months; 95% in the under-35 age group; and, 95% among under-25s (MPA, 2020). The data suggest the interest in magazines by people under the age of 25-years has not waned. Indeed, Reuters (2019) predicts that Gen-Z represents an emerging market for the print industry because this generation values print media and trusts print publications more than digital media. Reuters stated that, “Young consumers are very aware that magazine publishing doesn’t follow the same rules as social media and blogging, where speed trumps fact-checking, editing, and refining. All the necessary processes [are followed] before something makes it into print” (Samir, 2019, para. 10). In expounding the value of analogue experiences and ‘tangible things’, Sax (2016) supports the resilience of magazines, suggesting that,

The millennial (and those younger than them) fascination with vinyl records, print books and magazines comes from digital burnout, ...they don’t view digital as special. Digital is like the air around them. To them, there’s uniqueness when someone presents them something in an analog format. They’re more willing to see the value and not to see it as antiquated (p. 44).

To conclude, current data support Bonner’s (2015) assertion that the transition from print to digital is far from complete. However, with the evolving nature of media, there appears to be an evolving pattern of use. Thus, a more granular look at the motivations behind media choice and media use, becomes necessary.

### 2.3 THREE THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Substitutability between new and old media has been researched both qualitatively and quantitatively for decades (Kim et al., 2020). There are many theoretical approaches that attempt to make sense of why and how people use media, and how a media ecosystem is impacted by the arrival of a new medium. McQuail (2010) observed that just as media of all kinds are converging, so too are theories of new and old media. McQuail determined that the study of communication should be

interdisciplinary, utilising varied approaches and methods. This review will now focus on three theoretical approaches that are central to this research project: media substitution theory, U&G theory, and, generation theory.

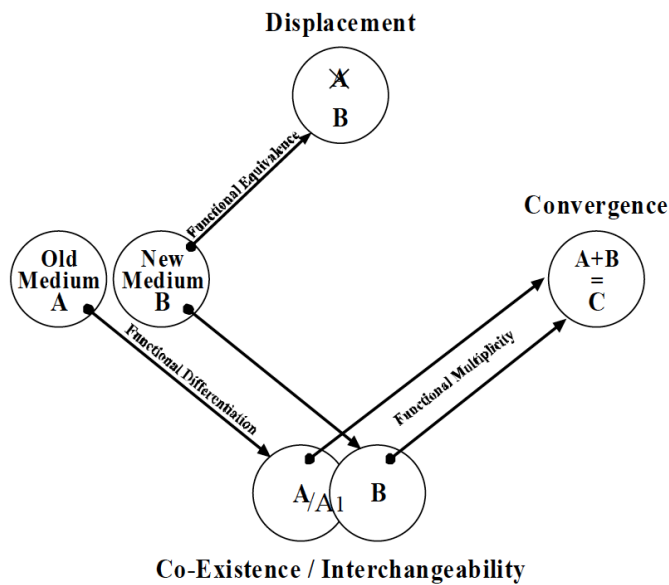
## 2.4 MEDIA SUBSTITUTION THEORY

If Darwin's 'survival of the fittest' principle is a suitable analogy for the way in which surf print media must respond to its changing environment, then media substitution theory is a suitable lens through which the avoidance of extinction can be analysed. Media substitution theory emerges from the functionalist approach to communication studies and is grounded in uses and gratifications theory, which assumes media users actively make media choices to satisfy psychosocial needs (Blumler & Katz, 1974; McQuail, 1984). Media substitution theory asserts that when a new media technology, such as the Internet, is introduced, audiences redistribute the allocation of their time among available media options and as a result, new patterns of media consumption emerge (Kaye & Johnson, 2003). Under these circumstances, Adoni and Nossek (2001) advanced three possible outcomes relating to the extent to which one media option is substituted for another: (1) Displacement, which occurs as a result of the new medium being 'functionally equivalent', creating conditions that could cause the incumbent to become either displaced or rendered obsolete; (2) Co-existence, which results from a process of 'functional differentiation' whereby the incumbent makes adjustments that allow it to realise a functional point of difference and re-establish its unique nature; and, (3) Convergence, which is a 'functional synthesis' of the two media sources resulting in a new medium that simultaneously utilises the functionality of both. A diagrammatic representation of the model is presented below, and an explanation follows.



**Figure 2.1**

*Dialectic Model of Media Interaction*



Note: Reprinted from *Nossek, Adoni and Nimrod* (p. 368), 2015, *International Journal of Communication*. Available under [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Referring to the figure above, because of total functional equivalence, New Medium B will make Old Medium A obsolete because the optimum circumstances for the substitution or displacement of its predecessor prevail. The result is a significant decrease in the production of the displaced medium, the number of its distribution channels, and a reduction in consumption. If Old Medium A were to achieve functional differentiation (or a low degree of functional equivalence), both media can co-exist, resulting in circumstances of stability or even growth in both forms of media. The final form of media interaction depicted on the model is a new medium (Medium C), which is the product of a convergence of the features of Medium A and Medium B, and results in a product with functional multiplicity. The converged medium (Medium C) may have a set of characteristics that are unique enough for it to be classified as a new New Medium B whose presence will disrupt the status quo, and set-off the process again.

While media substitution theory focuses on the extent to which audiences redistribute the allocation of their time when a new player enters the market, the model developed by Adoni and Nossek (2001) focuses on the result of the redistribution of their time. The model also suggests that by understanding the innate functional exchangeability between old and new media, one can ascertain their prospect of survival. It can also serve as a guide to making survival possible.

Applying their model, Nossek and colleagues (2015) argue there is a low degree of interchangeability between reading and consuming other media, because “reading as a cultural practice satisfies a few important personal and social needs” (Nossek et al., 2015, p. 367). In a study on European audiences, they found that displacement of print media by their digital equivalents was not occurring; instead, they identified a “slow synergistic evolution among media types during which sophisticated audiences are aware of their idiosyncratic psychosocial needs and know how to use various media simultaneously to fulfil those needs in the best possible way” (p. 381). They did, however, note that printed newspapers were more vulnerable than printed magazines or books. Their study found that the mean amount of time the general population devoted to reading printed newspapers versus their digital equivalents (online newspapers and online news websites) was very similar. By contrast, they found the mean amount of time that the general population devoted to reading printed books was double the mean amount of time devoted to reading printed newspapers. Nossek and colleagues suggest this is because readers favour specific features of print that go beyond their functional utilitarian value, “such as the smell and touch of paper and various book formats” (p. 380). The qualities of print beyond their functional utilitarian value have been well documented: as a tactile object (Benjamin, 1969); with material substance and permanence (Kitch, 2009); as a signifier of higher social status (Bourdieu, 1984); and, as collectable material artefacts that people keep to enhance identity or remember major or significant events (Kitch, 2009).

Adoni and Nossek’s (2001) model is based on the assertion that the interaction between any two media stems from varying degrees of functional equivalence. By focusing on functional interchangeability, they provide a useful framework for strategic responses by an established media source to the arrival of a potential disruptor, and this is worth exploring in light of the questions being asked of surf print media following the

closure of two giants of American surf culture: *Surfer* and *Surfing* magazines.

As already discussed, media substitution theory focuses on time allocation as a key mechanism of media substitution. The assumption is that time is finite and, consequently, increased time spent on one medium will result in decreased time spent on another. This concept of media use as a zero-sum gain can be challenged. Billings and colleagues (2015) describe how, in the digital age, the existence of multiple platforms has allowed for “simultaneous and intermittent selections to jointly aid the quest of the optimal media gratification” (p. 3). This information was advanced to explain the existence and use of second and third screen viewing of sport, and to suggest that when a particular need is not being adequately fulfilled by one source, audiences will satisfy that need via other sources simultaneously. The ability to utilise multiple media sources simultaneously suggests that more time spent on one medium does not necessarily imply less time will be spent on others. Indeed, simultaneous media use can result in more time being spent on one medium without it impacting the time spent on another. Mobile technology allows users to consume media on smartphones while performing other tasks, such as waiting in line. This demonstrates the case for an expansion of time spent on media, challenging the fundamental premise of media substitution theory, namely, that time spent on media is finite and thus increased use of one medium will result in decreased use of another. For the examination of how consumers make choices between media types, U&G theory has become a popular approach.

## 2.5 USES AND GRATIFICATION THEORY

U&G theory is an influential tradition in media research (Shao, 2008) and it has been a reliable theoretical approach in the initial stages of developing understanding of each new mass communications medium over the last two decades (Lin, 1998; Ruggiero, 2000; McQuail, 2010). U&G theory recognises that individuals actively make media choices for the gratification of their needs, and that they are able to discern the reasons for making such choices (Katz et al., 1973). Thus, it focuses on what audiences do with the media, not on what the media do for audiences. This contrasts with earlier theories of media that focused on how media affects people. Hypodermic needle theory, for example, advances that media affects everyone uniformly and is profoundly, even

dangerously, influential (Bineham, 1988). Limited effects theory heralded a shift away from what media does to people, toward how people engage with media. This perspective suggests that media's influence in people's lives is also influenced by other factors such as influential people or personal beliefs (Ward, 2016).

By examining the motives behind the consumption of a particular form of media, researchers can understand the reasons for that medium's popularity and the roles that the medium fills in society. This approach is most useful when there is a range of media options to choose from, and choice becomes a function of personal, social and psychological needs (Kilian et al., 2012). It is also useful for explaining success and failure in media. If media choice is the result of the interplay between audience expectation (uses) and satisfaction (gratification), then when gratifications obtained exceed gratifications sought, the result is a situation of high audience satisfaction. The reverse can also occur, providing clues to falling and rising audience numbers (McQuail, 2010).

Rubin (2009) advanced five assumptions underpinning U&G theory: 1. People select and use traditional and new media for goal-directed, purposeful reasons. Rubin suggests this is an "instrumental" type of media use; however, he also suggests that motives for media use may not be strategic or conscious, instead, it can be habitual or "ritualised"; 2. People select and use media to fulfil certain needs, which are not always obtained; 3. People's social environment and individual predispositions influence their selection and use of media. Under this assumption Rubin posits that personality can influence the media technologies people select as well as the type of content they consume. He also introduces the idea that media use is dependent on what other options are available at the time, which he calls "functional alternatives"; 4. Media compete with other forms of communication, including other media types, to fulfil a user's needs and wants. Under this assumption, Rubin posits that the user's personality, social situation, and the extent to which the medium satisfies a need are determinants of media selection; and, 5. People are typically more influential than the media, but not always. Here he posits that interpersonal relationships are more influential than media, in fulfilling people's needs. He adds, however, that higher use of one media type results in higher influence, which can create a self-perpetuating cycle where media becomes more influential than people in a user's life.

The categorisation of needs that media are purported to gratify, vary greatly in the literature. In their study of the dominant media sources of the time (television, radio and newspapers) Katz and Blumler (1973) developed a typology of four motives to explain their use. They are explained by Jere & Davis (2011) as: diversion (the need to escape personal problems and the need for emotional release); personal relationship (the need for companionship and help in social interaction); personal identity (the need for self-understanding and reassurance of one's role in society); and surveillance (the need for information about factors that might affect or help one) (p. 5). Stafford et al., (2004) established a breakdown of three subcategories of gratification factors, namely content gratifications, process gratifications and social gratifications. Content gratifications provide appeals such as entertainment and enjoyment; process gratifications provide appeals relating to the use of the medium such as the tactile nature of print or the autonomy of navigating a website; and, social gratifications relate to the way in which consumption enhances or facilitates social interaction. McQuail (1983) advanced four common reasons for media use: information; personal identity; integration and social interaction; and entertainment. Personal identity, and integration and social interaction, are two motives that are especially relevant to youth who are attracted to subcultures for their identity development (Stratton, 1985; Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017), and to surfers, whose inclusion or acceptance into the surfing subculture is largely dependent on their demonstration of insider knowledge (Langseth, 2012; Stranger, 2010). The entertainment motive also has relevance to the surfing subculture, which has been described as a hedonistic lifestyle that offers a diversion from the rigours of everyday life (Humphreys, 1997).

Magazine-specific U&G studies are limited (Payne et al.,1988; Randle, 2003; Webb & Fulton, 2020) but appear to have a common theme. Towers and Harting (1983) explored magazine reading behaviours based on information-focused and entertainment-focused behaviours, advancing three ways in which magazines interact with their 'larger environment', namely surveillance of; diversion from; and interaction with (the larger environment). They found that interaction with the larger environment was the strongest predictor of reading behaviour. Towers (1987) later found consumer magazine readers scored highest for diversion, while news magazines scored higher for surveillance and interaction. Payne et al. (1988) also found diversion to score highest for consumer

magazines. Diversion was described as “relaxing, escaping or passing time with entertainment material” (Payne et al., 1988, p. 910).

Randle (2001) found that magazine users perceive magazines to have superiority in affective (emotional) and diversionary functions when compared to the Internet (p. 127) and concludes by suggesting that, “magazine publishers should emphasize using affective, diversionary content in their printed magazines” (p. 130). Jere and Davis (2011) similarly found that magazines provide superior gratifications on all three of the subcategories of gratification factors identified by Stafford et al., (2004), but content gratifications (for example, Diversion, Social escapism, Surveillance and Self-development) predominate, followed by process gratifications and social gratifications” (p. 21). Bonner (2015) found six specific themes emerged to help explain why Millennials read magazines. They are content, aesthetics, entertainment, escape, habit, and ease of use. And finally, Webb and Fulton (2019) found aesthetics, content, entertainment, escape, collection and habit, and ease of use to be the gratifications that attracted young women to independent women’s magazines.

The themes that emerge from the abovementioned U&G studies share some of the characteristics advanced by McQuail’s (1983) typology comprising information; personal identity; integration and social interaction; and entertainment. Shao (2008), however sums up the various descriptions and motivations succinctly by suggesting that different uses are driven by different motivations, thus providing three interdependent motivations for involvement: “People consume the content for information and entertainment; participate for social interaction and community development; and produce their own content for self-expression and self-actualization” (Shao, 2008, p. 9).

Although U&G researchers continue to conceptually refine their perspective, controversy seems to plague it. Critics believe U&G theory is too narrowly focused on the individual and ignores the possible influence of societal or organisational factors. They also see a lack of synthesis in the various typologies given to needs and gratifications, and the mode for determining them, which has resulted in the relationship between content and gratifications being described as “fuzzy” (Weiss, 1976; Ruggiero, 2000). Another criticism is the inconsistent application of concepts and terminology, which is a consequence of unclear definitions of the theory’s central terms – such as *needs* and *motives*, which are two terms often used interchangeably (Ruggiero, 2000).

Consequently, U&G fell out of favour with some mass communication scholars for several decades, but the emergence of digital media, which has new attributes not commonly associated with traditional media, has revived its significance (Ruggiero, 2000). In more recent times, there have been calls to account for the changing nature of media. Sundar and Limperos (2013) found that as we move from older to newer media, new gratifications emerge which are more nuanced than those that appeared in older studies. To address this, they attempted to integrate and condense the many and varied typologies by “triangulating the traditional emphasis on purely social and psychological needs with technology-driven needs” (p. 521). Accordingly, Sundar and Limperos (2013) proposed their MAIN model, comprising four categories (Modality, Agency, Interactivity, and Navigability) under which gratifications can be recorded. This attempt to standardise U&G typologies for a research environment dominated by computer-mediated technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones and social media platforms fails to accommodate the significant research gap for a standardised U&G typology that can be applied to both old and new media in a contemporary research environment. For example, the dimensions of interactivity and navigability were conceptualised for, and are well-suited to, computer-mediated technologies, but not to printed magazines.

Another research gap, as pointed out by Randle (2003), is the need to investigate what type of subject matter is appropriate for what medium. For example, “is typical affective subject matter ‘more enjoyable’ in the printed magazine format than on the Web where the reader must be at the computer?” (Randle, 2003, p.21). Discovering a match between a content type and a media type would assist a medium to build on its unique strengths, which would be useful if that medium was seeking to differentiate itself in a crowded and competitive media environment. An investigation of this nature would benefit from being attempted in subject-specific media, where the content and reader profile are more stable and homogenous than in general interest media. An investigation of this nature also demonstrates how media substitution theory is grounded in U&G theory.

There are two dichotomous theoretical groups within U&G study: first, those who view content consumers as passive respondents to the active and discriminating output provided by the content producers; and second, those who view content consumers as actively and consciously making use of media for intended purposes (Ruggiero, 2000). The active selection of media is guided by personal choice, which is

dictated by needs, interests and tastes, “many of which seem to have a social or psychological origin” (McQuail, 2010, p. 423). The active audience approach is gaining credibility with researchers of digital media, and it supports the notion that media stakeholders compete against each other for viewers' gratification (Ruggiero, 2000). This is especially relevant to members of the youth who have grown up with digital media technologies integrated into their day-to-day lives (Billings et al., 2015).

“Youth” is a broad term used in the literature. At times, “youth” and names such as “Digital Natives” (Prensky, 2001) or “Millennials” (Howe & Strauss, 2000) are used interchangeably; but while these names were associated with youth at a point in time, they will not remain so. Indeed, Prensky’s oldest Digital Natives and Howe and Strauss’s oldest Millennials are already in their thirties. Being one of the key protagonists in the changing media landscape, it would be prudent, therefore, to establish an age range that defines youth, and understand the cognitive and social developmental changes that occur within the age range of our key research cohort, Gen-Z.

## 2.6 YOUTH

The age that defines youth varies greatly in the literature, but there appears to be consensus with the ages 15-24, as categorised by the United Nations and supported by UNICEF, the World Bank, the UN Development Programme and the International Youth Foundation (Smith & Smith Ellison, 2012). At the time of writing, since members of Gen-Z are currently up to 21-years-of-age, and members of Gen-Y are 22 to 40-years-of-age, the category of ‘youth’ currently comprises a combination of the Gen-Y and Gen-Z cohort. As this research focuses on Gen-Z, who are mostly categorised as youth, it would be useful to understand their social and cognitive context, especially during the significant developmental period of adolescence.

According to Valkenburg and Piotrowski (2017), the age of 15 to 19 is a period of significant developmental change, three features of which are pertinent to this study. First, at this life-stage there is an increase in the activity of neural axons, which use a neurotransmitter that is commonly associated with the pleasure system of the brain called dopamine. Dopamine fuels the desire to embark on new or exciting adventures,



and adolescents tend to develop an interest in high-risk sports, such as action sport. Second, and in terms of social-emotional development, a feature of this life-stage is the desire to gain autonomy, and develop “a healthy self-concept and a positive self-esteem” (p. 86). To achieve this, adolescents learn by observing adults, peers and media idols, and due to advancing executive functionality, they acquire “the cognitive functions needed for effective, efficient, socially adapted behaviour” (p. 92). With this enhanced developmental ability, they become more critical of poorly produced media content and their media preferences become more mature; and, “by the end of adolescence, teens are primarily reading magazines, watching television programs, and buying products meant for adults” (p. 93). The third significant feature of this life-stage is their social development. The need to validate their opinions and behaviour against peer group standards leads to the formation of “cliques ... (which) are usually inspired by subcultures” (p. 89). This makes them, “especially interested in products and media that have a social function and that express their identity, including music, social media, games, books and magazines” (p. 90). These three developmental factors – interest in high-risk sports, the need to develop a healthy self-concept, and the ability to critically reference adults, peers and media – provide further evidence of the value and relevance of surfing and surf media in a study about Gen-Z and media choice.

Studies on the growth of post-youth leisure lifestyles reveal that youthful thinking and behaviours are not limited to the age definition of youth. Wheaton (2019) describes how, “shifting definitions of ageing” (p. 387) have seen groups of older men and women engaging in youthful lifestyles and, in so doing, are “creating new and meaningful identities via immersion in forms of serious leisure associated with youth (p. 391). This is consistent with studies on broader social trends showing that kids aspire to being older sooner (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017), while adults aspire to staying younger longer (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1991). Thus, the concept of youth spans across generational boundaries and the sociological study of generational characteristics becomes a useful theoretical construct from which many studies of youth have been conducted.

## 2.7 THE THEORY OF GENERATIONS

The theory of generations is predicated on establishing a set of characteristics from a cohort's shared life experiences or external events (Bolton et al., 2013; Kupperschmidt, 2000). Each generation shares a common perspective based on their collective experiences, and as a generation matures, it develops unique characteristics such as values, attitudes, frames of reference and traits that are different to previous generations (Radford & Shacklock, 2012). Mannheim (1952), considered to be the progenitor of modern generation theory, postulates that an individual's formative years – the years of youth – are a key period of socialisation, and therefore, “people are crucially influenced by the socio-historical context that predominated in their youth” (Pilcher, 1994, p. 490).

Generational cohorts are classified by birth dates, with each generational term covering a time span of approximately 20 to 25 years (Zopiatas et al., 2012). However, there is an inconsistency around the length of a generational time span (Radford & Shacklock, 2012) because human lives, and indeed societies, unfurl over a continuous passage of time, and so the time interval separating generations is “subjectively experienceable time” (Mannheim, 1952, p. 282). Rosow (1978, as cited in Pilcher, 2012), notes that, “cohorts may be clearest at their centers, but blurred and fuzzy at the edges” (Pilcher, 2012, p. 487), reinforcing the notion that there are no clear generational boundary lines. Notwithstanding inconsistency around date ranges, Nielsen's (2014) complete generational time span classification is shown in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1***Nielsen's (2014) generational time span classification*

Generational Classification	Date Range
Greatest Generation	1901 - 1924
Silent Generation	1925 - 1945
Baby Boomers	1946 - 1964
Generation X	1965 - 1976
Generation Y	1977 - 1995
Generation Z	1995 - Present

There is also multiplicity around generational nomenclature, with the literature revealing a variety of names used to describe the generation studied. The current naming consensus is more reflective of first world environments with many developing and underdeveloped countries using alternative or supplementary names that better describe their characteristics (McCrimdle & Wolfinger, 2014). For example, Russians refer to Generation X as ‘the last Soviet children’ because they were the youngest generation to witness the downfall of communism in their country (McCrimdle & Wolfinger, 2014). The name assigned to Generations X, Y and Z were developed by Canadian author Douglas Copeland. Copeland’s (1991) book was “about a generation that defied labels – ‘just call us X’, he said” (McCrimdle & Wolfinger, 2014, p. 18). Ironically, the label stuck, and also spawned the names of the subsequent two generations.

Critics of generation theory argue that the world is characterised by a diversity of countries, cultures and events and so it is unrealistic to assign the same set of characteristics to a whole generation. Regionally specific cultural and socio-economic events could have a significant impact on the attitudes, values and perceptions of a geographically-specific generational cohort (Bolton et al., 2013). However, McCrimdle and Wolfinger (2014) suggest that significant homogeneity can and does exist among technologically connected, geographically diverse groups, especially in recent times. They explain that globalisation, facilitated by modern communication technologies, has

resulted in the youth of first world countries being shaped by the same events, trends and developments. Consequently, “from Beijing to Bangalore, from Buenos Aires to Brisbane, we have a generation accessing the same websites, watching the same movies, downloading the same songs and being influenced by the same brands” (McCrinkle & Wolfinger, 2014, p. 2). Indeed, while compiling their book about how media attract and affect youth, Valkenburg and Piotrowski (2017) found that Western youth are remarkably homogenous in their media preferences.

It would be remiss not to question whether generation theory is a robust predictive tool that can foresee changing attitudes and behaviour in the broader population. Howe and Strauss (2007) believe it is, suggesting that because generational characteristics are related to the events or circumstances that shaped them at a particular phase of life, it is possible to predict how a given generation will mature, by looking at previous generations born under similar circumstances (Howe & Strauss, 2007). They caution, however, that forecasters can make the flawed assumption that the future is simply a straight-line extrapolation from the recent past, predicting that one cohort will be a more advanced version of the current set, and point out that “social change is nonlinear - but it is [also] not chaotic” (p. 52).

While the focus of this research is on Gen-Z, one of its objectives is to build on the findings by Bonner (2015) and Bonner and Roberts (2017) with respect to the way Gen-Y feel about magazines and the role Gen-Z might have in determining their future. For this reason, both Gen-Y and Gen-Z will be explained using past scholarly literature and current reports.

## 2.8 GENERATION Y

The exact dates used to classify the Gen-Y time span varies from being broadly classified as individuals born in the late 1970s through the 1990s (Bennett et al., 2006), to being more specifically defined as those people born between 1977 and 1997 (Napoli & Ewing, 2000), and those born after 1982 (Strauss & Howe, 1991). This research will use the dates of 1980-1999, defined by the Pew Research Center (2010) and adopted by Bonner and Roberts (2017); Hamlin and Gillespie (2011); and, Prensky (2001). Alternative names used to define this cohort include, Millennials (Bonner & Rogers, 2017; Howe & Strauss, 2000; Ozcelik, 2015); Digital Natives (Prensky, 2001); the Net Generation (Napoli & Ewing, 2000); and, Generation Next (Emma et al., 2014). However, this research will use the widely accepted term, Gen-Y.

Gen-Y has been the subject of much research for several reasons. Arguably the most important of which is that this is the first generation to have spent their entire lives in a digital environment. Therefore, the extent to which this is shaping their attitudes and actions is being closely watched (Bolton et al., 2013; Cheng, 1999). Gen-Y is also believed to be significant in size; almost three times the size of its predecessor Gen-X (Cheng, 1999; Valentine & Powers, 2013), and at least as large as the Baby Boomers (Loda & Coleman, 2010). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) report that 22 to 41-year-olds comprised 14.4% of the Australian population, or 3.7 million people (ABS, 2021). Gen-Y's formative years were spent in a period of prosperity (Valentine & Powers, 2013), but they were politically shaken by 9/11.

A key characteristic of the Gen-Y cohort is that it has been exposed to a vast amount of media, marketing and advertising, and consequently, its members are extraordinarily media savvy and highly sceptical of messages that lack authenticity or integrity (Bennett et al., 2006). When asked what makes their generation unique, a 2014 Nielsen Research report reveals Millennials ranked "technology use" first (24%), followed by "music/pop culture" second (11%). By contrast, Baby Boomers ranked "work ethic" as the most defining characteristic of their generation (Nielsen, 2014). Growing up in an era dominated by technology has left its mark. Technology is an integral part of their lives, and they have become very adept at connecting their two worlds: one real and one virtual (Nielsen, 2014), and this makes it difficult for marketers to reach them effectively (Valentine & Powers, 2013).

Another defining feature of Gen-Y is their connection to action sports (Bennett et al., 2003). This connection gave rise to successful media-driven festivals such as the X-Games, Gravity Games and the Gorge Games, which targeted Gen-Y consumers and achieved significant popularity during the early years of the new millennium (Bennett et al., 2003). A study by Bennett et al. (2006) found that Gen-Y media consumption of action sports ranks highly. Survey respondents ( $n = 2108$ ) were found to consume the X Games and Gravity Games more than the Olympics, the NFL, and other traditional sporting events and most of this was on television (Bennett et al., 2006). Valentine and Powers' (2013) study on the psychographic profile and media behaviour of Gen-Y by gender, also showed that electronic media are the primary media used by this group. In this study, television was only marginally preferred over the Internet, with magazines and radio ranked third and fourth. Interestingly, this study also found that Gen-Y females use more traditional media than Gen-Y males, and, out of the traditional print media forms, only magazines were used to any significant degree (Valentine & Powers, 2013).

Bonner and Roberts (2017) conducted focus groups with Gen-Y to establish reasons why, despite their exposure to digital media, the print format remains sticky. The researchers noted six themes that emerged to explain why the print format was found to be more gratifying than digital: content, aesthetics, entertainment, escape, habit, and ease of use. They also noted a general dissatisfaction with the overwhelming nature of the growing digital environment, and conversely, a sense of reliability and trust in the print format:

They [Gen-Y] also expressed dislike of the magnitude of the growing new media landscape. Participants appreciate the gatekeeping role print magazines take on through the format's offering of more controlled, deliberate content. While print magazines help determine what information is important, digital magazine content often leaves them feeling bombarded (Bonner & Roberts, 2017, p. 7).

Bonner and Roberts (2017) also revealed that 75% of those who consumed magazine content, did so through a combination of the magazine's content platforms (print, website, tablet editions and social media), with the most common combination being print and social media, followed by print and websites. Only two out of 194 participants

obtained magazine content through the magazine's digital channels exclusively. With print being a feature in most of the combinations, Bonner and Roberts suggested that this demonstrates, "print is the critical link to these relationships" (p. 4). Gen-Y's connection to print is supported by Loda and Coleman (2009) who note that Gen-Y reads magazines as frequently as other cohorts; shows more interest in new television programs and new magazines when compared with the general population; and, rates television and magazine advertising more highly than the general population.

As mentioned before, notwithstanding Gen-Y's positive relationship with print, Bonner (2015) found that Gen-Y believes that the generation that comes after them (Gen-Z), will "inevitably dictate the course of the [print magazine] industry through their collective consumer behaviour in the coming years. Therefore, the motivations behind their use of such media are of more importance than ever" (p. ii).

## 2.9 GENERATION Z

The date for the start of Gen-Z varies from those born in 1990 (Tulgan, 2013; Turner, 2015), 1995 (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2014) and 2000 (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). To be consistent with the adopted classification of Gen-Y (1980-2000), this project will use 2000 as the genesis of Gen-Z. This date range has also been adopted by Howe and Strauss (2000), and Hernaus and Pološki Vokic (2014). Also known as The New Silent Generation (Saldik, 2007, as cited in Bassiouni & Hackley, 2014), the New Millennials (Budac, 2014) and the First Mobile Mavens (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015), they are smaller in number than Gen-Y, amassing 2 billion globally and 4.4 million in Australia (ABS, 2021). At 21-years-of-age, the oldest faction of this generation is in tertiary education or has just entered the workforce, and was shaped by the spread of global terrorism, the effects of the 2008 global financial crisis, and smartphone technology (Budac, 2014). More recently, the spread of misinformation and disinformation, most commonly referred to as "fake news," has left this generation very sceptical of organisations and institutions such as the media (Hickey, 2021). And, most recently, members of this generational cohort will have their worldview impacted by Covid-19 pandemic. Meyers (2021), reporting on a 2021 poll by Morning Consult found that Gen-Z has acquired a heightened concern about health and wellness, and that 40% of Gen-Z surveyed were planning to increase their spending on self-care in the

next six months compared to 26% of the general survey population. The same report also related that Gen-Z's 'obsession with technology' may diminish as the pandemic wanes.

Gen-Z is reported to be the most politically and socially engaged generation, as expressed by the involvement in the Black Lives Matter, MeToo, LGBTQ+, and climate change movements such as Extinction Rebellion in 2020 (FutureCast, 2017; Lachlan, 2020). This is due, in large part, to the accessibility of resources and platforms to voice opinions (FutureCast, 2017). Like the generation that precedes them, Gen-Z is also comfortable in a social landscape that spans the physical and digital world (Turner, 2015). Gen-Z has become accustomed to interacting and communicating in a world that is connected at all times, and as a consequence, they are "the most materially endowed, technological saturated, globally connected, formally educated generation our world has ever seen" (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2014, p. 15). Where "Millennials are digital natives; Gen-Zers are digital experts" (Bonner & Roberts, 2017, p. 10). They possess a great ability to process large amounts of information; are more adept at multi-tasking; are self-confident; creative; and innovative (Iorgulescu, 2016). Similarly, where members of Gen-Y were described as digital natives, Gen-Z are described as digital integrators, having not just an intuitive feel for technology, but the ability to seamlessly integrate technology into most aspects of their lives (McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2014).

The 2021 Deloitte Digital Media Trends report (15<sup>th</sup> ed.) states that Gen-Z spend their time online on gaming (26%), streaming music (14%), browsing the internet (12%), engaging on social platforms (11%), and streaming TV shows or movies at home (10%). It also found that while Gen-Z source their news from social media, they do not trust the news they see on those sources. Not surprisingly, Facebook, the world's largest social media platform (Kemp, 2021), and the one associated mostly with low levels of media trust (Chayko, 2021; Karlsen & Aalberg, 2021), is losing support among Gen-Z respondents. A Pew Research report (2018) revealed that use of the ubiquitous social media platform among 13-17-year-old members is as low as 51%. Furthermore, the composition of the three most popular social media platforms (along with their percentage of use) is also changing. In the 2014-2015 Pew Research report the top three platforms were: (1) Facebook (71%); (2) Instagram (52%); and, (3) Snapchat (41%). While in the 2018 report, the top three social media platforms were: (1) YouTube (85%); (2) Instagram (72%); and, (3) Snapchat (69%). The Piper Sandler (2020) survey of



American teen (average age of 16.1-years), reported the top three platforms used were, (1) Snapchat (34%); (2) TikTok (29%); and, (3) Instagram (25%).

In Australia, the annual *Australia Talks* survey, reports the use of Facebook is in decline across all age groups, but especially among 18 to 22-year-olds (down by 25%) and social media consumption as a whole is also in decline (Martino, 2021). In the same report Martino states “I would say that definitely, people are more disillusioned with social media, particularly following Facebook's withdrawal of news from Australia, even though that was for a short period” (Para. 11). These data suggest media change is fast and fluid and in the case of digital media, foreshown by youth. This is supported by Deloitte (2021), which states that when it comes to digital media use, “Generation Z could be viewed as early adopters who are influencing the behaviors of Millennials and Generation X – and possibly younger generations that follow them” (p. 11).

No generation has demonstrated a level of proficiency or comfort with technology at such an early age, and according to Turner (2015), the impact of this, both positive and negative, should not be overlooked. For example, since the arrival of the iPhone in 2007, smartphones have had a profound impact on Gen-Z (Turner, 2015). A study on the extent of smartphone usage among Gen-Z stopped short of it being described as an addiction. Instead, it is described as, “the most important part of their life” (Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015, p. 96). For Gen-Z, the smartphone is an “everything” hub of entertainment (Turner, 2015), and as a result, Gen-Z is, “exposed to media more than any other activity besides sleeping” (Turner, 2015, p. 106). Indeed, due to the omnipresence of media in their everyday lives, “some suggest that one should not view people as simply using media, but rather as if they are living media lives” (Westlund & Bjur, 2014, p. 24). If media are omnipresent in the lives of Gen-Z (Westlund & Bjur, 2014) one is left to wonder how they escape or disconnect.

## 2.10 MEDIA ESCAPISM AND LIMINALITY

The desire to physically disconnect from the routine and responsibility of day-to-day life is not necessarily achievable for everyone. An accessible and common alternative, according to Green and Brock (2000) is to escape the real world and immerse oneself in a fictional one. Green and Brock (2000) used Transportation theory

(Gerrig, 1993) to advance the idea of a mediated form of mental escapism that occurs when immersion in a story facilitates a temporary detachment from mundane reality into an alternative, narrative world. Green et al. (2004) explain the key psychological ingredients of transportation into a narrative world are assumed to take place regardless of modality of communication, but suggest that printed text (books and magazines), “have the advantage of allowing more imaginative investment from the individual as well as being self-paced” (p. 312).

A more complex and more commonly studied area of mental escapism is the topic of liminality, which has a sociological dimension that better suits the complexities of media choice. Liminality is an anthropological term originally used to describe the transitional phase experienced by a person during a rite of passage (van Gennepe, 1961). It is derived from the Latin word *limen*, meaning, “a threshold”. The limen is the state of mind when participants have completed their pre-ritual status but the transition to the status they will hold when the rite is complete, has not yet begun (Turner, 1967).

Turner (1967, 1969, 1977, 1982) applied van Gennepe’s work to a post-modern context where play and leisure are recognised as separate and distinct aspects of life. Turner’s focus was on the liminal stage, the state of flux “betwixt-and-between” the old and the new (Turner, 1977, p. 33), and his ideas have since been applied across the social sciences to sport events (Duignan et al., 2020; Tumbat & Belk, 2011), business (Hackley et. al, 2021), tourism and leisure (Taheri et.al, 2016), and many other fields of study such as advertising and watching movies.

In its modern interpretation, the liminal state is the threshold separating one state from another; a period of transformation when individuals are divorced from the norms, structures, and traditions of their everyday lives (McDonnell, 2015), and the chance to become someone completely new beckons. Turner (1967) identifies three distinct stages to the liminal process: separation, transition and incorporation. Separation occurs when the person begins to withdraw from their former role. The liminal, or transition period, is the in-between phase; when the person has ended one phase but still has not reached the next. Finally, the incorporation phase completes the transformation.

A liminal state is different to a liminoid state (Turner, 1982). Liminoid means liminal-like (Duignan et al., 2020), so, while both refer to the threshold between an old

and new identity, the liminoid experience is entered into voluntarily, engaged with repeatedly and playfully, has no formal ritualistic end point, and is impermanent (Turner, 1982).

Duignan et al. (2020) state that, “liminoidal phenomena may be collective but are usually individual experiences that can have a collective or ‘mass’ effect” ... and are more associated with leisure” (pp. 3-4). One of the mass effects is *communitas*, which emanates from the sharing of liminal states (Turner, 1982), and is described as the state of social relations that emerges when, in liminoid experiences, formal societal structures, such as age, status and roles, fall away and result in a utopian camaraderie or kinship (Tumbat & Belk, 2010). *Communitas* is not the same as solidarity or community because it is a temporary and transient sense of intense group identification that emerges from a collective experience that allows individuals to step out of their everyday structured lives. The result of this liminal camaraderie is described as a positive and liberating ‘existential’ experience (Turner, 1969), the effect of which may last beyond the temporary nature of the experience (Celsi, Randall & Thomas, 1993). Turner states, “exposure to, or immersion in, *communitas* seems to be an indispensable human social requirement. People have a real need . . . to do-off the masks, cloaks, apparel, and insignia of status from time to time” (1974, p. 243 as cited in Tumbat & Belk, 2010, p. 56).

Consumer research on the liminoid experience has been applied to many consumption-related contexts such as nightclubbing (Taheri et al., 2016), adolescent identity development (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2016), social capital in business (Ryan, 2013); the attraction of adventure sports (Celsi, et al., 1993; Tumbat & Belk, 2010), and advertising (Hackley et al., 2021), but not, as yet, to surf magazine consumption. Hackley et al. (2021) state that, “advertising is a key site for the marketization of liminoid experience” (p. 272). They view advertising as marketing communication that seeks to implicitly or explicitly attach luminous qualities to a brand (p. 270). Surfwear giant Billabong’s well-known brand by-line, “Only a Surfer Knows the Feeling”, is an example of this. It offers aspirational consumers the possibility of entry into a world of exclusive sensory experience and an exciting new identity. Hackley et al. (2021) define this sense of the possibility of personal transformation as having, “liminoid advertising appeal” (p. 271) and theorise that, “brands have found liminoid advertising and

branding appeals to be powerfully motivating for consumers” (p. 278). In their study, liminality is applied as an experience occurring at the individual level.

Through their study of skydiving, Celsi et al. (1993) considered how the appeal of liminoid experiences can be applied on a collective level, to adventure sports. They found three main motivations for high-risk leisure participation: *communitas*, *flow*, and *phatic communion*. As discussed, *communitas* is, “a shared ritualistic experience that transcends ordinary camaraderie” (Celsi et al., 1993, p. 12). Meanwhile, “*flow*” refers to a state of peak performance that results from intense immersion where one moment flows into the next without “conscious intervention” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1974, p. 58). *Phatic communion* is an attraction that comes from the use and understanding of the technical language describing the shared experiences of high-risk leisure consumers (Malinowski, 1923). “Comprehension of this language is held in high esteem and is a sign of cultural membership” (Celsi et al., 1993, p. 13).

While the desire to temporarily engage in experiences that facilitate lifestyle and identity experimentation is appealing, exciting and liberating to many, Hackley et al. (2021) warns that repeated consumption of liminoid experiences can bring social and personal costs. A constant cycle of acquiring and exchanging symbolic identities leaves one to question whether, “a consumer culture that powerfully promotes liminoid products, brands, services and experiences as liberatory influences for fun, fantasy and identity experimentation, (might result in) a permanent state of liminoid chaos and flux” (p. 278). They proceed to explain that,

consumers who (repeatedly) engage with branded consumption for purposes of identity experimentation and transformation are in effect consuming an indeterminate identity, one that neither disappoints, because it can always be changed, and never quite fulfils, because it is never formally acknowledged (p. 275).

To understand this more fully a more detailed examination into the concept of personal and identity and its close ties with culture will now be conducted.

## 2.11 SOCIAL IDENTITY

Jere and Davis (2012) describe the magazine *business logic* as using journalistic content to segment and target consumers and, in turn, attract advertising revenue. Napoli (2003) explains that because they sell audiences to advertisers, media firms essentially deal in human attention. The attention magazines command can be better understood when consideration is given to the concept and dynamics of individual and social identity. Kirsh (2010) defines individual identity as the traits and attributes used to describe the self, and social identity as the self-assigned social group to which one belongs. Thus, individual identity answers the question “Who am I?” and social identity answers the question “Where do I fit in?” (p. 21).

Erikson’s (1950) seminal theory of psychosocial development posits that individual and social identity formation occurs during adolescence in the Identity versus Role Confusion life stage. When this confusion is resolved, the individual is said to have obtained his or her sense of uniqueness and affiliation (Browning, 2008). As previously stated, Mannheim’s (1952) seminal work on generation theory predicts that attitudes, values and characteristics of a generational cohort are influenced most compellingly during events that occur around the age of youth. Although the exact age is not stated in both theories, the age range correlates roughly with the age range of the Gen-Z segment of this study (i.e., 15-21 years-of-age). Thus, the role of identity is especially apposite to the target audience of this study. Indeed, Hull (1976) asserts that the surfing subculture, “provides for the intense identity needs of adolescents as well as the identity needs of those who feel that their primary role in the community is not sufficient or rewarding enough” (p. 129).

More recent studies recognise identity formation as an active and on-going affair. Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998) postulate a person’s identity is something that is actively created and constantly validated. Thompson (1995) describes this construction of the self as a symbolic *project*, during which a consumer seeks out symbolic *materials*, which are weaved into “a coherent account of who he or she is, a narrative of self-identity” (p. 120). Elliott and Wattanasuwan proceed to conclude that, “all voluntary consumption carries, either consciously or unconsciously, symbolic meanings; if the consumer has choices to consume, he or she will consume things that hold particular symbolic meanings” (p. 134). Consumption choices, therefore, are based not

only on a product's utility but also on the contribution their symbolic meanings make to the construction of their identity (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998).

Significantly for this research, Markus and Nurius (1986) made the connection between identity construction and media consumption. They suggest that an individual can construct any number of identities based on their socio-cultural context and "the models, images and symbols provided by the media and by the individual's immediate social experiences" (p. 954). Thompson (1995) built on this work by explaining that symbolic resources for the construction of self can be obtained through lived and/or mediated experiences, with mediated experiences resulting from mass-communication culture and the consumption of media products. Kirsh (2010) advances that, "multiple studies have shown that media use can influence identity formation in youth, especially during adolescence" (p. 21).

Chayko (2021) explained the link between media and the process of socialisation. Socialisation is described as a lifelong process through which individuals discover and adopt the values and social standards of a social group (Genner and Süss, 2017). Drawing on the ideas of eminent sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934/2009), Chayko explained that individuals 'try on' aspects of 'specific' others, such as friends or role models, and, 'generalised' others, such as groups or teams, "who represent a type of person or a way of life" (p. 128). This process starts at childhood when children play games that involve pretending they are other people and continues throughout life. These specific and generalised others are encountered in social situations and the media. Those individuals, groups and institutions that have a strong influence on identity development are called 'agents of socialisation' (Chayko, 2021). Genner and Süss (2017) argue that, "Media are considered a powerful agent of socialization, responsible for shaping an individual's socialization process" (p. 1).

Group or social identity is explained by Tajfel (1978) in social identity theory, which postulates that identity can be influenced by group affiliations, which when emotionally embraced, become a source of individual pride and self-esteem. Tajfel advances a three-stage mental process that starts with our natural tendency to categorise our social environment in order to make sense of it. This first stage is social categorisation, which can be based on any construct including family, social class, sporting code, income category, or geography. Social categorisation leads to social

identification, which occurs when a person adopts the identity of the group they consider themselves as belonging to. The final stage is social comparison, during which a person actively distinguishes between people like themselves (the in-group) and people not like themselves (the out group). The process of group identity is thus complete when an individual assumes the attitudes, values and standards of the group and uses this as a basis on which to discriminate.

Many studies have examined the links between sport and group identity. Anderson and Stone (1981) identified that sport can be a powerful catalyst for group bonding. Albert and Whetten (1985) showed how the relationship with a sports team can extend beyond the core collective of players and coaches to the team's links to the city or state they represent, or other links such as economic status, ethnicity, gender, or politics. Thus, an affiliation with a sport or a sporting team includes a sense of belonging and an attachment to a larger social structure (Wann & Branscombe, 1991). Green and Chalip (1998) discuss how participation in a sport can be used as a platform for the "expression and exhibition of identity" (p. 282). They argue that participation in sport facilitates the socialisation into that sport's subculture, allowing participants to learn and adopt the attitudes, outlooks, and values common to the sport, which then become part of their identity. Green and Chalip (1998) also describe how sport events allow participants to "parade" their identity and suggest that sport events therefore should not just be a platform to endorse performance, but the subculture as well. They found that, "In the case of a (women's) football tournament, women seek more than a chance to play football; they seek an extended occasion and an encapsulated space to be football players" (p. 285).

According to Donnelly and Young (1988), identity construction in sport subcultures is a deliberate act involving four stages: presocialisation, selection and recruitment, socialisation, and finally, acceptance or ostracism. The first presocialisation stage is described as "all of the information an individual acquires about a specific subculture prior to the initial participation in the subculture" (p. 224). Selection and recruitment focusses on the manner in which the individual makes direct contact with the subculture, and socialisation is the stage where the member learns the characteristics of the subculture such as values, perspectives as well as identifications such as roles and symbols which are incorporated into the member's new concept of self. While the first three stages (presocialisation, selection and recruitment, and socialisation) result in

identity formation, the acceptance/ostracism stage is confirmation of that identity by established members of the subculture, or conversely, rejection of that identity. Donnelly and Young (1988) suggest that because identities and subcultures are constantly evolving, socialization is an ongoing process, and acceptance/ostracism is likely to be a repeated process. Subcultural membership, therefore, requires constant maintenance and vigilance, and the consumption of specialist media is claimed to be key to the learning of subcultural values by several researchers (Borden, 2003; Torton, 2005). Indeed, Langseth (2012) asserts the media-imparted images of surfing that draw people to the sport can be attributed to the presocialisation stage, “where the values of surfing are distributed through surf magazines and videos” (p. 12).

The extent to which surfing’s cultural values and symbolic meanings appeal to the general public has a causal effect on the success of the businesses that comprise the surf industry. This is because the surfing subculture, provides for the intense identity needs of adolescents as well as those who feel that their primary role in the community is not sufficient or rewarding enough (Hull, 1976). This is supported by Ford and Brown (2005) who observed surfer-founded businesses like Billabong, Rip Curl and Quiksilver have developed “lucrative niche markets” (p. 56) by successfully articulating surfing’s cultural “values and symbolisms ... to the wider non-surfing society” (p. 57). So, how effectively the surfing subculture is articulated and disseminated is worthy of consideration.

Exactly what constitutes surf culture is widely discussed in the literature. Taylor (2007) describes surf culture as having an anti-bourgeois ethos and counter cultural roots, which Stranger (2010) contends, has been defiled or diluted by the commodification of surf culture through the marketing of branded functional and lifestyle products. Stranger (2010) explains however, that despite its commodification, surf culture has the quality of being grounded in something real – the act of riding waves - which he describes as the “pursuit of an ecstatic communion with nature” (p. 118). He argues the act of riding the ocean’s waves is the foundational layer that underpins the surf industry’s commercialisation of the subculture (Stranger, 2010). This commercial layer is supported by a symbolic layer created by what Roberts and Ponting (2020) refer to as, “subcultural, specialist media” (p. 230). They argue therefore, that surf culture is a “socially constructed and socially contested phenomenon” enabled in part by “surfing-subcultural media” (Roberts & Ponting, 2020, p. 234).



The dynamics of personal and subcultural group identity feature prominently in surfing cultural studies. In an analysis of scholarly efforts to define a surfer, Holt (2012) concluded that surfers are: individuals with diverse attitudes to established societal standards; who are united by the extraordinary nature of their wave riding practice; enjoy a sense of belonging to their culture, prefer to affiliate with fellow surfers in their social setting; and, “recognise themselves foremost as surfers, not as teachers or plumbers, not as Australians or Hawaiians” (Holt, 2012, p. 8).

Understanding psychological and sociological drivers of personal identity and the deep and often enduring connections that form in group identities allows us to understand the power of identity to drive behaviour and consumption. Moreover, considering that the forces driving identity are most compelling during adolescence and the age of youth, McQuail’s (2010) inclusion of identity in his typology of motives for media use is both appropriate and particularly relevant to this study. Two motives not included in McQuail’s (2010) typology of motives for media use, however, are trust and habit. These are discussed next.

## 2.12 TRUST AND CREDIBILITY IN MEDIA

Oxford Dictionaries (2016) named “post-truth” as the word of the year in 2016, defining it as an adjective “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” (Oxford Languages, 2016). Lynch (2017) claims the post-truth era is a term that represents “a despondent complaint about the widespread, blatant, unapologetic, and often-successful deceptiveness promoted by powerful agents” (p. 594). The post-truth idiom dates back nearly a quarter of a century, to 1992 with the Iran-contra scandal in the USA, re-emerged several times during the Reagan and Bush presidencies, and experienced a strong revival during the Trump presidency and Brexit campaigns (Lynch, 2017). With the recent attention given to the notion of “fake news” and the requisite effort to distinguish the real and the fake, many are concerned that we are entering a post-truth era (Chayko, 2021; Sismondo, 2017). Fake news is defined as content that has been deliberately produced “to spread misinformation and lies; essentially, the story is an intentional hoax” (Chayko, 2021, p. 92).

Since their 2017 report, The Edelman Trust Barometer, an annual global online survey involving 33,000 respondents across 28 countries, has warned of the impact of fake news, hate speech, and the misuse of personal data. Since 2017, media has ranked the lowest in trust out of all the four institutions measured. The other three institutions are government, business, and non-government organisations (NGOs). Edelman describes the rise and spread of fake news as, “an epidemic of misinformation” (2021, line 6), and “this is the existential challenge of our times” (2018, p. 3), resulting in, “a new era of information bankruptcy and a trust ecosystem unable to confront it” (2021, line 8-9). The declaration of information bankruptcy (Edelman, 2021) refers to the failure of media and government, “the usual sources of quality information in a crisis, to deliver quality information during the COVID-19 pandemic” (2021, line 8-9). Edelman describes the combination of an epidemic of misinformation and “politics supplanting science” (line 18) as a “potent brew” (line 6) that has resulted in business being the only institution rated both competent and ethical. Australia fared well compared to other countries in the Edelman (2021) global survey showing an overall increase in trust across all four institutions. However, the trust ranking of those institutions remains the same, that is, (from highest to lowest) business, government, NGOs and media. Notwithstanding media’s global trust ranking being at an all-time low in 2021, 53% of the 33,000 people surveyed declared they trust traditional media when looking for general news and information, while only 35% declared they trust social media (Edelman, 2021). This is supported by a 2018 report on fake news and disinformation conducted by Eurobarometer, which found 83% of respondents said that fake news represents a danger to democracy. The survey also emphasised the importance of what are perceived as quality media: respondents perceive traditional media as the most trusted source of news (radio 70%, TV 66%, print 63%). Online sources of news and video hosting websites were the least trusted sources of news, with trust rates of 26% and 27%, respectively.

Edelman concludes the 2021 report stating; “Media must restore its position as the even-handed arbiter of truth, focused on news, not opinion” (2021, line 70-71). The representation of opinion as truth enables echo chambers where people believe ideas that agree with theirs and close their minds to ideas that do not. “Social media, Facebook and Twitter in particular, are increasingly called out for encouraging the development of echo chambers on their platforms” (Chayko, 2021, p. 93). Indeed,

Chayko (2021) points out that building trust and credibility in media is important to a stable and functional society, stating:

Facts matter. They are the cornerstone of free, civil debate and essential for intelligent decision-making on the individual, communal, and societal levels. It is a problem threatening freedom and democracy when it is difficult, if not impossible, to get to the bottom of whether certain information is factual or not (p. 93).

Tsfati and Cappella (2005), argue that trust and credibility are also fundamental to the business prospects of a media organisation. Trust in news media influences how people choose to access their news. If they do not trust the medium, they are less influenced by it and will find alternative sources (Tsfati & Ariely, 2014), and this has obvious implications for the business outcomes of the medium. Kalsnes and Krumsvik (2019), advance that a medium is an “experience good” (p. 297) and suggest that one can only establish its quality and value by using it; consequently, readers tend to be favourably predisposed to media they use. Against this backdrop, it is worth pointing out that Strömbäck, et al. (2020) claim accessibility bias can be a factor that is worthy of consideration in media trust research.

Strömbäck, et al. (2020) assert that in the current media environment where there is no shortage of choice, “the issue of media trust and its impact on people’s media use has taken on new importance” (p. 139). Consequently, trust and credibility in media has been a popular area of research interest (Karsen & Aalberg, 2021). Strömbäck, et al. (2020) explains that research on media credibility dates back to 1953 when Hovland et al. made the distinction between source credibility and medium credibility. They add that Hovland et al. (1953) describe source credibility as arising from a combination of expertise and trustworthiness, and found that for medium credibility, “the impact of a message probably depends also upon the particular publication or channel through which it is transmitted” (p. 19 in Strömbäck, et al., 2020, p. 141). Recent studies of media trust typically fall into three broad categories: Trust in the content; trust the actors working in the industry such as journalists and editors; and, trust in the medium such as magazines, newspapers or websites (Kalsnes & Krumsvik, 2019). Alternatively, Karsen and Allberg (2021) describe the three categories as: message credibility; source credibility; and media credibility. They recommend, however, that because social media

are so active in the dissemination of news, that two new categories should be added, namely, intermediary platform credibility (e.g. Facebook), and intermediary sender credibility (e.g. the individual actively sharing the news story).

An interesting sub-plot in the print versus digital debate was highlighted by Strömbäck, et al. (2020) when discussing the relationship between mainstream and non-mainstream media sources in the current high-choice news media environment. They claimed that many of the newer news media competitors are non-mainstream sources who present the traditional news media as being untrustworthy. Without directly naming them as non-mainstream, they observe that digital and social media have provided people the opportunity to bypass traditional (mainstream) media sources and use these channels for attacks on traditional news media, adding, ironically, that, “there is probably more so-called ‘fake news’, disinformation and misinformation circulating in the public arena than ever” (Strömbäck, et al. 2020, p. 140). Tsfaty and Cappella (2005) similarly, observed a link between media scepticism and non-mainstream media use. They found a positive association between media scepticism and non-mainstream media use and a negative association between media scepticism and mainstream media use. Tsfaty and Capella defined non-mainstream media as political talk back radio and the Internet. In a secondary data analysis of a 26-country survey between 2016-2019, Park et al. (2020) found that the use of social media for news is “closely linked to an increase in news mistrust” (p. 83). More recently, Karlsen and Aalberg (2021) reported that news stories distributed through Facebook were less credible than when presented on the original news site, and assert that this finding is reassuring because it demonstrates people are less trustful of news they consume through social media. They caution, however, that social media news-sharing can contribute to a decrease in trust in news over the longer term.

Strömbäck, et al. (2020) delve deeply into the notion of media trust pointing out a variety of complex and unresolved issues including: the blurred distinction between media trust and media credibility; how trust should be measured; whether media refers to media formats, media brands, journalists or media content; and similarly, whether media refers to organisations or the institution as a whole. Strömbäck and colleagues proposed that future researchers should clearly state their positions in relation to these issues; they then advanced a framework for conceptualising media trust at different levels of analysis. This framework provides a level of detail that is beyond the scope of

this research project, however, in the spirit of Strömbäck and his colleagues' call for dimensional transparency, media trust is hereinafter treated as, (1) a single variable; (2) relating to credibility of or trust in a medium; (3) comparing printed magazines with television, social media and websites; and, (4) through the perspective of U&G theory.

As already stated, U&G theory proposes that media choice is a conscious exercise based on the fulfilment of certain needs. In this context, Strömbäck, et al. (2020) advance that media trust might matter less compared to when, for example, media are used for informational and surveillance purposes. Indeed, Rubin (2009) and Ruggiero (2000) suggest that in some cases, media use can be ritualised and habitual. This necessitates some exploration into theory of habit.

### 2.13 HABIT

Kirsh (2010) describes media habit as having unconscious desires to engage with media and feelings of relief or comfort when doing so. Studies about media habit have appeared only intermittently in scholarly research because media scholarship tends to favour media choice as a conscious, rather than unconscious process (LaRose, 2010). While U&G theory considers media choice as a conscious process, habit has not been ignored in U&G scholarship. Habit-related motives have been, “scattered along other gratification dimensions” as far back as Greenberg (1974) (LaRose, 2010, p. 207). Indeed, Kirsh (2010) claims the most frequently cited uses and gratifications include arousal, companionship, escape, habit, learning, passing time, and relaxation. In recent years, however, habit has emerged more frequently in media studies concerning the pervasive use of the Internet, smartphones, and social media, especially among youth where its use is so prolific (Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017).

Rubin (2009) advanced habit as a component of one of his five assumptions underpinning U&G theory. He proposed that people select and use media for goal-directed and purposeful reasons (assumption #1) but qualifies this by adding that media selection is not always conscious, instead, it can be habitual or ritualised. Flavian and Guerra (2006) found that entertainment, habit and relaxation were motives for reading printed newspapers rather than online alternatives, while van der Wurff (2011) found that habit and accessibility were predictors of news media use among students. And, as

already stated, Bonner (2015) found habit to be one of the six motives explaining why Millennials read magazines.

Krishen et al. (2016) used the psychological concepts of the power law of practice and cognitive lock-in to explain why results of their study found that, despite prolific ownership of digital devices, consumers do not read magazines in a digital format. In this context, the power law of practice theorises that the repetitive practice of consuming hedonic content via the print medium fosters a perception of efficiency and familiarity, and ultimately, value in the medium. Cognitive lock-in occurs when the consumer is reticent to digress from that which he or she has become accustomed or practised, even though a potentially better alternative may exist (Krishen et al. 2016).

Murray and Bellman (2011) posit that inevitably, with the continued shift from traditional to digital products and services, consumers will feel more comfortable with digital formats, and as they gain in efficiency and familiarity, they will see greater value in the new medium. These two studies could explain why Bonner (2015) found that Gen-Y is still attached to print, and how Gen-Z could become decoupled from print and locked-in to habitual connections with digital formats. This is supported by Kilian et al., (2012) who state that, “changes in media use often occur more slowly than technological developments because usage patterns are partly habitual and, therefore, often sticky” (p. 114).

If the transition to digital media formats is an inevitable consequence of familiarity with digital media use, it will not necessarily occur synchronously (Bennett et al., 2008). Bennett et al. state that the literature is consistent with claims that digital natives possess sophisticated knowledge of and skills with information technologies, but suggest this is not a universal phenomenon. They conclude that, “[there is] a significant proportion of young people who do not have the levels of access or technology skills predicted by proponents of the digital native idea” (p. 7). Thus, the notion of a synchronous and wholesale generational change could be more *moral panic* than fact (Bennett et al., 2008). While McQuail does not include habit in his (2010) typology of motives, it has become an increasingly relevant concept in media scholarship, and is considered an important inclusion in the present study.

## 2.14 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The digital versus print narrative is inescapable in any analysis of today's rapidly evolving media ecosystem (Bonner & Roberts, 2017). There is a high level of interest in this area of research, but a paucity of recent scholarly work in relation to sport media, particularly magazines. The aim of this research is to develop an understanding of the media consumption habits of Gen-Z in order to advance ways in which the printed surf magazine can achieve functional differentiation against its digital disruptors, and thereby, avoid displacement. The study utilises three theoretical perspectives, namely: generation theory, U&G theory, and media substitution theory.

Generation theory presents an opportunity to conduct inquiry into an emergent demographic cohort whose lifelong characteristics are in the process of being formed (Howe & Strauss, 2007; Mannheim, 1952; Pilcher, 1994). This is useful because, as the sociology of generations proposes, "people in one generation are largely assumed to develop and maintain similar media use" (Westlund & Bjur, 2015, p. 21). U&G theory provides a methodological framework upon which Gen-Z media choice can be understood, with McQuail (1984) providing the foundation upon which a typology of motives can be tested. By taking the perspective of the media consumer as an active pursuer of optimal media selections, U&G theory exposes the psychosocial motives behind media choice. Media substitution theory considers how the media landscape is impacted by new patterns of media consumption that result from the arrival of a new media disruptor, and Nossek et al. (2015) provide the conceptual model upon which the outcomes of convergence, Co-existence and displacement can be mapped. Through the lens of these three theoretical perspectives, the following three research questions will be investigated:

**Research Question 1a:** *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1b:** *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1c:** *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise these media sources?*

**Research Question 2:** *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 3:** *How can printed surf magazines achieve functional differentiation in the digital age?*

The above research questions are sequential in nature, and as such, the research project culminates in Research Question 3.

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this research will: (1) answer the call by Bonner and Roberts (2017) for further research exploring the crucial role Gen-Z could have in determining the future of print magazines in this digital age; (2) make a positive empirical contribution to theory by testing an expanded version of McQuail's (1983) typology of media use; (3) advancing media substitution theory by identifying ways surf magazines might achieve functional differentiation and 'Co-existence', one of three possible outcomes advanced by Adoni and Nossek (2001); and finally (4) provide practical guidance for industry practitioners to identify ways their magazines might survive and thrive in this digital age. Practical applications could also be of value to sport organisations and businesses seeking to understand ways to connect with Gen-Z consumers.

## 2.15 CHAPTER TWO CONCLUSION

In this chapter, evidence from the literature about the declining popularity of print magazines has been presented, and the precarious nature of their future discussed. The literature review then explored the three theoretical approaches of media substitution theory, uses and gratifications theory, and generation theory. The concepts of liminality and liminoid experiences were then examined at individual and group level, as was the literature on identity at individual and group level. Finally, the relevance of media trust and media habit was explained before concluding with the research questions. The following chapter discusses the proposed research methods.



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## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

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### 3.1 CHAPTER THREE INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the overarching research paradigm and the methods used to address the research questions. The first section discusses the epistemology guiding the choice of a two-phased mixed methods research approach. Following this, the chapter discusses research design, participant selection, and data analysis for each of the two research phases. The chapter concludes with an examination of issues relating to trustworthiness, including the researcher's positionality, validity and reliability of the study, as well as ethical considerations.

### 3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

This section discusses the overarching philosophical principles within which social researchers conduct studies and arrive at an epistemological lens through which the research questions have been addressed, and ultimately justifies the research method chosen for this study.

There are three broad epistemological frameworks representing different ways to observe, measure and understand social reality (Neuman, 1997). These frameworks or theoretical perspectives are also known as paradigms (Weerakkody, 2015; Skinner et al., 2015). A paradigm is a point of view that is neither true nor false, but which gives one an understanding of the logic and assumptions on which the argument is based (Weerakkody, 2015; Neuman, 1997). The three broad epistemological paradigms are positivism, interpretivism and critical theory, but most ongoing social research is based on the first two (Neuman, 1997). The positivist paradigm is linked to the epistemology of objectivism, which seeks to obtain knowledge by discovery using rigorous and exact measures, with the researcher a detached actor in the process (Creswell, 1994). Quantitative research is aligned with positivism because it is objectively gathered, represented and quantified (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Skinner et al., 2015).

The interpretivist paradigm is linked to the epistemology of constructivism, which contends that social life is based on social interactions and thus meaning is discovered through social action, not just the external or observable behaviour of people (Skinner et al., 2015). Qualitative research methods align with interpretivism because the interpretive researcher understands that people may not always experience social or physical reality in the same way, and therefore, the social context of any observed social

action should be considered (Neuman, 1997). While some positivist researchers find the interpretive approach useful in exploratory research, few positivists consider it to be scientific (Neuman, 1997). Critics of the positivist paradigm argue that it fails to account for the complexity of the unobservable variables of the human experience. This led to the emergence of postpositivism, which concedes that truth is, “fallibilistically determined because humans are involved” (Jennings, 2005, p. 213).

A particular brand of postpositivism that is widely used in business (Jennings, 2005) and sport-media research (Billings & Eastman, 2003) is critical realism. Critical realism emerged from the postpositivist perspective and positions knowledge as a product of historical and social contexts, and so truth is contextual and subject to change over time. In the fluid and evolving media environment, the critical realism paradigm has resonance because the data that emerge from this research project are likely to be inextricably tied to the times in which they were extracted. Opponents of critical realist studies point to the potential for researcher bias to influence the interpretation of meaning and context. This can, however, be controlled by ensuring that the method, data collection, and analysis are free of prejudice (Scott, 2011).

For most of the late twentieth century, sport research was dominated by positivist quantitative approaches, however, acknowledgment of the need to understand underlying experiences, feelings and emotions saw an increase in interpretivist qualitative research during the 1980s (Gratton & Jones, 2008; Skinner et al., 2015). It is important to point out, however, that while quantitative and qualitative methods emerge from epistemological paradigms, the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research occurs at the methods level and not at the epistemological level (Weerakkody, 2015).

### 3.2.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Three potential methods of research are available to researchers: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Horn, 2011). In quantitative research, variables are directly measurable and converted into a numerical form before being statistically analysed (Gratton & Jones, 2008). Surveys and content analyses are commonly used quantitative tools in media and communication studies (Weerakkody, 2015), and

structured interviews or questionnaires are common in sport management studies (Skinner et al., 2015). Quantitative designs can also be used in longitudinal studies to examine the development of ideas and trends over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Quantitative research is generally associated with a deductive process such as testing or confirming theories or to make predictions and comparisons as impartially as possible (Skinner et al., 2015).

Qualitative research methods aim to capture data that are not quantifiable. Qualitative researchers use non-numerical data to capture such variables as feelings, thoughts, and experiences because the frequency of a response is not always the most enlightening datum (Gratton & Jones, 2008). Qualitative methods are commonly used when the researcher is interested in understanding, exploring and discovering (Skinner et al., 2015) or when existing theories do not necessarily apply to the study. Qualitative methods are thus, generally associated with an inductive process such as building theory or finding explanations (Skinner et al., 2015). Some examples of qualitative data sources include texts, opinions, in-depth interviews, focus groups and field studies (Weerakkody, 2015).

While early sport research was dominated by quantitative research designs, and later, qualitative approaches found favour, it was at the start of the twenty-first century with the publication of the *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research* by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1993), that a third alternative gained legitimacy (Skinner et al., 2015). Mixed methods research adopts procedures from both qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches (Skinner et al., 2015) and found favour in contemporary research practice because it minimises the limitations of both approaches when used in isolation and provides a more complete understanding of the problem being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Some argue that mixing the two is fundamentally incorrect because they each rely on differing epistemological assumptions, but others acknowledge that the final product can be strengthened by the contributions of both approaches. According to Skinner et al. (2015), the strength of this approach lies in the combined advantages of the two data sources whereby quantitative data provides for generalisability and qualitative data offers context. Yin (2011) argues a mixed method study should, however, retain its identity as a single study that reflects “an integrated relationship between the quantitative and qualitative components”, and both sets of data, “should be analyzed and interpreted together before arriving at a

study's main conclusions (Yin, 2011, p. 291). When faced with the choice of three methodological approaches under the epistemological framework of critical realism, consideration ought to be given to Yin (2011) who argues that the focus of any social science study should be on the "appropriate matching of methods to the research questions being examined" (p. 287).

### 3.2.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR THIS STUDY

The purpose of this research project is to answer research questions that together allow the researcher to investigate what functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors. The research questions aim to establish, (a) what the content needs of Gen-Z surfers are; (b) what media sources they use to satisfy these needs; and, (c) what motivates them to use those sources. These lines of inquiry have a scaffolding characteristic with each question informing its successor, adding layers of understanding along the way. The interconnected and multilayered nature of the research aims, therefore, requires careful selection of the appropriate research method.

The first research question (RQ 1a), which seeks to establish the research group's content needs, can be answered objectively, and requires no explanation. This research question views reality as being objective, value-free and unbiased, which is consistent with the assumptions of the traditional, positivist, quantitative paradigm where the researcher is detached from the data collection process (Creswell, 1994). The next four research questions (RQs 1b, 1c, 2 and 3), which seek to establish where the research group accesses this content, and why, are more nuanced, as media source choice is influenced by a variety of personal factors that are not easily generalisable. These research questions view reality as subjective and value-laden which is consistent with the assumptions of the interpretivist, qualitative paradigm where the researcher is seen as inextricably involved in the data collection process (Creswell, 1994). Since both quantitative and qualitative research methods are necessary, a mixed methods research design was considered appropriate.

Although many mixed method designs exist, Creswell and Creswell (2018) developed three primary mixed method designs commonly used in the health and social science fields. The first is the *convergent design*, which involves the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, analysing them separately, and then comparing the

results to see if the findings are congruent. The second is the *explanatory sequential design*, which involves an initial phase of quantitative data collection and analysis followed by a qualitative phase to gain deeper understanding of the findings from the quantitative phase. The third design is a three-phased *exploratory sequential design* whereby a qualitative procedure is undertaken in order to identify the features of a subsequent quantitative design, which is then administered to a sample of the population for data collection and analysis. One of the unique benefits of mixed method design is methodological triangulation, which enables the researcher to utilise both data sources to confirm the existence of a phenomenon and interpret it from multiple perspectives, thus strengthening the validity of the findings (Skinner et al., 2015; Weerakkody, 2015; Yin, 2011).

### 3.2.3 OTHER METHODS CONSIDERED

An analysis was conducted on a range of studies in the sport media field that had similarities to this study. Five of which are discussed below to elucidate the journey of discovery that informed method selection for this study.

Investigating U&G motives for magazine and internet use among South African Women's magazine readers, Jere and Davis (2012) took a quantitative approach, utilizing an online survey instrument which presented 10 categories of U&G motives drawn from the literature. Factor analysis was used to extract the gratification factors for each medium and paired sample t-tests were used to establish the extent of difference between magazine and internet gratification factors. While the findings were useful in that they revealed that magazine usage provided superior gratification on more dimensions of gratification factors than Internet usage, without a qualitative component the study was unable to determine the reason why the sample group felt this way. Zerba (2011) took a qualitative approach when investigating reasons why young adults avoid daily print newspapers by conducting focus groups across three cities in the United States of America. A total of 64 participants were split into two age categories (18-24 and 25-29-years-of-age), and eight focus groups were conducted to examine the similarities and differences between the two age categories. This was a small sample considering the size of the US population, and a broad survey-based inquiry could have improved the validity of this study.

In practice, utilising a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods appears to have more depth and rigor in the fields of sport and media. Li, Stokowski, Dittmore and Scott (2017) utilised a quantitative approach by means of an online survey to explore the impact of social media in Chinese sports journalism. Their survey featured three open-ended questions, which required qualitative methods of analysis (content analysis). The combination of quantitative and qualitative questions surfaced interesting findings including the weakening of journalists' gatekeeping role and an erosion of the relationship between journalists and athletes as a result of citizen journalist activity on Weibo and WeChat. This methodological approach most closely resembles Creswell and Creswell's (2018) convergent design.

Exploring the uses and gratifications of leisure travel magazine readership, Carter (2013) utilised the exploratory sequential mixed methods design. The study started with in-depth interviews to establish a set of motivations for travel magazine use from ten participants. These data formed the basis of a larger quantitative study, using an online survey instrument, to test the motives on a larger scale. In their study about Millennials and the future of magazines, Bonner and Roberts (2017) utilised an explanatory sequential design starting with a preliminary online survey to gauge the magazine consumption practices of participants. This was followed up with focus groups conducted as the dominant method of inquiry. The survey was used to establish participants' levels and preferences of magazine use and divide them into focus groups according to prominent segments that emerged from the magazine consumption habits they reported. Webb and Fulton (2019) also used an explanatory sequential design, starting with a more substantial survey of 300 respondents, followed by a focus group of six participants providing elucidatory information.

The mixed methods approach is well suited to a study that investigates the uses and gratifications of media, and the utilisation of a sequential design by both Carter (2013), Bonner and Roberts (2017) and Webb and Fulton (2019) lends support for the methodological approach selected for this study.

#### 3.2.4 METHOD SELECTION FOR THE STUDY

This study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed methods design starting with an online cross-sectional survey followed by face-to-face in-person semi-structured interviews. Consistent with Creswell and Creswell's (2018) explanation of the

explanatory sequential design, the survey results were analysed before undertaking interviews. The sequential nature of the study allows the qualitative phase to explain and interpret the findings from the quantitative phase, thus enhancing its validity and reliability (Jogulu & Jaloni, 2011).

Commencing with an online cross-sectional questionnaire survey allowed access to a large amount of data, in a cost-effective way. A cross-sectional survey design most commonly surveys a cross-sectional sample of the population group, in order to collect data that might suggest causal relationships, which can then be generalised back to the wider population (Gratton & Jones, 2008). Questionnaire surveys are commonly used in quantitative research designs, “when relatively simple measurements are required from a large sample group” (Gratton & Jones, 2008, p. 115). Conducting surveys online, as opposed to on paper, has many advantages, arguably the biggest of which is the ubiquitous availability of Internet access. With an 89% Internet penetration from a total population count of 25.6 million (Kemp, 2021), Australia has no problem in this regard. Online survey tools such as Qualtrics have several advantages over paper or email surveys including: a wider variety of aesthetic embellishments can be added; open questions can easily be facilitated; and, filter questions can be programmed to allow respondents to skip irrelevant questions (Bryman & Bell, 2010). Online survey tools also offer flexibility in design, which allows for a large number and range of questions to be posed in one instrument. Numerous studies of media choices and behaviour have used a cross-sectional survey design (Westlund & Bjur, 2014). This is also broadly accepted as a suitable method of measuring uses and gratifications (Clavio & Kian, 2011).

For the follow-up qualitative study, interviews were considered most appropriate because they allow the researcher to probe the how and why of a phenomenon (Gratton & Jones, 2008). Interviews can capture data that are not measurable and tend to be richer in meaning than a questionnaire survey. Semi-structured interviews are based on a standard set of questions, but the researcher has the flexibility to control and adjust the line of questioning depending on the unique responses provided by the respondent. The researcher can also seek clarification from respondents and therefore, “semi-structured interview data can carry a mixture of both the respondent’s and researcher’s points of view” (Weerakkody, 2015, p. 187). In-person focus groups were considered but Covid-19 physical distancing restrictions ruled this option out, and online focus groups were



considered problematic with varying access to, comfort with, and quality of the necessary technologies across the sample population. Gratton and Jones (2004) state the one-to-one interview is, “undoubtedly the most common method by which qualitative data is collected in sport research” (p. 140).

Skinner et al. (2015) propose one of the major disadvantages of the semi-structured interview method is that the researcher is, “vulnerable to the interpretations and subjective insights of the informant” (Skinner et al., 2015, p. 55). Another cautionary factor is interviewer bias. Neuman (1997) lists six categories of interviewer bias including, “Influence on the answers due to the interviewer’s appearance, tone, attitude, reactions to answers, or comments made outside of the interview schedule” (Neuman, 1997, p. 259). While these two perceptual biases are realistic concerns, given the researcher’s long-standing association with media and surfing, they were mitigated by, “continually acknowledging the unwanted biases imposed by your own values” (Yin, 2011, p. 177), and, by member checking or respondent validation (Skinner et al., 2015). These will be discussed in the last section of this chapter. Alternatively, a significant advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow unexpected data to emerge, that were not thought of by the researcher.

In conclusion, the explanatory sequential mixed methods approach was considered the most appropriate design for this study as it is consistent with the postpositivist, critical realist paradigm, which advances a process that is consistent with the following central features of this study: (1) Knowledge ought to be constructed from precise and objective measures; (2) since humans were involved, empirical observation of opinions and feelings could not be divorced from this process; and, (3) findings and conclusions drawn from this process were inextricably temporal in nature, that is, connected to the times in which they were extracted. Accordingly, the details of this two-phased study are outlined in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1**

*The two parts that constitute this research inquiry*

Study	Date
Phase 1: Quantitative self-reporting online survey	8 August to 11 October 2019
Phase 2 Qualitative semi-structured interviews	15 December 2020 to 15 August 2021

Table 3.1 shows that the study was conducted over a 2-year period, so the oldest Gen-Z respondents in Phase 1 of the study (online survey) were 19-years-of-age, while the oldest Gen-Z respondents in Phase 2 of the study (semi structured interviews) were 21-years-of-age. This explains why survey results refer to 15-19-year-old respondents as representatives of Gen-Z while some of the Gen-Z interview participants are as old as 21-years-of-age.

### 3.2.5 SECTION SUMMARY

This study draws upon the epistemology of critical realism by employing a mixed method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods in an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The sequential nature of the study allows the qualitative phase to provide more explanatory and interpretive depth to the findings from the quantitative phase, thus enhancing validity and reliability (Jogulu & Jaloni, 2011).

This chapter will now explain the mechanics of Phase 1 of the study, which will hereinafter be referred to as the *Phase 1 Study*. An explanation of the *Phase 2 Study* will follow. A discussion about trustworthiness (reliability and validity) and ethical considerations will conclude the chapter.

### 3.3 PHASE ONE STUDY

This section will explain the research design, participant selection and data analysis for the Phase 1 study, which uses a survey instrument to discover the media choices of a sample of the Australian surfing population.

#### 3.3.1 PHASE ONE RESEARCH DESIGN

An initial test survey was developed and conducted on a group of academics, publishers, and surfers ( $n = 14$ ). The purpose of a test survey is to test and refine common issues of measurement such as mutually exclusive categories, matching the responses to the survey questions, logical order of responses, and, avoiding double-barrelled questions (Weerakkody, 2015). Feedback from the test survey resulted in a refinement of the naming of the five content categories, and of the wording of the explanatory statement that appeared at the start of each section. For example, the initial content category list was changed from *Surfer Interviews* to *Interviews and Profiles of Famous or Iconic Surfers*, and, the explanatory statement at the start of the content sources section of the survey was adjusted from *The following four questions concern where you source your surfing content from* to, *The following four questions concern where you source your surfing content, proving five different content sources (surf magazines, websites, television, social media)*. The final online survey was developed in Qualtrics and contained a consent form that included the purpose of the study, the approximate duration of completion, rights of confidentiality, and participation consent. The online survey was designed to address four categories of inquiry, as seen in Table 3.2 below:

**Table 3.2**

*The Four Sections in the Online Survey*

Section number	Section description
1	Descriptives
2	Content needs
3	Media source choice
4	Motives for media source choice

The first part of the survey captured the demographic data about the participant group: age, gender, frequency of participation in surfing, and, current surf magazine use. Questions about gender, surfing frequency and surf magazine use were included to add scope to the data analysis and extend the use of the research data beyond the scope of this particular project. A question asking how the participant came to find out about the survey was asked to ensure that the data were not skewed by being predominantly from one platform, and also, to gain insights about participant selection for future research.

The second part of the survey was designed to capture the surf content needs of the participant group, and to rank their content needs in hierarchical order of importance. This part of the survey relates to RQ 1a: *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* Some preparatory work was necessary to reduce the full gamut of surfing topics into a manageable list of content categories. This was done in consultation with two surf content editors who assisted in developing the five categories of surf content depicted in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3**

*Five Content Categories for Phase 1 Study*

Content category
Surf Conditions or Forecasts
Surf Travel Destinations
Surfing Technique and Equipment
Interviews and Profiles of Famous or Iconic Surfers
Competition

The second part of the survey was described to participants as follows: *This question concerns your surfing content preferences, providing five content categories for you to rank in order of importance to you.* Participants were asked to rank the content options using an in-built drag and drop function. The hierarchical structure was designed to highlight which content preferences are considered more important than others, and while this information is ostensibly a preparative exercise for the third part

of the survey, the data offer the potential for exploration into content preference by gender, age and surfing frequency, which adds scope for further research.

The third part of the online survey was to identify where content is sourced for each of the listed content needs. This part of the survey relates to RQ 1b: *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* And RQ 1c: *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise the use of these media sources?* The literature is consistent that digital media technologies are a defining feature of contemporary daily life across a wide spectrum of the Australian population (Park et al., 2020; Webb & Fulton, 2019). For purposes of this study, these technologies are broadly categorised as websites and social media. Social media is defined as a group of internet applications that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Television and surf magazines were added to the list of content sources, thus the survey included representation from digital, electronic and print media sources. Accordingly, the third part of the online survey was described as follows: *The following four questions concern where you source your surfing content, providing four different content sources (surfing magazines, websites, television, social media).* At the core of U&G perspectives is the notion of the media consumer being an active pursuer of optimal media selections (Billings et al., 2015). The existence of multiple surf content platforms has allowed for what Billings et al. refers to as, “simultaneous and intermittent selections to jointly aid the quest of the optimal media gratification” (p. 3). It was expected, therefore, that most, if not all, needs will be sourced from multiple sources. To improve the scope of the survey, two filter questions were included among this set: (1) If “Magazines” was selected as one of the four content sources, another question asked: *Printed magazines or digital magazines?* and, (2) If social media was selected as one of the four content sources, another question will ask: *Which social media platform do you use most for this topic?* The purpose of these filter questions was to add scope to the data analysis and extend the use of the research data beyond the scope of this project. At the end of this section, an attention check question was added, which if violated, resulted in those data being excluded from the data set.

The fourth part of the online survey was designed to establish content source satisfaction, and relates to RQ 2: *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?* This was described in the survey as: *The following questions concern the*

*reasons why you might choose these four content sources, providing six possible reasons.* Four of the six reasons (or motives) for media source choice, were derived from McQuail's (1983) U&G typology of four motives. These are: (1) entertainment; (2) information; (3) personal identity; and, (4) integration and social interaction. McQuail's U&G typology was used by Kilian et al. (2012), whose research was focused on social media use by Millennials. The adoption of Shao's (2008) three U&G typologies was also considered. While these are well-suited to the measurement of user-generated media, they were determined to be not as inclusive as McQuail's four U&G motives, because they fail to accommodate both old and new media formats. Instead, an expanded version of McQuail's (1983) U&G typology was presented to participants, which included the addition of two new motives, namely, trust and habit. The addition of "trust" as a U&G motive accommodates an issue that is becoming increasingly prominent in discussions about media choice (Edelman, 2018; Jones, 2004; Sismondo, 2017), and thus, is a necessary consideration when researching media use. The addition of "habit" as a motive is an acknowledgment of the potential role/s played by both the power law of practice and cognitive lock-in theory in decisions concerning the transition from print to digital, or indeed, digital to print (Krishen et al. 2016). Accordingly, the U&G motives used in this study are as follows:

1. Entertainment (McQuail, 1983)
2. Information (McQuail, 1983)
3. Personal identity (McQuail, 1983)
4. Integration and social interaction (McQuail, 1983)
5. Trust (added by researcher)
6. Habit (added by researcher)

These six U&G motives were applied to an adapted series of six questions used in a study by Kilian et al. (2012). Participants were asked the same six questions for each of the four content sources.

### 3.3.2 PHASE ONE PARTICIPANT SELECTION

There are two types of sampling methods used to recruit participants to a study; probability sampling, which involves a form of random selection whereby each population member has a known and equal probability of being selected; and, non-probability sampling, whereby not all population members have an equal probability of being selected (Sedgwick, 2013). The Phase 1 study utilised a non-probability convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that is based on a population sample that is easily or conveniently available to participate in a study. Sedgwick (2013) posits that due to the non-random nature of the participant selection method, a disadvantage of convenience sampling is the extent to which the study results can be generalised to the population. This is known as external validity. To mitigate for this, the characteristics of any sample obtained using convenience sampling must be inspected to determine how well the sample represents the population (Sedgwick, 2013).

A goal of 400-600 completed surveys was set and following Bond University ethical clearance, the researcher enlisted promotional support for the survey from his contacts in the surfing industry. The survey received enthusiastic promotional support from a broad range of surf industry stakeholders, and as a result, the study attracted 1612 completed surveys. The data collected from this study exceeded expectation, making the results more robust and reliable than anticipated. Promotional activity undertaken by the researcher, and supported by surf industry stakeholders, to encourage participation is listed in Table 3.4 and discussed below.

**Table 3.4***Providers of promotional support for Phase 1 Study*

Surf industry stakeholder	Nature of support
Rip Curl (surfing lifestyle brand)	Prizes: Two watches
Firewire (surfboard manufacturer)	Prizes: Two surfboards
Surfing Life (Surfing magazine)	Publicity via magazine ad, electronic direct mail (eDM), website banner ad, social media post
Tracks (surfing magazine)	Publicity via article and banner ad on website
Coastalwatch (surf forecasting website)	Publicity via article and banner ad on website
World Surf League (governing body)	Publicity via eDM
Surfing Australia (governing body)	Publicity via eDM
Australian Surf Business (website)	Publicity via article on website
Surf Careers (website)	Publicity via article on website
18 Seconds (digital surf magazine)	Publicity via social media post
White Horses (magazine)	Publicity via social media post
Vissla, Kirra Klassic, & Various surf shops	Distribution of printed flyers

In order to obtain statistically reliable data from a simple random sample, the data must meet two criteria. First, the sample must be unbiased, meaning every member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. Second, the data points must exhibit independence, meaning the selection of one participant must not influence the selection of other participants (Creswell, 2009). A variety of methods were used to achieve the first criterion. Firstly, in principle support was procured from print (*Tracks* and *ASL* magazines) and digital surf media outlets (*18 Seconds* and *Coastalwatch*) and surfing sport governing bodies (Surfing Australia and World Surf League) prior to the survey being launched. In return for this support a promise was made to share the findings with them by way of two research reports. These were produced and circulated in January 2020 and October 2020. Secondly, a website ([www.surfsurvey.com.au](http://www.surfsurvey.com.au)) and a Facebook page (@surfmediaresearch) were established. Thirdly, a series of promotional



assets were designed including Facebook and Instagram ads, website banner ads (MREC and leader board), an electronic direct mail (eDM) banner, a printed flyer, a half page magazine print ad, and a press release. Once the survey was launched, the entities that offered in principle support were sent a press release as well as the full suite of promotional assets. Lastly, a network of private individuals who are surfing influencers were asked to 'spread the word' via their social media platforms; flyers were handed out at surf shops (in Queensland, and New South Wales), and over 500 coastal schools were contacted via email. The above recruitment strategy targeted participants who were users and non-users of print and/or digital surf media; active and non-active surfers; male, female or gender agnostic. Regarding the second criterion of independence, it could be argued that the presence of an incentive to complete the survey influenced people who found the incentive attractive. The incentive was a draw to win one of two brand new surfboards valued at approximately \$700 each. This would have attracted people who either liked the brand of surfboard or needed a new surfboard. These motives, however, have no bearing on the quality of their answers, as a surfboard does not influence media choice. Moreover, the survey included an attention test question (Q22) that was similar to the preceding questions (Q17 - 20). Data from participants ( $n = 98$ ) who failed the attention test, possibly just to win the prize, were eliminated from the data set.

Two weeks prior to the closing of the survey, the 15-19-year-old age group represented 10% of the total number of participant data collected, so a 5-day Facebook ad campaign was actioned, targeting 15-19-year-old Australians who are interested in surfing. After three days the influx of 15-19-year-olds was sufficient to widen the ad-targeting parameters to Australians of all ages who are interested in surfing. The Facebook advertising campaign was, therefore, an intervention that distorted the natural level of survey participation of the 15-19-years age group. Without the Facebook advertising campaign, however, the 15-19-year-old group would have comprised an estimated 10-11% of the overall number of participant data collected. Since the research questions focus on Gen-Z, it was considered more important to recruit sufficient numbers into this age group than be concerned about a potential skew to the age distribution curve. Another potential consequence of the Facebook ad campaign was a larger proportion of Facebook-sourced participants in this age group compared to other groups. It can be argued, however, that Facebook was, at the commencement of this

study, a popular social media platform for this target group. This is supported by Table 3.5 below, which shows the total participant group in this survey ranks Facebook second out of the five social platforms surveyed, suggesting that Facebook is a popular choice across the participant group as a whole.

**Table 3.5**

*Mean Rank of Total Participant Social Media Platform Preference*

Rank	Social media platform	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Instagram	1.96	1.019
2	Facebook	2.41	1.201
3	YouTube	2.49	.997
4	Snapchat	3.72	1.315
5	Twitter	4.42	.787

Ford and Brown (2006) observe that while surfing has an overarching meta-narrative by which it reflexively makes sense of itself, variances exist in the detail. One such variance is between surfing subcultures around the world (Jarratt, 2010). It was therefore considered necessary to isolate the study to a specific country. Australia was a pragmatic option as this is where the researcher resides. The survey was consequently limited to Australian residents. An Australian resident refers to someone who lives in Australia permanently. Participants who failed to meet the country criterion ( $n = 120$ ) had their data eliminated from the data set. A total of 154 participants failed to complete the full survey. Pairwise and listwise methods of missing data exclusion are the most common techniques used to address missing data (Peugh & Enders, 2004). The listwise exclusion option only uses cases where complete data on all the variables being analysed are available. This “blanket removal of cases with missing data” (Peugh & Enders, 2004, p. 525) option was rejected because it was deemed to unnecessarily limit the sample size. The pairwise case exclusion method was selected because it attempts to minimise the loss that occurs in listwise deletion by including data on an analysis-by-analysis basis for which the necessary information is available. A disadvantage with the use of pairwise deletion is that the standard of error computed by most statistical

software uses the average sample size across analyses and consequently, the standard of error can be overestimated or underestimated. Another problem is the comparability of analyses within a study, as each analysis could use different subsets of cases. Pairwise deletion, therefore, requires the *missing completely at random* (MCAR) assumption or it could produce biased parameter estimates (Peugh & Enders, 2004). The MCAR mechanism is defined as one where the missing values on one variable are unrelated to the other variables in the data set as well as the underlying values of the variable itself (Rubin, 1976). In all cases, it is observed that missing data occurred as a result of the participant leaving the survey before it was fully completed, and thus, the reason for the missing data is unrelated to the participant's attitudes, values and perceptions of media, media choice and media uses and gratifications.

Following the above-mentioned exclusions, the final number of participants analysed was  $n = 1369$ . The following section will describe how these data were analysed.

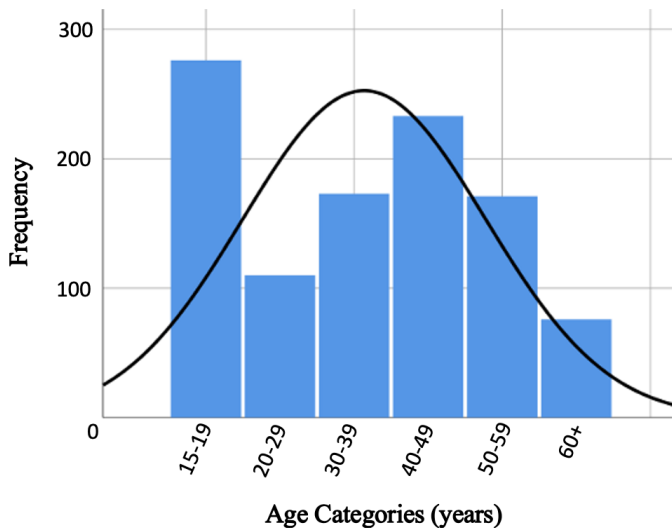
### 3.3.3 PHASE ONE DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a systematic process of applying logical techniques and statistical instruments to give meaning. Data were analysed using SPSS version 26.0 for Windows, using both descriptive and inferential statistics. As already mentioned, the online survey can be categorised into four sections, as seen in Table 3.2 above. In the first section, age is a key variable because the research questions are focussed on the influence of Gen-Z (which at the time of the survey, were in the 15-19-years age group) on the future of surfing magazines. Ethical limitations prevented this study being conducted on people under the age of 15-years, but there was no limitation on participation from older ages. In the survey, age was discretised into groups, starting at 15-19-years age group and ending at Older than 60-years age group. Figure 3.1 below shows the distribution of the age variable skews to the left. As discussed in Section 3.22 (Phase 1 Study Participant Selection), this skew is the result of a three-day Facebook ad campaign to recruit more participants in the 15-19-years age group. This skew does not influence the results of statistical techniques that require the assumption of normality, because, (a) the skew is slight; (b) the sample size is so large; and, (c) this study only uses non-parametric statistical techniques. The Age variable comprises six age

groupings presented to the survey participants, starting with the 15-19-years age group and ending with the 60-plus-years age group.

**Figure 3.1**

*Participant Age Breakdown (n=1369)*



Since the research problem focuses on Gen-Z, this study analyses the difference between the Gen-Z age group (15-19 years) and all the remaining age groups in the total participant group. For this reason, an additional age variable (named Age2 in SPSS) was created comprising two groups; (1) Gen-Z (being 15-19-year-olds), hereafter referred to as Age Group 1, and, (2) a consolidation of all the remaining ages (being 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and over 60-year-olds), hereafter referred to as Age Group 2. This consolidated variable will be used for the remainder of this study, and the demographic being studied (Gen-Z) is 26.6% of the demographic it is being compared against (the older cohorts).

The Surfing Frequency and Surf Magazine Use variables were measured on an ordinal scale where the distribution between options is not standard. When a dependant variable is not measured at the interval or ratio level, it does not meet the assumptions required for the use of parametric techniques. So, for these variables, the non-parametric technique of the Mann-Whitney U test was used to establish the significance in differences between age and gender for surfing frequency and surf magazine use.

The second section of the survey was designed to capture the surf content needs of the participant group and attempts to explore the data relating to Research Question 1a: *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* Participants were asked to rank five content categories presented, in order of preference. Content needs were analysed by the total participant group and by age. Mean rank scores were used to establish the rank order of the five content categories. Non-parametric tests are appropriate for ranked (ordinal) data and so for this section, Friedman tests were used to establish general significance in within-group rank order, and this was followed-up by a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test which is used to identify specific significance in within-group rank order by comparing pairs of content preferences. In this study, when analysing ranked pairs, the discovery of no significance is noteworthy because it shows that the difference between the two ranks is so small that it would be misleading, in the context of this study, to depict them as distinct. In such instances, the ranking was deemed by the researcher to be equal and is depicted as such in the column labelled as ‘Sig. Ranking’.

For ease of presentation, the naming of the content categories was abridged. Table 3.6 shows the full names of the content categories with the edited names next to each. The word *Surf Magazines* was also abridged and replaced with *Magazines*.

**Table 3.6***Content Category with Abridged Names*

Full name	Abridged name
Surf Conditions or Forecasts	Conditions
Surf Travel Destinations	Travel
Surfing Technique and Equipment	Technique
Interviews and Profiles of Famous or Iconic Surfers	Interviews
Competition	Competition

The third section of the online survey sought to identify where content is sourced for each of the listed content needs, and explores the data relating to Research Question 1b: *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they use each media source to access the five content types, on a five-point Likert scale (Never to Always). Content needs by media source was analysed by the total participant group and by age. From these data, it was possible to use mean scores to establish a hierarchy of preferred content types for each of the four media sources. Standard deviation was introduced to provide further support for, and confidence in, the ranking of content preference by media source. This additional layer of analysis was considered necessary because unlike the content preference variable, analysed in Section 2 of the online survey, the ranking of content preference by media source is a post hoc construct and not something done by the participant group during the survey. To test the significance of the rank orders, the same non-parametric techniques utilised in Section 2 were applied; that is, Friedman tests to establish general significance in within-group rank order, and Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests to identify specific significance in the rank order. Also, consistent with the data analysis of the second section of the survey, for the third section, if no significant difference was found between a pair of ranks, that pair was presented as equally ranked.

Using the same data, and in order to answer Research Question 1c), namely: *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise the use of these media sources?*, the independent and

dependent variables were switched. The independent variables, therefore, become the four media sources and the dependent variables become the five content types. From these data, it was possible to use the mean scores to establish a ranking of media sources for each of the five content types. The same non-parametric techniques were applied. That is, Friedman tests to establish general significance in within-group rank order; and Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests to identify specific significance in the rank order.

Having analysed participants' top five content types (RQ 1a), the media sources that are best suited to deliver these content types (RQ 1b), and how participants prioritise their use (RQ1c), the inquiry then considered motivations for media source choices. Accordingly, Section 4 explores the data relating to Research Question 2: *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?* Using five-point Likert scales, participants were requested to indicate the extent to which each media source satisfies a list of six needs or motives. The naming of the motives used in the survey was abridged for ease of presentation. Table 3.7 shows the full names of the motives with the edited names next to each.

**Table 3.7**

*Motives with Abridged Names*

Full name	Abridged name
They keep me informed about my passion	Information
They provide me with entertainment	Entertainment
They reinforce my identity as a surfer	Identity
They help me interact with other surfers	Interaction
They have more trustworthy content than other sources	Trust
It's just a habit; it's what I've always done, and I'm used to it	Habit

From these data, it was possible to use the mean scores to establish a ranking of media sources for each motive. Standard deviation scores were included to provide further

support for, and confidence in, the rank order. In order to test the significance of the rank orders, the same non-parametric techniques utilised thus far have been applied. That is, Friedman tests to establish general significance in within-group rank order, and Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests to identify specific significance in the rank order. This statistical technique was applied to the analysis of the total participant group, followed by an analysis by age. Also, as with previous sections, the discovery of no significance in a pair of ranks, resulted in that pair being presented as equally ranked.

As mentioned in Section 3.2.2, the purpose of this research project is to answer research questions that together allow the researcher to investigate what functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors. Consequently, there are no survey questions relating directly to Research Question 3: *How can printed surf magazines achieve functional differentiation in the digital age?* The answer to this question is inductive and was derived from all the survey and interview data.

A summary of the statistical techniques used in the Phase 1 study is presented in Table 3.8 below.



**Table 3.8***Statistical Techniques Used in Phase 1 Study*

Section number	Statistical method
Section 1: Descriptive analysis	Mann-Whitney U test
Section 2: Ranking of content needs	Mean scores
	Standard deviation
	Friedman test
	Wilcoxon Signed Rank test
Section 3: Ranking of media sources by content type	Mean scores
	Standard deviation
	Friedman test
	Wilcoxon Signed Rank test
Section 4: Ranking of media sources by motive	Mean scores
	Standard deviation
	Friedman test
	Wilcoxon Signed Rank test

**3.3.4 SECTION SUMMARY**

Having arrived at the selection of an explanatory sequential research design, this section provided a detailed account of the first phase of the study. The section started by describing how the survey design was guided by the research questions, before detailing how the survey was promoted to achieve a better-than-expected number of participants, including the tactic to improve Gen-Z participation, the incentive to participate, and the data exclusion approach to mitigate for participants who were more interested in the incentive than the survey. The section then described the way in which the data were analysed and the reasons for the statistical techniques used. The next section will follow the same procedure for the second phase of the study.

### 3.4 PHASE TWO STUDY

“It has been said that the simplest way to find out information from someone is simply to ask them!” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 140). This section will explain the research design, participant selection and data analysis for the second phase of the study, which uses interviews to help explain and interpret the findings from the survey.

#### 3.4.1 PHASE TWO RESEARCH DESIGN

When adopting an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, Creswell and Creswell (2018) advised that, “it is important to tie together or to connect the quantitative results to the qualitative data collection” (p. 222). Accordingly, the results from the Phase 1 quantitative study were used to plan the design of the succeeding qualitative phase. There were many interesting findings that emerged from the phase one study, some of which are beyond the scope of this project and will form part of the recommendations for future research. The findings that fell within the scope of this project were determined by the research questions. Hence, the survey results that related to, (a) content needs; (b) media source choice; and, (c) motives for media source choice, form the backbone of the interview questions. Creswell (2004) suggests that interviews are likely to be an appropriate method of inquiry when, “you are looking for explanation rather than description” (p. 141), and so additional lines of enquiry were formulated to bolster the practical and theoretical implications of the survey findings. Consequently, additional interview questions sought explanation about: (d) the role of surf magazines in the construction and maintenance of self-identity; (e) the extent to which surf magazines may or may not contribute to the development of surf culture; (f) deeper exploration into media trust; and, (g) the distinguishing characteristics of surf magazines versus the three other media sources in the study. From these seven topics, a test interview schedule was produced and piloted on three people who were not included in the participant list. This allowed the researcher to refine the questions and then adjust the order and grouping of the questions.

A final interview guide was then produced, along with a document for record keeping, which captures the pseudonym, age and gender of the participant, and, the location and duration of the interview. Following Bond University ethical protocols for research, an explanatory statement was also prepared which outlined the purpose of the interview, the rights of the respondent, the responsibilities of the researcher, and the use

and disposal of data. The explanatory statement and interview guide can be found in Appendix H and J respectively.

One of the characteristics of semi-structured interviews is that the questions are open-ended in nature, as this provides opportunity for both the interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in greater detail (Skinner et al., 2015). “What transpires within the interview (therefore) may be neither expected nor predictable” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 82, parentheses in original). Of particular importance, given the researcher’s extensive background and experience in the sport of surfing and media, is for the researcher to be nondirective and neutral during the dialogue, as the goal is to let participants describe the world as they see it and so, “body language, expressions and words need to be carefully cast in a neutral manner” (Yin, 2011, p.137). The researcher’s background and experience are discussed in Section 3.6.

Another important consideration is the opening question which, according to Gratton and Jones (2004), can be strategically designed to put the respondent at ease, establish rapport and to orientate the respondent toward the subject matter. Accordingly, the opening question was: *Do you read surf magazines?* And when appropriate, this was followed up with *Why/why not?* Asking an easy first question about their use of surf magazines is a topic most surfers are very familiar with and, thus, would be comfortable talking about it. In all cases, this proved to be an effective “ice-breaker”. Bonner and Roberts (2017) utilised a similar ice-breaker in their focus group, asking: “*Tell me about your favourite magazine and what you like about it?*” (Bonner & Roberts, 2017, appendix B). In most cases the ice breaker question provided a good segue into two important follow up questions about how they perceive surf magazines in the context of surf media in general: (a) *What is it that you especially like or dislike about surf magazines?*; (b) *What do you think distinguishes a surf magazine from the other media sources in this study?*

#### 3.4.2 PHASE TWO PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Where the Phase 1 study aimed to capture the largest sample size possible, the Phase 2 study focused on quality rather than quantity. Gratton and Jones (2004) explain that surveys tend to capture relatively shallow information from a large sample group, whereas interviews tend to yield rich data from a smaller sample group. The size of the

sample group should not be predetermined but rather become evident through the ongoing pursuit of ‘data saturation’, which is defined as “the stage in fieldwork where any further data collection will not provide any different information from that you already have” (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.153). A small sample of participants, representative of the various demographic groups in the study was selected using two methods. The first was to select participants from the respondents of the survey who consented to being contacted for a follow-up interview. The second was to use the snowball sampling technique, which is defined as the utilisation of existing participants’ networks to source new participants to recruit (Skinner et al., 2015). All interviews were in-person and face-to-face so convenience in scheduling, transport and geography were factors that also influenced participant selection. Over the course of time and through the pursuit of data saturation, 17 face-to-face interviews of an average duration of 29 minutes and 32 seconds were conducted.

While the focus of this research project is on the media choices and perceptions of Gen-Z, it is necessary to interview members of the older cohort so their insights can be compared and contrasted to members of the Gen-Z cohort. Additionally, members of the older cohort were not only questioned about their own attitudes and characteristics, but also their thoughts on the attitudes and characteristics of Gen-Z. To this end, some of the participants from the older cohort were selected specifically for their expertise in this area. For example, Aaron is a surfer who is also a philosopher and an author on the philosophy of surfing; Anthony is the global marketing director of a multinational surf brand, whose role relies on his understanding of youth; Anton is the general manager of a surf travel company; and, Alec is a highly respected former editor and designer of multiple surf and action sport magazine titles, books, mobile applications, and websites over a career that has spanned some 30 years. More specific details concerning age, pseudonyms, gender, geography and duration of interview are contained in Table 3.9 below.

**Table 3.9***Schedule of Participants in Semi-structured Interviews*

Participants	Pseudonym	Participant age	Participant gender	Interview location	Interview duration
Participant 1	Aaron	38	M	QLD	42:20
Participant 2	Adam	34	M	QLD	39:54
Participant 3	Alfred	24	M	NSW	31:52
Participant 4	Alec	55	M	QLD	26:52
Participant 5	Allen	18	M	QLD	15:54
Participant 6	Andre	21	M	QLD	21:51
Participant 7	Andrew	21	M	QLD	40:48
Participant 8	Abby	19	F	QLD	25:59
Participant 9	Alissa	20	F	QLD	25:59
Participant 10	Adele	21	F	QLD	25:53
Participant 11	Anton	44	M	QLD	23:53
Participant 12	Anthony	57	M	VIC	46:05
Participant 13	Arthur	20	M	WA	26:50
Participant 14	Alice	20	F	QLD	23:47
Participant 15	Anna	17	F	QLD	29:24
Participant 16	Asher	18	M	QLD	41:22
Participant 17	Ashton	18	M	QLD	41:22

Each interview was recorded on an Olympus Digital Voice Recorder (model WS-852) and an iPhone 11 was on hand as a back-up device. Interviews were downloaded, de-identified, and transcribed independently by an external experienced transcriber and interview notes were taken after each interview. The recordings and

transcripts were stored securely in line with Bond University's research data management guidelines.

### 3.4.3 PHASE TWO DATA ANALYSIS

Being an explanatory sequential research design, the primary purpose of collecting qualitative data was to elucidate the findings of the quantitative survey data. This approach is known as the *a priori* deductive method and was guided by the five-stage process advanced by Yin (2011). The first stage is *compiling*, which involves getting transcriptions and interview notes into some form of order. The second stage, the *disassembling* stage, requires the researcher to break down the organised data into smaller fragments, which can be coded. This stage is also referred to in the literature as data reduction or data fragmentation. Coding is described as a set of processes that enable data to be “assembled, categorized, and thematically sorted, providing an organized platform for the construction of meaning” (Williams & Moser, 2019). The third stage is *reassembling*, which occurs when the coded data are rearranged into new combinations that can lead to the discovery of emerging patterns and themes. The next stage is *interpreting*, which is the interpretation of the patterns and themes, resulting in a greater degree of understanding or possibly the emergence of a new degree of understanding. The final stage is *concluding*, which is where the researcher situates the interpretation in the context of the entire study. This process is described by Yin (2011) as nonlinear, recursive, and time-consuming.

Once the transcriptions and interview notes were compiled into a consistent format, they were uploaded to the computer software program NVivo, which was found to be efficient in facilitating the data analysis process. After reading the transcripts and interview notes, subject codes and topic codes were formulated from the research questions. An example of how subject codes were reduced to topic codes is provided in Table 3.10 below.

**Table 3.10***Example of Reducing A Priori Subject Codes to A Priori Topic Codes*

A priori subject code	A priori topic code
Content Preference	Gen-Z preference Technique over Travel
	Older cohort preference Travel over Technique
Content Preferences and Media Sources	Gen-Z preference Technique in magazines
	Yet Gen-Z still use Social Media
Motives for Media Source Choice	Gen-Z rank Magazines first for trust
	Gen-Z rank Social Media last for trust

Topic codes were then sorted into three sub-categories; namely: Gen-Z Responses, Older Cohort Responses, and, Other Insights. Insights that were not directly related to the topic codes were arranged into the Other Insights sub-category. From these three sub-categories, emergent themes were identified and from those emergent themes concluding themes were derived. This process is set out in Figure 3.2 below, using one example.

### Figure 3.2

*Example of Process of Data Reduction and Interpretation*

A priori subject code	A priori topic code	Example of insight	Emerging themes	Concluding themes
Content Preferences and Media Sources	Gen-Z preference content about Technique in magazines	"I'd rather look good in the surf ... I think technique makes you a good surfer ... So, yeah, I think it's just about looking better or looking good"	Gen-Z in the formative stage of their surfing development	Strong links between surfing skill and personal and group identity
			Surfing skill impacts their social standing	Magazines superiority for Technique related to medium credibility
		"There's so much research going into those magazines, and I feel like most of the magazines are done by proper professional editors and stuff like that"	Magazines are considered to be more authentic and trustworthy	
			Gen-Z see magazines as having a high degree of suitability to the delivery of Travel and Technique	Magazines exert influence on identity development Magazines have source and medium credibility

An explanation of the above example is as follows: The survey data revealed that Gen-Z prioritise content about technique and equipment over content about surf travel, and this differs from the older cohort who prioritises the content about surf travel over content about technique and equipment. Gen-Z interviewees were asked why they prioritise Technique over Travel and why they think the older cohort prioritises Travel over Technique. From this it was established that Gen-Z are in the formative stage of their surfing journey and thus, eager to learn more about technique and equipment so they could surf better. From these discussions, it emerged that surfing skill influences their social standing in the surfing community, which also impacts their self-esteem. Comments that supported the link between surfing skill and self-identity were placed into Other Insights, becoming an emergent theme. As more Gen-Z interviewees expressed the link between surfing performance and their identity as a surfer, it became



a consistent theme, which in turn became one of the concluding themes used to demonstrate the influence magazines have in the construction and maintenance of self and group identity.

Williams and Moser (2019) contend that regardless of the methodological approach adopted, the process should be clear, systematic and repeatable, because if the data analysis “lacks rigour”, the process “can be impeded and that in turn minimises the value of the outcomes” (p.45). This process was found to be both clear and systematic, and consequently, it is argued to have contained an apposite degree of rigour.

#### 3.4.4 SECTION SUMMARY

This section discussed the details of the follow-up study of this explanatory sequential research project. A semi-structured interview guide was developed based on the results of the phase one survey and used the project’s research questions to sharpen the focus of the interview questions. The methods of selecting participants were discussed and a summary of the participant pool was provided. The analysis of data was guided by Yin’s (2011) five-staged process. The details of trustworthiness will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

#### 3.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

This section discusses considerations of reliability and validity as well as discloses the researcher’s positionality before discussing ethical considerations. These contribute towards the study’s credibility and trustworthiness. Consideration of the reliability and validity in the social sciences is important because, “constructs in social theory are often ambiguous, diffuse, and not directly observable” (Neuman, 1997, p. 138). Perfect reliability and validity are, therefore, ideals to strive for but not easy to achieve (Neuman, 1997). The reliability of a study refers to its ability to be replicated with consistent results. Validity refers to the extent to which “the social reality being measured through research matches with the constructs researchers use to understand it” (Neuman, 2006, p. 188). Therefore, reliability is a dependable measure and validity is a true measure (Neuman, 1997). Although reliability is necessary for validity, it does not guarantee validity. For example, it is possible to repeat a study that consistently

produces a measurement that, “does not match the definition of the construct” (Neuman, 1997, p. 145), and is, therefore, invalid.

Skinner et al. (2015) describe reliability as having an approach that is consistent across different researchers and projects, and that measurement is consistent and stable over time. In quantitative research, reliability can be improved with clear and precise definitions of constructs, precise levels of measurement, and conducting pre-tests or pilot studies (Neuman, 1997). Some statistical techniques can be used to underpin reliability such as confidence intervals or p-values. In qualitative interview research, reliability can be enhanced by using the same interview guide, having a consistently similar interview environment, and transcribing the recorded interviews in as short a time as possible. Key to achieving reliability in qualitative research, therefore, is the detailed documentation of the procedures so the study can be repeated as precisely as possible (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

Validity is more difficult to achieve than reliability. Yin (2011) describes a valid study as simply one that has properly collected and interpreted its data. In quantitative research, validity is focused on measurement validity, which is described by Neuman (1997) as, “the degree of fit between a construct and indicators of it”. Absolute validity is impossible because ideas are abstract and imprecise and measurement is specific and precise, so the objective is, “to reduce the gap between abstract ideas and specific indicators” (Neuman, 1997, p. 141). Qualitative validity requires the researcher to ensure the accuracy of the findings by employing rigorous procedures such as: triangulation, which involves attempts to find converging evidence from different sources to confirm a finding (Yin, 2011); member checking, which entails a “comparison of the research findings between interviewer and interviewee” (Skinner et al., p. 61) to double check the accuracy of a finding; and, seeking inter-coder agreement, which requires cross-checking the researcher’s coding with the findings of a fellow researcher’s coding (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

In consideration of the foregoing discussion, the following procedures and measures were undertaken to improve the reliability and validity of this study. For both studies, the questions asked of the respondents were consistent across all participants, and over time. All the statistical techniques used, met their preconditions and where possible, p-values and standard deviation measurements were used to enhance

transparency, accuracy and confidence. The study's research questions informed the semi-structured interview guide, ensuring salience of the questions in the follow-up quantitative study. All interviews were face-to-face, and, with the exception of two, all were with a single interviewee. Dyadic, joint or paired interviews involve two participants simultaneously interacting in response to open-ended questions (Szulc & King, 2022). They are seen to be of particular benefit when "participants have some form of pre-existing relationship" (p. 4). In both cases the pairs were friends who expressed a preference to be interviewed together. The value of dyadic interviews is the opportunity to gain insights from the interaction between two participants which can be richer and more in-depth as meaning around the topic under investigation is co-constructed. The challenge however is to understand that in any interview, the interviewer is an integral part of the relational process, and so the interviewer needs to practice what Walsh (2003) calls interpersonal reflexivity. Here the interviewer needs to focus on how the participants are reacting to each other as well as how they are reacting, to the interviewer, as individuals or as a dyad, being careful not to dominate the conversation (Szulc & King, 2022).

Notes were taken in the hours following the interview and transcriptions were completed within four weeks of the interview date. Of the two exceptions to one-on-one interviews, one interview was conducted with two Gen-Z males in the same home, and the other was with two Gen-Z females in the same coffee shop, who felt more comfortable being interviewed together than alone. Member checking occurred on several occasions and the coding process was conducted under close supervision of the researcher's supervisory team, for the purpose of achieving inter-coder agreement (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Skinner et al. (2015) suggest that reliability and validity are not the only indicators of trustworthiness. Other indicators are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Skinner et al., 2015). Credibility includes aspects of validity as it concerns the accurate and detailed recording of the participants, the setting, and the procedures of a study. Transferability refers to the extent to which the results can be applied to other contexts. For example, can the findings from a study on Australian surfers be applied to other Australian athletes? Dependability includes aspects of reliability as it has an emphasis on the stability of data over time. The final indicator of trustworthiness is confirmability, which seeks to demonstrate that the "data

interpretations and outcomes are rooted in contexts and persons apart from the researcher and are not mere products of the researcher's imagination" (Skinner et al., 2015 p. 74). Given the researcher's extensive background in sport and media, this final indicator warrants some scrutiny.

### 3.6 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY

The researcher has a deep and long history in surfing and surf media. Starting in 1976 as a 12-year-old on the shores of Durban, South Africa, he developed his surfing skill to make multiple state and national teams, win many amateur and professional events, and ultimately compete as a professional on the world surfing tour (then the ASP World Tour). Towards the end of his competitive surfing career, he became involved in surfing media. First as a correspondent for *Zigzag* South Africa's leading and longest running surfing magazine, then when international boycotts of South African sportsmen made his professional aspirations unachievable, as owner, editor and publisher of *Zigzag*. For twenty years he operated and owned a publishing company called Atoll Media which published five youth lifestyle and action sports titles, accumulating many publishing awards along the way. He also has experience as a newspaper columnist, a surfing presenter on television and radio, and has become a recognisable name in the surfing community. For example, he has a profile listing in *The Encyclopedia of Surfing* (Warshaw, 2005, p. 542).

In 2007, after selling Atoll Media to the public listed corporation, Naspers, he emigrated to Australia where he was employed as General Manager of Morrison Media and Publisher of seven of that company's youth and action sport titles. During this time, he was involved in the conceptualisation and launch of *White Horses*, a publication established as an experimental response to the rapidly evolving media landscape. He also conceptualised and implemented a radical change to the publishing strategy of *Australia's Surfing Life (ASL)*, in response to the need to find a new purpose for printed magazines, which were being ravaged by digital disruption. In 2016, after serving eight years as General Manager and Publisher at Morrison Media he purchased *ASL* and *White Horses* returning to his roots as a small independent publisher and began a transition to an academic career. In 2018 he sold *ASL* and remains a majority owner and Publisher of *White Horses*, while working as a teaching fellow at Bond University.

Having worked in media before, during and after the digital disruption of the sector, the researcher has a keen interest in the evolving media landscape, specifically the issue of how niche sport magazines can remain relevant and in-demand. The interest is not just driven by his own commercial endeavours, but more so by the important role magazines have played in the maintenance and dissemination of the sporting subcultures they serve. His long-term commitment to observing and interpreting the surf media environment has resulted in his own opinions, observations, and experiences being shared in conferences, articles, and essays targeted to members of the surf industry and those allied to it. This research project provides an opportunity for formal empirical research into the evolving surf media landscape, which will be openly shared. Early findings were documented in two “industry reports” which were shared with and enthusiastically received by surf industry and surf media stakeholders.

Yin (2011) describes research integrity as demonstrating that a research project is truthful, accurate and fair, and is especially apposite to qualitative research because the designs and procedures are more flexible. It is therefore essential to disclose conditions that might influence the conduct of this study by declaring the researcher’s personal roles, affiliations, and predispositions. The above biography reveals that the researcher is inescapably related to the subject matter being studied. His past shapes his philosophical predispositions, political ideologies, emotional proclivities, and embodied experiences. There is, therefore, a risk of a distorted interpretation of findings because of perceptual biases, in particular, confirmation bias, which is defined as a strong tendency to seek and attend to information that confirms our beliefs and attitudes and ignore information that contradicts them (Rothwell, 2019). Inferential error is another risk because as Rothwell (2019) states, we draw inferences or make conclusions about the unknown based on what is known, and these are influenced by our past experiences. When the researcher’s positionality intersects with the complexity of semi-structured interviewing, the researcher took guidance from, among others, Gratton and Jones (2004), who advance the following researcher checks: Does the informant interpret the interview questions correctly? Are they able to effectively articulate their thoughts and feelings? Is their response influenced by events or recurrences at the time of the interview? And finally, are the informant’s views influenced by perceptions of what the interviewer wants to hear, or by perceptions of what the interviewer might think of them if a certain response was provided? Two suggestions made by Dean and Whyte (1978)

in Gratton and Jones (2004) to mitigate validity risks are firstly, prior to the interview commencing, the interviewer should stress the confidential and ‘blind’ nature of the interview so the informant understands there will be no judgement or repercussions as a result of what is said. Secondly, the interviewer should be ready to ask the same question in a variety of ways, thus using a form of ‘within-interview triangulation’ (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p. 151).

As discussed above the researcher is aware of the potential influence of his positionality on perceptions of research integrity and validity, and has used his best endeavours to mitigate the many risk factors that can impact social research. Indeed, Yin (2011) states that scholars have vigorously debated whether truly objective inquiries in the social sciences are even possible as the researcher’s perceptions will inevitably have influence. Having discussed validity and reliability, and researcher positionality, ethical considerations will be discussed next.

### 3.7 ETHICS

The researcher received ethical approval to conduct the study from the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee (Ethics application IDs: 16164 and CS03290). All researcher responsibilities with regards to design, conduct and reporting the results were compliant with the National Statement (2007) and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007). Chapter 5.4 of the National Statement and Chapter 7.1 of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research deals with conflict of interest. Whilst no conflict of interest exists, the National Statement advises, “the perception that a conflict of interest exists can be as serious as an actual conflict” (NHMRC, 2018). The National Statement issues guidelines which include full transparency, as well as disclosure about mitigation efforts. This has been addressed in section 3.5.2 above. Consent to participate in the online survey and semi-structured interviews was gained following acceptance of the respective explanatory statements. No objections or complaints were received throughout the research period.

Another ethical consideration is research involving children and young people, as outlined in Chapter 4.2 of the National Statement. Despite the focus of the study being on Gen-Z, ethical limitations dictated that the survey and semi-structured interviews were to be limited to Australians over the age of 15-years. With the online

survey, control of this was maintained by using a disqualification filter. If, despite the call to entry conditions, a respondent was under the age of 15-years, a disqualification filter ejected them from the survey, thanking them for participation and advising they are not eligible to continue. Nine participants failed to meet the age criterion, i.e.: they were under the age of 15-years. The researcher will securely store data from the survey and interviews for five years after the approval of the dissertation. Data has been de-identified and stored on a secure server at Bond University.

### 3.8 CHAPTER THREE CONCLUSION

This chapter justified the methodological approach of this study by discussing the epistemological perspective that led to the selection of an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design. It then explained the design, participant selection and data analysis for Phase 1 (quantitative) and Phase 2 (qualitative) of the study. Validity, reliability and ethics, and researcher positionality were discussed and interrogated, and finally, disclosure of ethical responsibilities was provided. The next three chapters will discuss the results of both phases of the study.

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## CHAPTER 4: DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANT GROUPS

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#### 4.1 CHAPTER FOUR INTRODUCTION

Chapters four to eight have a similar format, each featuring results followed by a discussion of those results. This chapter provides a descriptive analysis of the participants in both phases of this study. It will detail the age and gender breakdown, the surfing frequency, and magazine use of the participant group. A discussion about the descriptive results will then be presented, and a brief summary will conclude the chapter.

#### 4.2 AGE AND GENDER BREAKDOWN OF TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Table 4.1a shows the age breakdown of the survey participants. The largest number of participants come from the 15-19-years group, followed by the 40-49-years group. Table 4.1b shows the largest number of participants in the semi-structured interviews come from the 20-29-years group, followed by the 15-19-years group.

**Table 4.1a**

*Survey: Total Participant Age Breakdown (n=1039)*

Value	Count	Percent
15-19 years-old	276	26.6%
20-29 years-old	110	10.6%
30-39 years-old	173	16.7%
40-49 years-old	233	22.4%
50-59 years-old	171	16.5%
Older than 60 years-old	76	7.3%

**Table 4.1b***Interview: Total Participant Age Breakdown (n=17)*

Value	Count	Percent
15-19 years-old	5	29.4%
20-29 years-old	7	41.2%
30-39 years-old	2	11.8%
40-49 years-old	1	5.9%
50-59 years-old	2	11.8%
Older than 60 years-old	0	0%

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Age variable was collapsed from six distinct groupings to two. These new age groupings are referred to as Age Group 1 (the Gen-Z cohort) and Age Group 2 (the older cohort). Table 4.2a and 4.2b, respectively, show the age breakdown of the survey (Phase 1) and interview (Phase 2) participants; while Table 4.2c and 4.2d, respectively, show the gender breakdown of the survey and interview participants.

**Table 4.2a***Collapsed Age Breakdown of Survey Participants (n=1039)*

Value	Count	Percent
Age Group 1 (Gen-Z)	276	26.6%
Age Group 2 (Older Cohort)	763	73.4%

**Table 4.2b***Collapsed Age Breakdown of Interview participants (n=17)*

Value	Count	Percent
Age Group 1 (Gen-Z)	9	52.9%
Age Group 2 (Older Cohort)	8	47.1%

**Table 4.2c***Gender Breakdown of Survey Participants (n=1039)*

Gender	Count	Percent
Male	870	83.7
Female	169	16.3

**Table 4.2d***Gender Breakdown of Interview participants (n=17)*

Gender	Count	Percent
Male	12	70.6
Female	5	29.4

### 4.3 SURFING FREQUENCY OF TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Table 4.3 below shows how often survey participants' surf. Surfing frequency of Phase 2 interview participants was not measured. The following descriptive data about surfing frequency, therefore, apply to the survey participants only.

**Table 4.3**

*Surfing Frequency of Survey Participants (n=1039)*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
1 I don't surf much but enjoy being informed about the sport, and watching it	65	6.3
2 A few times a year or just when on holidays	129	12.4
3 Less than once a week but more than once a month	178	17.1
4 Once a week	208	20.0
5 Several times per week	459	44.2
Total	1039	100.0

#### 4.3.1 SURFING FREQUENCY BY AGE

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed a significant difference in surfing frequency between Age Group 1 ( $Md = 3, n = 276$ ) and Age Group 2 ( $Md = 4, n = 763$ ),  $U = 78601, z = -6.591, p < .001, r = .20$ . Specifically, Age Group 2 surfs more frequently than the younger Age Group 1. Using Cohen (1988) the  $r$  value shows a small effect size.

#### 4.3.2 SURFING FREQUENCY BY GENDER

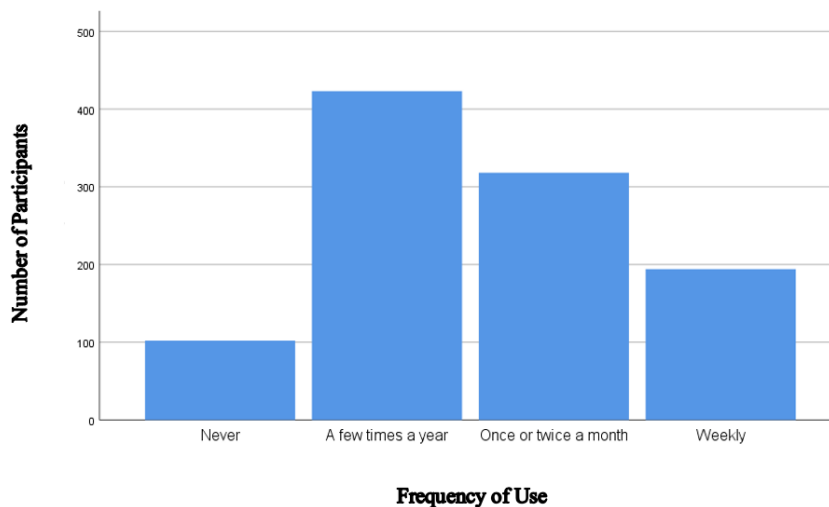
Among the survey participants, males were more active than females, whose level of surf participation was less frequent. This was supported by a Mann-Whitney U test, which revealed a significant difference in surfing frequency between males ( $Md = 4, n = 870$ ) and females ( $Md = 2, n = 169$ ),  $U = 37570, z = -10.62, p < .001, r = .33$ . Using Cohen (1988), the  $r$  value shows a medium effect size.

#### 4.4 SURF MAGAZINE USE OF TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Figure 4.1 shows that 41% of survey participants read surf magazines a few times a year; however, 49% read surf magazines more than once or twice a month. Surf magazine use of interview participants was not measured. The following descriptive data about surf magazine use, therefore, apply to the survey participants only.

**Figure 4.1**

*Surf Magazine Use of All Participants (n=1037)*



##### 4.4.1 SURF MAGAZINE USE BY AGE

A Mann-Whitney U test exploring significance in surf magazine use between Age Group 1 ( $Md = 3, n = 274$ ) and Age Group 2 ( $Md = 2, n = 763$ ) revealed a significant difference in surf magazine use between the two groups but with a small effect size,  $U = 93014, z = -2.86, p = .004, r = .08$ . That is, Age Group 1 reads surf magazines marginally more frequently than Age Group 2.

##### 4.4.2 SURF MAGAZINE USE BY GENDER

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in surf magazine use between males ( $Md = 2, n = 869$ ) and females ( $Md = 2, n = 168$ ),  $U = 69096, z = -1.159, p = .246$ . That is, the frequency by which participants read surf magazines does not significantly differ as a function of gender.

#### 4.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

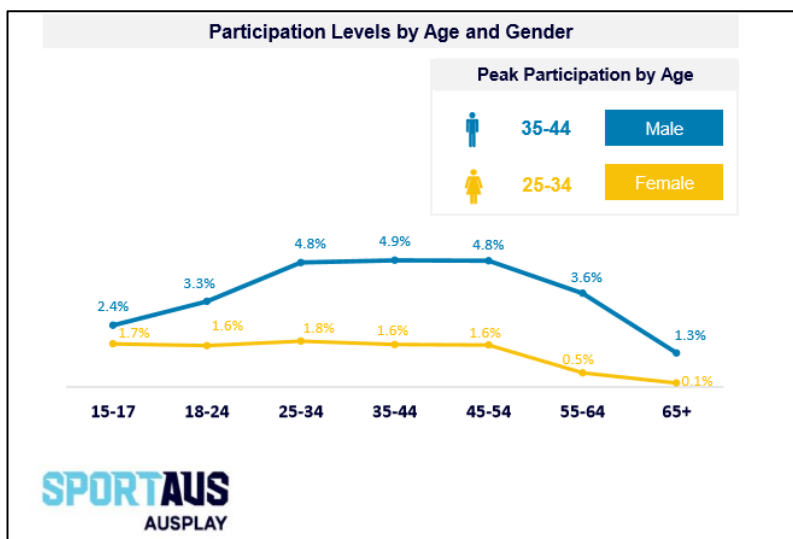
The total participant group is characterised by highly active surfing participation, whose age and gender profile align with the most recent data available on the Australian surfing demographic (AusPlay, 2021), which provides support for the reliability of the sample used in this study. Interestingly, magazine use is slightly higher in the Gen-Z age group than the older age group.

#### 4.6 DISCUSSION

The survey data shows the older age cohort (Age Group 2) surfs more frequently than the younger, Gen-Z cohort (Age Group 1). This is consistent with the AusPlay (2019) report which had a similar number of participants (See figure 4.2 below), and the AusPlay (2021) report shows that peak participation in surfing occurs in the 45 to 49-years age category.

**Figure 4.2**

*AusPlay (2019) Surfing Participation by Age and Gender (n = 1177)*



Notes: 1 =Don't surf much; 2=a few times a year; 3=less than once a week; 4=once a week; 5=several times a week. This figure was made available under [CC BY NC ND 3.0 AU](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/au/)

The finding in this study and the AusPlay reports (2019, 2021) are in contrast to the common public perception of surfing as a youth sport connected to youth culture (Jarratt, 2010; Pearson, 1982, Ford & Brown, 2005). It is, however, consistent with the

literature on the growth of post-youth leisure lifestyles (Wheaton, 2019). Indeed, Warshaw (2005) observed that in the 1970s, the average age of a surfer was around 18 years-of-age but it “is now somewhere near 30 today” (p. 54). This finding is important because although surfing is widely considered a youth sport associated with youth culture, the modern reality is different. A more accurate descriptor would be that surfing is a youthful sport and surfers form part of a youthful subculture. The distinction between youth and youthful is important because the average surfing participant no longer falls into the traditional definition of “youth” (between 14 and 24-years-of-age), however, they remain youthful by nature. The youthful appeal of the surfing lifestyle is, therefore, an aspirational positionality. This finding supports the notion that the surfing participant, who is also a consumer of surfing related goods and services, should not be defined by age but rather their attraction to a youthful aspirational proposition. This is especially relevant in Australia where the global phenomenon of an aging surfing demographic (Beaumont & Brown, 2015; Warshaw, 2005; Wheaton, 2019) is compounded by an aging Australian population (ABS, 2020).

Survey data showed that nearly half the total participant group (49%) reads surf magazines more than once or twice a month. This finding appears to contrast the dire predictions for surf magazines in the public discourse (Surflife, 2017). However, when compared to reports on the time spent consuming digital media (Deloitte, 2021; GWI, 2021; PwC, 2021), reading surf magazines more than once or twice a month is relatively infrequent. Industry reports show that media consumption is increasing but the growth is mostly in digital media consumption (Deloitte, 2021; PwC, 2021).

The survey data also show that the Gen-Z cohort reads surf magazines marginally more frequently than the older age cohort. This finding is surprising given youth are reported to be abandoning print media in favour of digital media (Bennett et al., 2008; Bolton et al., 2013; Bonner & Roberts, 2017; PwC, 2021; Roy Morgan, 2021). However, perhaps this is part of an emerging trend because Webb and Fulton (2019) found a notable increase in young adult female readers who are choosing to engage with independent women’s magazines in Australia based on their aesthetic appeal. In line with Webb and Fulton’s work, aesthetic quality was one of the themes that emerged from the Phase 2 interview question about what makes surf magazines unique. For example, Aaron (38) explained it this way:

The quality, you know, when I think about great surf stories that I've read, very few are internet-based stories. And it's also got the highest aesthetic values as well, you just see better pictures in a magazine than you do elsewhere, and so in that sense the magazine stands as the best we can do currently.

#### 4.7 CHAPTER FOUR CONCLUSION

In this chapter, it was shown that the age, gender and surfing frequency profile of the participant group aligns with that of a 2019 government study of surfers in Australia, which provides support for the reliability of the sample used in this study. The high level of participation in surfing by the older age cohort is consistent with a broader trend of extended participation in youthful lifestyles. Having completed a descriptive analysis of the participant groups, more detailed results and discussion relating to the research questions, are presented next.



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CHAPTER 5: CONTENT NEEDS AND CONTENT SOURCES

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter explores the data relating to Research Question 1a: *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*; Research Question 1b: *What media sources do Gen-Z surfers use to satisfy their content needs?*; and, Research Question 1c: *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise these media sources?* For each research question, the quantitative results of the Phase 1 survey are presented and explained. This is followed by a discussion supported by the literature and qualitative data that were derived from the Phase 2 interviews, and finally, a summary will conclude the chapter.

## 5.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 1A: HIERARCHY OF CONTENT NEEDS

This section explores the data relating to Research Question 1a: *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* Survey participants were asked to rank the content options using an in-built drag and drop function. The results will be presented by total participant group before being split by age group. This will be followed by a summary of the results and then a discussion, before progressing to RQ 1b.

### 5.2.1 RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Based on mean ranks, the first column of Table 5.1 shows the content preference of the total sample population, with 1 being their most favourite and 5 being their least favourite content category.

**Table 5.1***Ranking of Content needs, Total Participant Group (n = 1015)*

Rank	Total participants	Mean score	Sig. Rank
1	Conditions	3.41	1
2	Travel	3.37	1
3	Technique	3.29	1
4	Interviews	2.63	4
5	Competition	2.30	5

Within-group analyses were conducted to establish the integrity of the rank order. A Friedman test confirmed that the differences between the ranking of the content categories were statistically significant [ $\chi^2(4, n = 1015) = 412.36, p < .001$ ]. A follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was conducted to investigate specific significance in the within-group rank order by comparing pairs within the rank order. It was found that Conditions and Travel ( $z = -.345, p = .730$ ), and Travel and Technique ( $z = -1.404, p = .160$ ) were not significantly different, however Technique and Interviews ( $z = -9.551, p < .001$ ) and Interviews and Competition ( $z = -5.409, p < .001$ ) were significantly different. A revised ranking, adjusted for significance, is shown in the last column of Table 5.1.

### 5.2.2 RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS SPLIT BY AGE

Using mean rank scores, Table 5.2 and 5.3 below shows the difference in the content preferences of the total sample population when broken down by age.

**Table 5.2***Ranking of Content Needs, Age Group 1*

Rank	Age group 1	Mean score	Sig.rank
1	Technique	3.54	1
2	Conditions	3.51	1
3	Travel	3.12	3
4	Competition	2.72	4
5	Interviews	2.11	5

**Table 5.3***Ranking of Content Needs, Age Group 2*

Rank	Age group 2	Mean score	Sig.rank
1	Travel	3.46	1
2	Conditions	3.38	1
3	Technique	3.19	3
4	Interviews	2.81	4
5	Competition	2.15	5

Within-group analyses were conducted to establish the integrity of the rank order in each group. A Friedman test confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the content categories were statistically significant within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(4, n = 265) = 152.28, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(4, n = 750) = 344.03, p < .001$ ]. More detailed within-group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 it was found that the difference between first and second ranked Technique and Conditions ( $z = -.113, p = .910$ ) were not significant, but the remaining ranks were all significantly different

[Conditions and Travel ( $z = -2.70, p = .007$ ); Travel and Competition ( $z = -3.00, p = .003$ ); Competition and Interviews ( $z = -5.21, p < .001$ )].

For Age Group 2 it was found that the difference between first and second ranked Travel and Conditions ( $z = -1.17, p = .243$ ) were not significant, but the remaining ranks were all significantly different [Conditions and Technique ( $z = -2.03, p = .042$ ); Technique and Interviews ( $z = -4.88, p < .001$ ); Interviews and Competition ( $z = -9.40, p < .001$ )]. A revised ranking, adjusted for significance, is shown in the last column of Tables 5.2 and 5.3.

### 5.2.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1A RESULTS

The mean rank scores for the total participant group show a clear separation between a cluster of the top three content types (Travel, Conditions and Technique) and a cluster of the bottom two content types (Interviews and Competition). The separation between the two clusters remained evident when comparing age groups. In the top cluster both age group cohorts are interested in accessing content about surf Conditions, however, the Gen-Z age cohort is more interested in Technique than Travel while the older age cohort prefers Travel more than Technique. In the bottom cluster of the rank order, the Gen-Z age cohort ranks Interviews lower than Competition whereas the older age cohort ranks Competition lower than Interviews.

### 5.2.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1A RESULTS

This discussion concerns RQ 1a: *What are the content needs of the Gen-Z surfers?* The discussion will explain the survey results using theory, other scholarly work and interview data, in order to understand, and at times, compare and contrast, the attitudes, thoughts and perspectives of both Age Group 1 (Gen-Z) and Age group 2 (the older cohort). From these conclusions will be drawn about what the content needs of the Gen-Z surfers are.

Although Booth (2020) states that most scholarly literature on the subject of surfing describes it as a lifestyle sport, people surf for very different reasons; some surf for communion with nature, others for sporting prowess, general fitness, or for fun with friends and/or family. The one constant requirement for all these motivations is the

presence of waves. Obviously, without waves there can be no surfing. Thus, in 1998, when CoastalWatch (now Surfline) and Swellnet established a small network of cameras feeding live vision of the surf conditions back to their websites, they immediately attracted an audience because they were catering to a fundamental need. Today, the low cost of live vision camera technology and affordability of high-speed internet have enabled these businesses to establish a large network of ‘surfcams’ which surfers utilise to check the surf conditions and stay in touch with their local breaks. The high ranking of Surf Conditions is, therefore, explained by the existence of surf forecasting and live camera websites, which are accessed by surfers of all ages to monitor the surf conditions, often daily. For example, marketing expert Anthony (57) explained, “I look at conditions every day, like everybody else does, just because you can.” The surf forecasting and live camera sites also publish extra content such as: surfing news, travel reports, and equipment reviews. Most of this content, however, is driven by commercial arrangements and only about 10% of time on site is spent consuming this type of content (R. Holt, personal communication, November 4, 2021).

While the high ranking of Surf Conditions is not surprising, the other two content categories in the top three cluster, Technique and Travel, revealed interesting differences between Gen-Z and the older age cohort. In response to interview questions on this phenomenon, two strong themes emerged. Interview respondents from the Gen-Z age cohort prefer to consume content about Technique ahead of Travel, and, interview respondents from the older age cohort prefer content about Travel ahead of Technique. Gen-Z’s higher interest in Technique may be because they are still developing their surfing ability and while they are interested in travel, it is something they expect to do later, when they have the money, opportunity, and in some cases, the surfing ability. Abby (19) explained that, “Technique is more interesting to me because I just want to be a machine!” Asher (18) explained that when, “people are younger, they just want to get better”. Meanwhile, respondents from the older age cohort were resigned to the fact that their current standard is not going to improve. Thus, information about technique and equipment is less important to them. The following series of quotes exemplify this sentiment:

Adam (34): "I don't have the desire to surf with perfect technique, I surf because it's fun and I'm just happy to do some carves and, and just enjoy it for whatever it is."

Aaron (38): “If I saw an article that told me how to boost an air, I would turn to the next page. It’s not going to happen!”

Anton (44): “So someone who’s young, learning to surf, aspires to be a better surfer. Someone who’s our age, is probably past aspiring to be a better surfer, and aspiring to explore and get out of the office.”

Alec (55): “The horse has bolted on that sort of a front (that is, surfing technique), mate!”

The above quotes show a shifting of priorities over time as a surfer ages. Younger surfers are eager to improve their surfing technique, but as they age, their interest moves away from performance and more towards the broader experiences inherent to surfing (Wheaton, 2019). One of the primary broader experiences of surfing is travel (Ford & Brown, 2006; Pointing, McDonald & Wearing, 2005), which is explored in more detail later in this chapter.

The interest shown by Gen-Z respondents in improving their surfing technique can be explained by the forces of self and group identity. Evidently, becoming better surfers, and being recognised as such, contributes to their self-identity as surfers and their sense of belonging to the wider surfing subculture. Erikson’s (1950) seminal theory of psychosocial development posits that individual and social identity formation occurs during adolescence. Similarly, Mannheim’s (1952) generation theory proposes that attitudes, values and characteristics of a generational cohort are influenced most compellingly during events that occur around the age of youth. Erikson’s identity theory and Mannheim’s theory of generations recognise that identity formation is very active for the Gen-Z segment of this study (i.e., 15-21 years-of-age). Ford and Brown (2005), meanwhile, observe that a surfer’s social standing is heavily influenced by present (and past) surfing skill, which they term “performance capital” (p. 81). Thus, Gen-Z’s interest in surfing technique is explained by the intense identity needs (Erikson, 1950; Mannheim, 1952) of this age cohort, and the contribution that performance capital can make to their social standing in the surfing subculture (Ford & Brown, 2005). Andrew (21) exemplified all of this when he explained that his interest in technique offers him, “more hope of being recognised for surfing. So, you’re relying on technique to be putting your name out there”. Allen (18) concurred, saying, “I’d rather look good in the

surf ... I think technique makes you a good surfer ... So, yeah, I think it's just about looking better or looking good".

Wheaton's research (2019) into ageing surfer identities revealed that as surfers age, they experience a loss of performance capital and status, and so they embrace different ways of being a surfer. This can occur by changing the size of their surfboard, becoming more risk-averse, and also developing, "an expanded sense of being a surfer" (Wheaton, 2019, p. 404). Indeed, Wheaton suggested that the ageing process in surfers results in them appreciating broader aspects of the surfing lifestyle such as, "the natural blue space, their intergenerational friendships and the sense of excitement and achievement and well-being as well as physical fitness gained" (Wheaton, 2019, p. 404). Much of what Wheaton describes as an expanded sense of being a surfer is satisfied by surf travel.

Just as waves are a fundamental component of the surfing experience for all types of surfers, travel has a similar intrinsic connection to surfing. The search for the elusive perfect wave is innate to the surfing way of life (Ford & Brown, 2006; Preston-Whyte, 2001; Scheibel, 1995) and as a result, surf tourism is a growing niche within the adventure/sport tourism sector (Ponting & O'Brien, 2015). Research by Towner (2015) on motivations for surf tourism, found most surf tourists are "seekers" who are motivated by the pull factor of surfing high-quality, uncrowded waves. Pursuant to this, Towner observed that most surf tourists are well-educated, middle-aged males with high discretionary income who he classified as, "escapers ... wanting a break from their nine-to-five workdays, Western lifestyles and the average, cold, crowded home surf breaks" (Towner 2015, p. 69). Towner's observations were borne out in the interview data. For example, Alec (55) stated that, "I'd say, being an old person, supposedly with some disposable income, that travel would be, you know, the thing that I'm interested in - to get away from all the Generation Z!". This explains why Gen-Z rank Technique above Travel, and why the older cohort ranks Travel above Technique. It also suggests that as time passes, Gen-Z will broaden their interest in surfing and the allure of surf travel will interest them more.

The low ranking for content about competitive surfing (*Competition*) warranted further investigation because the surf media and surf brands tend to focus a considerable amount of attention on high-ranking competitive surfers, through editorial coverage and



event and athlete sponsorship (Jarratt, 2010). While survey data suggested a low level of interest in content about competitive surfing, the interview data revealed that this finding is not necessarily complete. Indeed, rather than a low level of interest in competitive surfing, the result may rather be indicative of the infrequent occurrence of surfing competitions, and thus, a comparatively low level of use. An indicative quote in the interview data is that of Arthur (20), who stated that, “Whenever it’s [a World Surf League event] on, I’m sure it’s the most watched thing”. Competitive surfing does, however, have a contentious place in surfing, and this has been an ongoing subject of debate among surfers since the 1970s (Booth, 2020; Brennan, 2021; Fiske, 1989; Ford & Brown, 2006; Jarratt, 2010), and will now be explored in more detail.

Brennan (2021) contends that most descriptions of surfing depict it as an “aesthetic pursuit” partaken by surfers who escape from “mundane society to experience the unique sights and sensations that only come through riding waves” (p. 11). As such Brennan concludes that surfing is best described as ‘play’, citing Huizinga’s (1995) definition of play as something that is distinct from ordinary life, “yet still utterly absorbing” (p. 11). Brennan suggests that the objection some surfers have to competitive surfing is that it loses some of the vital components of play and, as such, competitive surfing is viewed as the commercialisation of an antisocial subculture. Ashton (18) was a champion of surfing as play, arguing that:

Surfing probably was never really a competition sport in its early ages, it was more like a leisure activity, and competition only sort of started coming around, like around about now. But surfing always used to be, you know, chill, and not really competitive ... I’m not competitive. I’d rather see a bit of Australia and the world, and surf. You know just have some really good times, you know, surfing.

Scholarly efforts to unpack the fractious marriage between competition and surfing have found the roots of discomfort run deeper than surfing specifically. Booth (2020) suggests competition is not an essential component of nature/extreme/lifestyle sports, such as surfing. He supports Krein’s (2015) assertion that competition in nature sports exists on a continuum where the more formal competition is embedded in a nature sport, the less of a nature sport it really is. About surfing specifically, Booth (2020) explains that competition is innately about conquest; exerting control over the elements that naturally prevail, whereas surfing is best described as a union between

surfer and wave, where neither entity exerts ultimate control. Andrew (21) encapsulated this when he explained that, “Maybe people just don’t like the format of competition surfing, because surfing is ... like, it sounds so cliché ... but it’s probably very spiritual for a lot of people. Then you see it condensed in, like, a competition form, maybe a lot of people don’t relate well to that”. Interestingly, in a similar vein but at the other end of the participant age range, Alec (55) concurred by likening surfing to a religious experience. He observed that: “I think it’s also because people have such an intensely personal relationship with surfing themselves that they see any kind of mainstream - and competition is the effort of surfing trying to become a mainstream thing - that they see that as almost kind of sacrilegious”.

Competition’s low ranking may, in part, be explained by survey respondents answering the survey question based on their recall of frequency of usage, and since competitions occur less frequently than, for example, their daily visit to their favourite surf cam website, it therefore ranked low. However, even if that were the case, Competition’s ranking would likely remain low because many surfers see competitive surfing as an illegitimate part of the subculture (Brennan, 2021).

The content category of Interviews is a truncation for ‘interviews and profiles about famous or iconic surfers’. The ranking for Interviews may be impacted by the same factors that resulted in Competition’s low ranking. Surfers who see surfing as a personal communion with the ocean’s waves are less likely to be enthralled by famous surfers, especially if such fame was earned through the structures of competition. The close link between Competition and Interviews is evident in the data. For Gen-Z, Interviews ranked lowest with Competition second lowest, and for the older cohort Competition ranked lowest with Interviews second lowest.

To summarise, this discussion has explained that Gen-Z ranks Conditions highly because live streaming technology allows them to check the surf conditions regularly, and their frequency of use and level of interest in daily surf conditions, is high. It was then explained why Gen-Z ranks content about technique and equipment more highly than content about surf travel, and how inevitably, their interest will gravitate towards Travel over Technique. While Technique, Conditions, and Travel dominate the content needs of the Gen-Z participants; the importance of Competition to some, but not others, was explained.

Having ranked the five content types (Conditions, Travel, Technique, Interviews, Competition), participants were then asked to indicate where they source information about each of the five content types, from a choice of four possible media sources, namely: magazines, websites, television, and social media. Accordingly, the next section explores the data relating to the media sources used to meet surfers' content needs.

### 5.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 1B: RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS BY MEDIA SOURCE

This section explores the data relating to Research Question 1b: *What media sources do Gen-Z surfers use to satisfy their content needs?* Survey participants were asked to rate the extent to which they use each media source to access the five content types. From these data, it is possible to use mean scores to establish a hierarchy of preferred content types for each of the four media sources, the results of which are outlined in Table 5.4 below. In this section, content preference by media source will be analysed by the total participant group, followed by an analysis by age. A summary of the results will be provided, before a discussion that is supported by both the literature and the qualitative data from the Phase 2 interviews.

**Table 5.4**

*Content Ranking by Media Source*

Rank	Magazines	Social media	Websites	Television
1	Travel	Travel	Conditions	Competition
2	Technique	Competition	Travel	Conditions
3	Interviews	Technique	Technique	Interviews
4	Competition	Interviews	Competition	Travel
5	Conditions	Conditions	Interviews	Technique

### 5.3.1 RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS BY MEDIA SOURCE FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores of the total participant group’s responses, a ranking of preferred content types for each of the four media sources was established. A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the content types were statistically significant for each of the four media sources [Magazines:  $\chi^2(4, n = 974) = 498.94, p < .001$ ; Social Media:  $\chi^2(4, n = 974) = 39.28, p < .001$ ; Websites:  $\chi^2(4, n = 974) = 1216.50, p < .001$ ; Television:  $\chi^2(4, n = 974) = 475.07, p < .001$ ]. Further within-group analyses were undertaken by means of a series of Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, which compares pairs of content preferences within each of the four media sources. The full set of results are contained in Appendix A, but the table below provides a snapshot of this analysis. A summary is provided at the end of this sub section.

**Table 5.5**

*Content Ranking by Media Source*

Rank	Magazines	Sig. Rank	Social media	Sig. Rank	Websites	Sig. Rank	Television	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	1	Travel	1	Conditions	1	Competition	1
2	Technique	2	Competition	2	Travel	2	Conditions	2
3	Interviews	3	Technique	2	Technique	2	Interviews	3
4	Competition	4	Interviews	2	Competition	4	Travel	3
5	Conditions	3	Conditions	2	Interviews	5	Technique	5

To summarise this sub section, aside from establishing the integrity of the within-group ranking of content preference by media source, the above analysis provides evidence that content preference may be influenced by the media source from which it is accessed. For example, content about Conditions is most commonly accessed via Websites (where it is ranked first), and Television (where it is ranked second). By

contrast, Conditions is the least preferred content type when accessed using Magazines and Social Media. Similarly, content about Competition is commonly accessed using Television (where it is ranked first) and Social Media (where it is ranked second). By contrast, Competition is ranked fourth when accessed using Websites and Magazines. Based on an analysis of the mean score and the standard deviation, the strength of the usability of Websites for Conditions ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.851$ ) appears clear and concordant, and by contrast, an analysis of the mean score and the standard deviation of Competition's link to Television ( $M = 2.64$ ,  $SD = 1.370$ ) appears tenuous. Magazines ( $M = 3.27$ ,  $SD = 1.049$ ) and Social Media ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = 1.204$ ) enjoy a similar strength of suitability to Travel. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests reveal that Magazines is the only media source with a significant difference between each rank within the entire spread, suggesting there is clarity around the relative use value of this media source for the five content types. Finally, for each of the four media sources, there is a significant difference between content types ranked first and second. From this, it is possible to identify content types that, based on the evidence of usage, are best suited to each media source. The top ranked content type for each media source is shown in Table 5.6 below.

**Table 5.6**

*Highest Ranked Content Needs by Media Source*

Media source	Preferred content type	Mean score	Standard deviation
Surf Magazines	Travel	3.27	1.049
Social Media	Travel	3.37	1.204
Websites	Conditions	4.50	0.851
Television	Competition	2.6.3	1.370

### 5.3.2 RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS BY MEDIA SOURCE FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP, SPLIT BY AGE

The same set of statistical analyses used in Section 5.3.1 were applied to this sub-section; namely, mean scores were used to establish the ranking of preferred

content types for each age group across all four media sources. Friedman tests examined general significance of within-group rank order; this was followed by more specific Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests examining each pair within each ranked group. The full set of results are contained in Appendix B, but Table 5.7 and 5.8 below presents a snapshot of this analysis. A summary is provided at the end of this sub section.

**Table 5.7**

*Content Ranking by Media Source, Age Group 1*

Rank	Magazines	Sig. Rank	Social media	Sig. Rank	Websites	Sig. Rank	Television	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	1	Travel	1	Conditions	1	Competition	1
2	Technique	1	Competition	1	Travel	2	Conditions	2
3	Interviews	3	Technique	3	Technique	2	Interviews	2
4	Competition	3	Interviews	3	Competition	2	Travel	2
5	Conditions	3	Conditions	3	Interviews	5	Technique	5

**Table 5.8**

*Content Ranking by Media Source, Age Group 2*

Rank	Magazines	Sig. Rank	Social media	Sig. Rank	Websites	Sig. Rank	Television	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	1	Travel	1	Conditions	1	Competition	1
2	Technique	2	Competition	2	Travel	2	Conditions	2
3	Interviews	3	Technique	2	Technique	3	Interviews	3
4	Competition	4	Interviews	4	Competition	4	Travel	3
5	Conditions	5	Conditions	4	Interviews	5	Technique	5

### 5.3.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1B RESULTS

Once split by age group, the separation between the top two content types for each media source becomes less distinct, with the existence of equal first in two instances in Age Group 1, namely, Surf Magazines, and Websites. This weakens but does not invalidate the assertion that it is possible to identify a most-preferred content type for each media source. Including ties, the top ranked content type for each media source when split by age is shown in Tables 5.9 and 5.10 below. It is noteworthy that both age groups have the same top two content types for each media source. This unanimity further supports the assertion that it is possible to identify preferred content types for each media source.

**Table 5.9**

*Highest Ranked Content Preference by Media Source, Age Group 1*

Media Source	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Magazines	Travel and Technique	3.46	0.961
Social Media	Competition and Interviews	3.82	1.055
Websites	Conditions	4.34	0.943
Television	Competition	3.31	1.270

**Table 5.10**

*Highest Ranked Content Preference by Media Source, Age Group 2*

Media Source	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Magazines	Travel	3.20	1.070
Social Media	Travel	3.26	1.253
Websites	Conditions	4.56	0.810
Television	Competition	2.41	1.326

Another noteworthy finding in the tables above is that there is a high degree of consensus about the suitability of Conditions to Websites for both age groups, as evidenced by the high mean scores and low standard deviation scores. To a lesser extent, the same applies to the suitability of Travel and Technique to Magazines for Age Group 1. Finally, when analysing the whole participant group (Section 5.3.1), it was found the only media source that had a significant difference between each rank was Magazines, however, when split by age this applies to Age Group 2 only. This shows that clarity around the relative use value of the five content types for Surf magazines does not apply to Age Group 1. Gen-Z (Age Group 1) is clear that Travel and Technique are well suited to magazines (ranked equal first) and believes that Interviews, Competition and Conditions (all ranked second) are equally less suited to magazines. The important point is that the results show that both age group cohorts agree on the suitability of magazines for the delivery of Travel and Technique. This, and other aspects of the RQ 1b will be discussed below.

#### 5.3.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1B RESULTS

This discussion concerns RQ 1b: *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?* Using quantitative and qualitative data derived from this study, it will explain the results considering the perspectives of both Age Group 1 (Gen-Z) and Age group 2 (the older cohort). From this, conclusions will be drawn about what media sources Gen-Z surfers use to satisfy their content needs.

In the previous section (Section 5.4 RQ 1a) it was shown that the top three favoured content types for the total participant group are: Conditions, Travel and Technique. In this section, the data demonstrate that content about the surf conditions was commonly accessed via websites, and the strength of this usage link was clear and concordant. This is not surprising given the need to check surf conditions is satisfied by websites that live stream from beaches around the coast of Australia. It does, however, provide confidence in the validity of the instrumentation (survey) used. Thus, with a similar level of confidence ( $SD = 0.961$ ), this section found that surf magazines were mostly used by Gen-Z to access content about Travel and Technique. This is a noteworthy finding because it suggests that surf magazines have strong usability links with two of the three most favoured content types.



Interview data reveal two common themes about why magazines are well suited to the delivery of content about Travel and Technique. The first theme relates to the affective and aesthetic quality of printed magazines, while the second theme relates to perceptions of authenticity and credibility.

As already discussed, the search for the perfect wave is deeply embedded in the individual surfer's psyche and wider surfing subculture. A printed magazine containing well-written words accompanied by beautifully reproduced images seems to trigger a powerful emotive response (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Haniff, 2006; Webb & Fulton, 2019). Interviewees expressed difficulty in articulating specifics about the attraction to consuming travel content in print, but the affective response to printed travel content was thematically distinct. For example, Alfred (24), spoke about the feeling of consuming travel content in the printed format:

I get a different feeling from reading a travel story when I read it in a book, compared to if I was to read it on a screen, or on my phone .... I've started to value the work and the quality that goes into a magazine, and the creative aspects of it. And, yeah, I like having the words and pictures there, and that I can flip the pages that I can sort of feel in my hands. It just feels better to me; it feels nicer to read a story or something about travel in that form for me... it sort of stays with me much longer. Whereas you can watch a video on YouTube of a location as well, but it's just a bit of a blur to me personally.

Alfred's comments are consistent with the findings of Webb and Fulton (2019) who concluded that, "high-quality designs, layouts, photography and art on high-quality paper offered an aesthetic experience, which online content can find difficult to compete with" (p. 283). Alfred's comments are also consistent with Haniff (2006), who found that, "emotional connections to a print publication evoke feelings of relaxation, attachment and even constructs strong memory recall" (p. 67).

Andrew (21) suggested that the deeper connection generated by magazines makes the experience more transformative. He suggested that, "when you're reading (travel stories in print), like maybe your imagination kind of puts you there, whereas if you're just watching something you're just seeing images given to you". Andrew's comment aligns with Randle (2001) who found that magazines have both affective

(emotional) and diversionary effects on the consumer when compared to the Internet. Indeed, diversion has been found by U&G researchers to be a particular strength of consumer magazines (Payne et al. 1988; Randle, 2003; Towers & Harting, 1983; Towers, 1987). Diversion is described as “relaxing, escaping or passing time with entertainment material” (Payne et al. 1988, p. 910).

The survey data also revealed that magazines are well suited to the delivery of content about technique and equipment. This type of content is technical in nature, usually time sensitive, and appeals to people who are in an information-seeking mode. Researchers have found that information-seeking is a key U&G motive for the Internet, not magazines (Carter, 2013; Charney & Greenberg, 1999; Randle, 2003), so in this sense, this study contradicts these earlier findings. Two studies help to explain this apparent contradiction. Firstly, Billings et al. (2015) describe the uses and gratification of media in an environment of multiple platforms, results in the user adopting “simultaneous and intermittent selections to jointly aid the quest of the optimal media gratification” (p. 3). Secondly Bonner and Roberts (2017) found 75% of their respondents consumed magazine content in combination with other platforms, finding, incidentally, that “print is the critical link to these relationships” (p. 4). In this study, interview data showed that magazines are critical to the delivery of content about technique and equipment because they are perceived to have editorial integrity. Andre (21) reflected the many comments expressing the trust and credibility in print:

There’s so much research going into those magazines, and I feel like most of the magazines are done by proper professional editors and stuff like that ... And they’ve got their name like written down on every single little article, whereas in social media, you could be anonymous. So, I feel like people will trust magazines because of that, because they know the person, there’s a name to it.

As discussed in Chapter 3, there has been a surge of research interest in trust and credibility in media due to the impact this can have on the prospects of a media business (Chayko, 2021; Karsen & Aalberg, 2021; Strömbäck, et al., 2020; Tsfati & Cappella, 2005). These researchers draw on the work of Hovland et al. (1953) who made the distinction between source credibility and medium credibility. What these researchers suggest, and respondents in this study imply, is that perceptions of credibility, authenticity, and trust can influence media choice. Respondents in this study

demonstrated that they value expert opinion (source credibility) to satisfy their need for information about technique and equipment, and they believe they get this in magazines. Consequently, the source credibility attributed to magazines give magazines medium credibility for content about technique and equipment.

Finally, it has already been shown with a high degree of confidence that content about surf conditions is commonly accessed by websites. This was found when the data were analysed by total participant group as well as by both age cohorts. Similarly, content about Travel and Technique were most commonly accessed via magazines when analysed by total participant group as well as by both age cohorts. Thus, with the application of the same logic and a similar degree of confidence, it can be argued that surf magazines are well-suited to the delivery of content about surf travel, and, about technique and equipment. Indeed, for all four media sources, there was unanimity about the top two content types for each media source when analysed by the total participant group and by both age groups. These are shown in Table 5.11 below. This degree of unanimity further supports the assertion that it is possible to identify preferred content types for each media source. It is worth noting that this finding cannot be generalised as it only applies to the five content types and four media sources presented, but it does provide scope for further research into matching the message and the medium in order to achieve optimal user engagement.

**Table 5.11**

*Content Suitability by Media Source*

Media Source	Content Type
Magazines	Travel and Technique
Social Media	Competition and Interviews
Websites	Conditions and Travel
Television	Competition and Conditions

To summarise this discussion, the data analysis showed a high degree of unanimity between Gen-Z and the older cohort about the suitability of each media

source for the delivery of certain content types. This suggests there is clarity around perceptions of medium and content suitability. The suitability of magazines for the provision of content about surf travel can be explained by the medium's innate affective and diversionary characteristics. Well-worded travel stories accompanied by beautifully presented images can evoke a powerful emotional response in readers who become temporarily transported into the narrative world. The suitability of magazines for the provision of content about technique and equipment, which is more important to Gen-Z than the older cohort, is posited to be attributable to the perception that magazines have source credibility and this, in turn, affords them medium credibility for this content category. And finally, this section identified and presented the top two content types empirically found to be best suited to each of the four media sources in the study. This advances work by Randle (2003) who called for more research in identifying the suitability of media sources for the delivery of particular content types. It contributes to media substitution theory building because discovering a match between a content type/s and a media type provides the opportunity for media sources to achieve co-existence and avoid displacement. It also has practical implications, which will be discussed in Chapter 8.

Having identified the media sources that best satisfy the content needs of the participant group, it becomes necessary to understand the extent to which these media sources are used to satisfy the respondents' content needs. Accordingly, the next section explores the data relating to Research Question 1c: *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise these media sources?*

#### 5.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 1C: RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY CONTENT TYPE

RQ 1c utilises the same data used to answer RQ 1b but switches the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables, therefore, become the four media sources and the dependent variables become the five content types. The results of which are outlined in Table 5.12 below.

**Table 5.12***Media Source Ranking by Content Type*

Rank	Travel	Interviews	Competition	Technique	Conditions
1	Websites	Social Media	Websites	Websites	Websites
2	Social Media	Websites	Social Media	Social Media	Social Media
3	Magazines	Magazines	Magazines	Magazines	Magazines
4	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television

To test the integrity of the above rank orders, the same non-parametric techniques utilised previously were applied. That is, Friedman tests to establish general significance in within-group rank order; and, Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests to identify specific significance in the rank order. Also, consistent with the previous section, if no significant difference was found between a pair of ranks, that pair is presented as equally ranked. In this section, the ranking of media sources by content type is presented by total participant group before being split by age group. A discussion that incorporates the insight from the qualitative data collection phase in light of the relevant literature will complete this section.

#### 5.4.1 RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY CONTENT TYPE FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores of the total participant group's responses, a ranking of media sources for each of the five content types was established. A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the content types were statistically significant for each of the five content types [Travel:  $\chi^2(3, n = 974) = 962.63, p < .001$ ; Interviews:  $\chi^2(3, n = 974) = 524.17, p < .001$ ; Competition:  $\chi^2(3, n = 974) = 370.98, p < .001$ ; Technique:  $\chi^2(3, n = 974) = 1132.95, p < .001$ ; Conditions:  $\chi^2(3, n = 974) = 1220.55, p < .001$ ]. Further within-group analyses were undertaken by means of a series of Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, which compared pairs of content preferences within each of the four media sources; the following findings were made.

For Travel:

Websites and Social Media ( $z = -6.48, p < .001$ ); Social Media and Magazines ( $z = -1.46, p = .144$ ); Magazines and Television ( $z = -21.13, p < .001$ ). Since the difference between the ranking of Social Media and Magazines is not significant, the last column of Table 5.13 shows them to be ranked equally.

**Table 5.13**

*Media Source Ranking by Content Type: Travel*

Rank	Media Source	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.66	1.015	1
2	Social Media	3.38	1.203	2
3	Magazines	2.32	1.031	2
4	Television	2.09	1.136	4

For Interviews:

Social Media and Websites ( $z = -4.32, p < .001$ ); Websites and Magazines ( $z = -1.77, p = .077$ ); Magazines and Television ( $z = -15.50, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 5.14 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 5.14**

*Media Source Ranking by Content Type: Interviews*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.17	1.237	1
2	Websites	2.98	1.109	2
3	Magazines	2.90	1.012	2
4	Television	2.12	1.200	4

For Competition:

Websites and Social Media ( $z = -4.62, p < .001$ ); Social Media and Magazines ( $z = -12.34, p < .001$ ); Magazines and Television ( $z = -0.79, p = .427$ ). The last column of Table 5.15 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 5.15**

*Media Source Ranking by Content Type: Competition*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.50	1.167	1
2	Social Media	3.29	1.311	2
3	Magazines	2.71	1.099	3
4	Television	2.69	1.374	3

For Technique:

Websites and Social Media ( $z = -8.99, p < .001$ ); Social Media and Magazines ( $z = -1.06, p = .292$ ); Magazines and Television ( $z = -10.29, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 5.16 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 5.16**

*Media Source Ranking by Content Type: Technique*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.63	1.016	1
2	Social Media	3.24	1.224	2
3	Magazines	3.19	1.064	2
4	Television	1.91	1.080	4

For Conditions

Websites and Social Media ( $z = -19.42, p < .001$ ); Social Media and Magazines ( $z = -12.30, p < .001$ ); Magazines and Television ( $z = -4.56, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 5.17 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table 5.17**

*Media Source Ranking by Content Type: Conditions*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.49	0.862	1
2	Social Media	3.15	1.497	2
3	Magazines	2.47	1.376	3
4	Television	2.24	1.305	4

#### 5.4.2 RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY CONTENT TYPE SPLIT BY AGE

This sub-section compares the media source ranking by content type for Age Group 1 (See Table 5.18) and Age Group 2 (See Table 5.19). Friedman tests examined general significance of within-group rank order; and this was followed by more specific Wilcoxon Signed Ranks tests examining each pair within each ranked group. A summary is provided below, and the full set of results are contained in Appendix C.



**Table 5.18***Media Source Ranking by Content Type, Age 1*

Rank	Travel	Interviews	Competition	Technique	Conditions
1	Social Media	Social Media	Social Media	Social Media	Websites
2	Websites*	Websites*	Websites*	Websites*	Social Media
3	Magazines*	Magazines*	Television*	Magazines*	Magazines
4	Television	Television	Magazines	Television	Television

Note. Asterix identifies media sources that are equally ranked when adjusted for significance

**Table 5.19***Media Source Ranking by Content Type, Age 2*

Rank	Travel	Interviews	Competition	Technique	Conditions
1	Websites	Websites*	Websites	Websites	Websites
2	Social Media*	Social Media*	Social Media	Magazines*	Social Media
3	Magazines*	Magazines	Magazines	Social Media*	Magazines
4	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television

Note. Asterix identifies media sources that are equally ranked when adjusted for significance

#### 5.4.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1C RESULTS

Aside from establishing the integrity of the within-group ranking of media sources by content type, the above analysis provides evidence that Websites and Social Media are the most common media source from which content is accessed by the total participant group. Despite its relative strength as a content delivery platform for Travel and Technique, Magazines rank third across the media source spectrum, and Television ranks last. A noteworthy finding is that when adjusted for significance, Magazines rank

equal second, with Social Media, for Travel, and Technique. The general dominance of Social Media and Websites remains evident when split by age, with the only difference being Age Group 1 preferring to use Social Media ahead of Websites for all content types except Conditions, and Age Group 2 preferring to use Websites ahead of Social Media for all content types. When adjusting for significance, Magazines rank equal second under Travel and Technique for both age groups.

#### 5.4.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTION 1c RESULTS

This discussion concerns 1c: *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise these media sources?* It will explain the survey results using theory, other scholarly work and interview data, in order to understand, how and why Gen-Z prioritise their use of the four media sources in the study. This will be followed by a section summary before concluding with a chapter summary.

The tremendous growth in access to and use of the internet is widely reported in the literature and industry reports, so the finding that Magazine use ranks third behind website and social media use for most content categories, is not surprising. The preference of Social Media over Websites by Gen-Z is also consistent with industry reports and scholarly literature (Deloitte, 2021; Jacobsen & Barnes, 2020), however, the apparent contradiction with the findings of RQ 1b warrants explanation.

The survey question asked was “I use *X* to source information about ...?”. The same question was asked four times with *X* being substituted for each of the four media sources, namely: websites, magazines, social media and television. The results showed which media sources are used to satisfy the content needs of the survey participant group. From this information, it was possible to deduce, with a reasonable degree of confidence, that each media source is well suited to the delivery of at least two content types. Table 5.11 is repeated below for reader convenience.

**Table 5.11 (repeated)**

*Content Suitability by Media Source*

Media source	Content type
Magazines	Travel and Technique
Social Media	Competition and Interviews
Websites	Conditions and Travel
Television	Competition and Conditions

The apparent contradiction is that one analysis of the survey data (for RQ 1b) reveals that Gen-Z mostly uses magazines to access content about Travel and Technique, yet another analysis of the survey data (for RQ 1c) reveals that Gen-Z prefers Social Media to access content about Travel and Technique. Moreover, one analysis of the survey data (for RQ 1b) reveals that Gen-Z has a heterogeneous use of media sources to access particular content types, yet a different analysis of the survey data (for RQ 1c) reveals that Gen-Z's media source use is largely homogenous. This will now be explained.

In Chapter 4, it was shown that in response to the survey questions about magazine use, Gen-Z were active users of magazines. In fact, magazine use was slightly higher in the Gen-Z age group than the older age group. However, when compared to digital media use, their consumption of magazines is low. Indeed, a recent study by Engberg et al (2021) revealed the average consumption of digital media by their Gen-Z participants was 3.2 hours per day, while Deloitte (2021) reports Gen-Z spends 3.3 hours a day on social media alone. Thus, this apparent contradiction can be placed into better perspective by stating the following: When accessing their surf content, Gen-Z are heavy users of social media and websites, and only rank magazines third ahead of television. However, when they do read magazines, they appreciate the ability of the medium to deliver travel and technique.

The only exception to Gen-Z's use of social media as their primary source of content is websites for content about surf conditions. This finding was conclusively

supported by the statistical techniques used in the data analysis and corresponds with the logic that surf conditions are consumed by watching live streamed surf locations on the websites that offer this service. This finding also shows that the survey instrumentation used is sensitive enough to pick up this nuance, bolstering confidence in this study's instrumentation.

The survey result showing the older cohort uses websites ahead of social media for their content needs can be explained by the psychological concept of cognitive lock-in which occurs when the consumer is reticent to digress from that which he or she has become accustomed or practised, even though a potentially better alternative may exist (Krishen et al. 2016). This is also supported by Kilian et al., (2012), who posit that, "changes in media use often occur more slowly than technological developments because usage patterns are partly habitual and, therefore, often sticky" (p. 114). This premise was supported by respondents from this study. For example, Adele (21) mused that, "They probably didn't grow up so much with social media, right? And, what they were used to then was going on a computer and looking it up, and I'm sure it's a habit of theirs." Similarly, Andre (21) reflected that:

Like, my old man doesn't really use social media at all. If he's looking at something he'll look online...the older generation aren't used to using social media as much as the young do...I reckon most of them don't really know how to use social media, so they'll just go to what they're comfortable with.

When Gen-Z interview participants were asked why their cohort indicated that magazines are best suited for the delivery of content about Travel and Technique, yet they still use social media to access content about Travel and Technique, the responses could be clustered into three categories, namely: familiarity (comfort), accessibility (easy access), and popularity (everyone uses it). These are summed up in the two interview excerpts below: Adele (21) explained that: It's so accessible, right We have it on our phone every day. I watch Instagram and YouTube daily, and yeah, we're just like, I think we grew up with that and are ingrained in that type of system, you know what I mean? And it can be quite bad in some senses; you become addicted really."

Abby (19) and Alissa (20) were interviewed together and discussed this point at some length:

Abby: It's just that it's the easiest, like, source.

Alissa: Yeah, it does pop up heaps. Especially if you get that algorithm going. It's just like, it's there.

Abby: It's the first thing we look at.

Alissa: Yeah.

Abby: I reckon it's the accessibility ...

Alissa: Yeah. It's always there.

Abby: ... Like, it's on the table right now. If I want to get up a video, I could show you right now.

Alissa: And if you're sitting down and someone's talking about, it's like, oh did you see this?

Abby: Yeah, you'll whack it up.

Alissa: Pull it up and it's just there.

Abby: If it's a book, I have to go downstairs, grab it, find it, find my page, bring it back.

Researcher: So, it's the convenience of social media that makes social media your first choice?

Alissa: Yeah, first, yeah, I would say so.

Abby: Yeah. Which kind of sucks. I wish it was the other way. Like, books are so much better.

Alissa: Yeah, yeah, but the social media's just, yeah, it's getting ...

Abby: Easier.

Alissa: Yeah.

Some interviewees, including Adele, Abby and Alissa above, displayed an unprompted tone of regret in their admission that social media is their go-to media source for almost every content category. They appear to recognise the credibility and quality of print, and have concerns about privacy and the voracity of information of social media, but the advantages of familiarity, accessibility and popularity appear to hold sway. The fact that social media is preferred because the content is free was only

mentioned once by Andre (21), who also described the convenience of accessing content from a device in the palm of his hand:

I reckon everyone these days is really lazy, like I reckon people used to go down to the shops on a Sunday or something to the newsagent and get magazines ... But now that social media and the internet's taking off, everything's for free and you don't have to pay for anything, (so) people would just rather look stuff up online, have something that they can just have on their phone and save, rather than something that might be laying around.

Recent industry reports, however, show an increasing use of subscription services suggesting that paying for content is something consumers are willing to do to get access to exclusive, better-quality content, or reduced advertising (Deloitte, 2021; Rußell et al., 2020). This shows that the well-documented and widespread concerns about trust, privacy and the voracity of information on open digital media platforms (Edelman, 2021) are resulting in the downgrading of one of the original reasons for the migration away from print to online sources. Consumers are showing a willingness to pay for direct access to quality content and this represents a lowering of one of the barriers to adopting magazines; the barrier of cost.

To summarise this discussion, despite the earlier finding (Section 5.10, RQ 1b) that Gen-Z appreciates the superiority of magazines for the delivery of content about Travel, and Technique. They still use social media to access this content. Indeed, it was found that they use social media to access four of the five content categories presented. The only exception being the use of websites for Conditions. Reasons for their stubborn use of social media were clustered into three response categories; familiarity (comfort), accessibility (easy access), and popularity (everyone uses it). However, the qualities of magazines and concerns about social media we also articulated, and this could signal an emerging appetite for change. One such shift is the growth in subscription services which reflects an emerging willingness to pay for digital content and services, thus breaking down one of the original barriers to adopting magazines; the barrier of cost.

## 5.5 CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the findings in relation to research questions 1a, 1b, and 1c were presented and discussed. The research questions focussed on content needs and the media sources used to satisfy them. It was found that magazines had characteristics that make them well suited to the delivery of two of the three top rated content needs; however, despite this, it was found that both Gen-Z and the older cohort preference digital media sources over magazines to access their content. To explore this further, Chapter Six investigates motives for media use.

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CHAPTER 6: MOTIVES FOR MEDIA SOURCE CHOICE

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## 6.1 CHAPTER SIX INTRODUCTION

Having analysed participants' top five content types, as well as their preferred media sources for accessing these content types, it was found that Gen-Z see value in magazines for the delivery of content they desire (Travel and Technique), yet they prefer to access that content via social media. To understand this anomaly, Chapter 6 considers motivations for media source choices by asking the research question: *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?* The results and an explanation of the findings will be presented firstly, by total participant group, and following that, by age group. This will be followed by a discussion, supported by both qualitative data and the literature, before a summary of the chapter is presented.

## 6.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2: RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY MOTIVE

Using five-point Likert scales, participants were requested to indicate the extent to which each media source satisfies a list of six U&G needs or motives. Mean scores were used to establish rank orders, and standard deviation scores were included to provide further support for, and confidence in, the rank orders. To test the significance of the rank orders, the same non-parametric techniques utilised thus far in the study were applied. That is, Friedman tests to establish general significance in within-group rank orders, and Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests to identify specific significance in the rank orders. This two-part technique was applied to the analysis of the total participant group, followed by an analysis by age. Also, as with all rank-order analyses in this study, the discovery of no significance in a pair of ranks, results in that pair being presented as equally ranked.

### 6.2.1 RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY MOTIVE FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores, a ranking of media source choice by motive was established for the total participant group and is shown in Table 6.1 below.

**Table 6.1***Media Source Ranking by Motive, for Total Participant Group*

Rank	Information	Entertainment	Identity	Interaction	Trust	Habit
1	Websites	Websites	Magazines	Socials	Magazines	Websites
2	Magazines	Magazines	Websites	Websites	Websites	Magazines
3	Socials	Socials	Socials	Magazines	Socials	Socials
4	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television

Note: Social Media has been abbreviated to Socials due to table width constraints

A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of media sources are statistically significant for each of the six motives [Information:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 655.97, p < .001$ ; Entertainment:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 298.24, p < .001$ ; Identity:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 422.17, p < .001$ ; Interaction:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 724.09, p < .001$ ; Trust:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 300.87, p < .001$ ; Habit:  $\chi^2(3, n = 816) = 162.11, p < .001$ ]. A Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was then conducted to establish the integrity of the ranking for each motive. A full set of results and tables can be found in Appendix D, however, a summary of the findings is presented below.

Each pair in the rank order was found to be statistically significant for Information, Entertainment and Interaction, and so the rank order and the Adjusted for Significance order are identical. However, some pairs in the rank order for Identity, Trust and Habit were found to be not significant and as a result some ties were recorded in the rank order, as seen in the Adjusted for Significance column in Tables 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 below.

**Table 6.2***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.33	1.073	1
2	Websites	3.29	1.047	1
3	Social Media	3.19	1.206	3
4	Television	2.50	1.132	4

**Table 6.3***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.62	0.921	1
2	Websites	3.34	0.931	2
3	Social Media	2.96	1.105	3
4	Television	2.89	1.189	3

**Table 6.4***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.35	1.020	1
2	Magazines	3.27	1.072	2
3	Social Media	3.24	1.218	2
4	Television	2.78	1.184	4

## 6.2.2 RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY MOTIVE FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

### SPLIT BY AGE

Using mean scores, a ranking of media source choice by U&G motive was established for Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. The result is shown in Table 6.5 and 6.6 below.

**Table 6.5**

*Media Source Ranking by Motive, for Age 1*

Rank	Information	Entertainment	Identity	Interaction	Trust	Habit
1	Socials	Socials	Socials	Socials	Magazines	Socials
2	Magazines	Magazines	Magazines	Websites	Television	Websites
3	Websites	Websites	Websites	Magazines	Websites	Magazines
4	Television	Television	Television	Television	Socials	Television

Note: Social Media has been abbreviated to Socials due to table width constraints

**Table 6.6**

*Media Source Ranking by Motive, for Age 2*

Rank	Information	Entertainment	Identity	Interaction	Trust	Habit
1	Websites	Websites	Magazines	Socials	Magazines	Websites
2	Magazines	Magazines	Websites	Websites	Websites	Magazines
3	Socials	Socials	Socials	Magazines	Socials	Socials
4	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television

Note: Social Media has been abbreviated to Socials due to table width constraints

To test for general significance of within-group rank orders, Friedman tests were conducted for each ranked group. Follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were then conducted to establish a more accurate within-group ranking for each group. A full set of results and tables can be found in Appendix E. A summary of the findings is presented below.

### 6.2.3 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTION 2 RESULTS

Aside from establishing the integrity of the within-group ranking of media sources by motive, the above analysis demonstrates which U&G motives attract the strongest association with a particular media source. For example, for the total participant group Magazines enjoy a strong association with Trust and Identity (where Magazines rank first), but not with Interaction (where Magazines rank third). The Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests show a significant difference between media sources ranked first and second for five out of the six motives so it is possible to identify the most-preferred media source for each motive. The only exception is Identity, which has a strong association with two media sources, namely; Magazines and Websites. The top ranked media source for each motive is shown in Table 6.7 below, and it reveals that for the total participant group, Websites enjoy a strong association with the most motives, namely; Information, Entertainment, Identity and Habit. This is consistent with Randle (2001) whose study about the displacement effect of the Internet on an American music magazine found that, “websites serve a wider spectrum of needs and gratifications than magazines” (p.113). To record a similar finding some 20 years later, despite the rise and spread of social media, shows the voracity of Randle’s study and casts a positive light on the reliability of this study.

**Table 6.7***Highest Ranked Media Source by Motive*

Motive	Media source	Mean score	Standard deviation
Information	Websites	4.25	0.822
Entertainment	Websites	4.30	0.793
Identity	Magazines	3.33	1.073
	Websites	3.29	1.047
Interaction	Social Media	3.62	1.231
Trust	Magazines	3.62	0.921
Habit	Websites	3.35	1.020

When split by age, each pair in the rank order was found to be statistically significant in both age groups for Entertainment and Interaction, and so the rank order for these two motives remains unchanged when split by age. However, some pairs in the rank order for Information, Identity, Trust and Habit were not significant and, as a result, some ties were recorded in the rank order, as seen in the Adjusted for Significance column in Tables 6.8 to 6.15 below.

**Table 6.8***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information, Age 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Social Media	4.45	0.825	1
2	Magazines	4.10	0.790	2
3	Websites	4.00	0.869	2
4	Television	3.46	1.120	4

**Table 6.9***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information, Age 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Websites	4.34	0.787	1
2	Magazines	4.02	0.923	2
3	Social Media	3.75	1.240	3
4	Television	2.62	1.285	4

**Table 6.10***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity, Age 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Social Media	3.81	0.962	1
2	Magazines	3.64	0.887	2
3	Websites	3.47	0.943	3
4	Television	3.22	1.037	4

**Table 6.11***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity, Age 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Magazines	3.22	1.112	1
2	Websites	3.22	1.075	1
3	Social Media	2.96	1.207	3
4	Television	2.28	1.078	4

**Table 6.12***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust, Age 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Magazines	3.99	0.836	1
2	Television	3.61	0.976	2
3	Websites	3.53	1.047	2
4	Social Media	3.50	0.992	2

**Table 6.13***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust, Age 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Magazines	3.49	0.914	1
2	Websites	3.28	0.877	2
3	Social Media	2.77	1.079	3
4	Television	2.64	1.154	4

**Table 6.14***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit, Age 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Social Media	3.97	1.007	1
2	Websites	3.50	1.011	2
3	Magazines	3.34	0.964	3
4	Television	3.28	1.073	3



**Table 6.15***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit, Age 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Websites	3.30	1.019	1
2	Magazines	3.25	1.108	1
3	Social Media	2.98	1.181	3
4	Television	2.60	1.171	4

When split by age, the results show that Age Group 1 ranks Social Media highest for all U&G motives except for Trust where it ranks Magazines highest, and Social Media lowest. In both cases, the standard deviation is below 1, suggesting there is a high degree of consensus on the trust attributed to Magazines, and the lack thereof to Social Media. Magazines also rank highly for Identity, where it ranks second behind Social Media for Age Group 1 and first by Age Group 2. There were two areas of agreement between Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. Both age groups rank Magazines highest for Trust and both age groups rank Social Media highest for Interaction. For the motive Habit, Age Group 1 ranks Social Media highest and Age Group 2 ranks Websites highest. This correlates with the findings of RQ 1c, which found Age Group 1 uses Social Media for all five content types except Conditions and Age Group 2 uses Websites for all five content types.

#### 6.2.4 DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH QUESTION 2 RESULTS

This discussion concerns RQ 2: *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?* It will explain and support the survey findings using interview data, theory and other studies, and, from this, conclusions will be drawn about the media source choice of Gen-Z surfers.

The finding that Gen-Z ranks Social Media highest for the gratification of most motives is consistent with industry reports and literature about Gen-Z's voracious use of

social media (Deloitte, 2021; Jacobsen & Barnes, 2020; Martin & Medina, 2021; Valkenburg & Piotrowski, 2017). That both age groups rank Social Media highest for the U&G motive of Interaction is no surprise as social interaction is the very purpose of the medium.

The motive of Habit also correlates with the preferred media use by Gen-Z and the older cohort, with Gen-Z ranking Social Media highest for Habit and the older cohort ranking Websites highest for Habit. Indeed Bonner and Roberts (2017) found habit to be one of the U&G factors that kept Gen-Y connected to print. The idea of media choice occurring on the basis of habit contradicts one of the main tenets of U&G theory, which is that media choice is an active process enacted for the conscious and deliberate gratification of psychosocial needs (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1973). Rubin (2019), however, argues that motives are not always conscious, and can be habitual or ritualised. Indeed, Kilian et al. (2012) suggested that patterns of media use are partially habitual, “and therefore often sticky” (p. 114). This can be explained by the psychological concept of cognitive lock-in, which occurs when the consumer is reticent to digress from that which he or she has become accustomed or practised, even though a potentially better alternative may exist (Krishen et al., 2016). The idea that media choice is influenced by familiarity of use was supported by Andre (21) and Adele (21) below:

Andre (21): Like, my old man doesn't really use social media at all. If he's looking at something he'll look online...the older generation aren't used to using social media as much as the younger do...I reckon most of them don't really know how to use social media, so they just go to what they're comfortable with.

Adele (21): they probably didn't grow up so much with social media, right, and what they were used to then was going on a computer and looking it up, and I'm sure it's a habit of theirs.

A noteworthy point about habitual connections to a media source is that establishing new patterns of use takes time and thus, as Kilian et al. (2012) asserts, “changes in media use often occur more slowly than technological developments” (p. 114). The implication of this is that changes in media use can occur more slowly than the appetite for such change.

Like Habit, the motives of Information and Entertainment are also consistent with the patterns of usage for each age cohort. That is, for Information and Entertainment, Gen-Z ranks Social Media highest, and the older cohort ranks Websites highest. Of interest, however, is the fact that Magazines rank second for both gratifications (Entertainment and Information) by both age cohorts. Referring to Table 6.16 and 6.17 below, the high ranking for magazines across both motives is in contrast to the media source use finding in RQ 1c, which shows that Magazines rank third behind Social Media and Websites. This finding therefore presents Magazines as more highly valued for these two gratifications when compared to general patterns of media use.

**Table 6.16**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Entertainment, Age 1 and Age 2*

Media Source Age 1	Sig. Rank Age 1	Media Source Age 2	Sig. Rank Age 2
Social Media	1	Websites	1
Magazines	2	Magazines	2
Websites	3	Social Media	2
Television	4	Television	4

**Table 6.17**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information, Age 1 and Age 2*

Media Source Age 1	Sig. Rank Age 1	Media Source Age 2	Sig. Rank Age 2
Social Media	1	Websites	1
Magazines	2	Magazines	2
Websites	3	Social Media	3
Television	4	Television	4

The high ranking of Magazines for Entertainment may be linked to the findings in RQ 1b where Magazines were found to be highly ranked for the content category of Travel. Diversion is a U&G category used by several U&G researchers (including: Randle, 2001; Payne et al., 1988; Towers, 1987). Diversion is described as “relaxing, escaping or passing time with entertainment material” (Payne et al., 1988, p. 910). Towner (2015) found that most surf tourists, who travel to exotic destinations for surf, do so to escape their mundane Western lifestyles. So, the link between travel and entertainment may account for the high ranking of Magazines for Entertainment. The link between Trust and Information is more obvious. If magazines rank highly for the motive of Trust, then one can expect that this would impact the ranking of magazines for the motive of Information. This could be an explanation why Magazines rank second behind each age cohort’s preferred media source for Information.

The low level of trust in social media is a commonly reported phenomenon (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Edelman, 2021; Karsen & Allberg, 2021; Park et al., 2020). What is significant is the finding that Gen-Z does not trust the very medium they choose as their primary content resource. Indeed, Gen-Z’s low ranking for Trust in Social Media was a statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) and congruous ( $SD = > 1$ ) finding. Conversely, Magazines ranked highest for Trust by Gen-Z. This finding was also statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ) and congruous ( $SD = > 1$ ). These two findings present a double paradox: Gen-Z are heavy users of social media, yet they trust them the least, and, Gen-Z are light users of magazines, yet they trust them the most. Deeper understanding of this complex phenomenon was sought in the interviews. A common theme explaining the low levels of trust in social media was the perception that social media comprises ostensibly unregulated and open platforms that sanction anonymity, and so a high level of caution and scepticism is required. Andrew (21) lamented the lack of regulation saying, “everyone can say anything whenever they want, and there’s probably just a lot of bad ideas and opinions out there, and people are too stupid to recognise that”. Ashton (18) used anonymity to explain the fundamental difference between social media and magazines. As he explained,

On social media you don’t know who the person is ... [so] ... it’s a bit more dodgy, but if you have a magazine, you obviously know that it’s qualified because it’s got the right people in it. It’s been certified, I guess.

Allan (18) used the accountability of print to articulate Gen-Z's sentiments about the trustworthiness of magazines over social media:

Nowadays there are so many fraudulent accounts made, pretty much, by trolls that just put on random crap. Whereas books and magazines have to go through a bunch of publishers and editing before it's actually sourced out to the public ... So, yeah, I definitely think that the lack of editing and publishing on social media is why it's not as trustworthy.

The work of Kalsnes and Krumsvik (2019) is insightful in seeking understanding of the "use-it-the-most-but-trust-it-the-least" paradox. These researchers propose that a medium is an "experience good" (p. 297) and, thus, one can only establish its quality and value by using it. Consequently, they suggest that readers tend to be favourably predisposed to media they use regularly. This study shows that despite their low level of trust in social media, Gen-Z are clearly favourably predisposed to media they use. The use-it-the-most-but-trust-it-the-least paradox also adds empirical weight to the psychological concept of cognitive lock-in (Krishen et al., 2016). Gen-Z use social media the most because they are most familiar with it, and they will be slow to adjust to anything that is different to that which they have become accustomed.

While the low level of trust in social media appears to derive from learned experience, as suggested by the interviewees quoted above, trust in magazines appears to be predicated on something less pragmatic. A strong emergent theme illustrating the trust attributed to magazines was exemplified by Andrew (21) who said: "there's so much effort and time put in a magazine, and so much, like, careful consideration as to what goes in the magazine and what doesn't go into it, and people acknowledge that". Anna (17) concurred, observing the process of magazine production involved multiple people which, in and of itself, she perceived as a fact checking mechanism:

I think maybe you would trust content in a magazine more ... because it has to go through a lot more people to be published and put out there, when anyone, really, can just post something ... it doesn't really have to be checked.

Andrew and Anna's comments exemplify the consistent opinion presented by Gen-Z respondents who believe that magazines are trustworthy because of the nature of the

production process. Magazines are understood to take time, effort and consideration by multiple people to compile, and because of that, they are assumed to be more trusted.

A sense of legitimacy and authority seems to be a by-product of the trust that is attributed to print. This amounts to what Strömbäck, et al. (2020), and Kalsnes and Krumsvik (2019) refer to as “medium credibility”. They found that trust in a message is not just dependent upon who the sender is (source credibility) but can also be impacted by the medium through which it is delivered. Haniff (2012) found the superior content quality that print is able to deliver by virtue of its lengthy production process afforded the medium a degree of credibility, value and special attention. Specifically, Haniff (2012) stated that the “journalistic aspect of print magazines adds a professional quality to a medium deemed by participants to be more permanent and credible, thus more valuable and compelling” (p. 59). While explaining how digital content distribution raises questions of authority and legitimacy surf industry marketing expert, Anthony (57), uses the example of the Stab website to prosecute his case for the superiority of print, saying: “any website should be a companion site to the print, not vice versa, and [that is why] Stab doesn’t get much love”. Anthony (57) proceeds to demonstrate how the medium credibility of printed magazines is so entrenched, it can be exploited.

I believe they (Gen-Z) trust magazines more than social media because they know they can put anything they want up on social media, and they know that they bullshit a lot on social media ... I firmly believe it’s because there’s still a perception of the effort that it takes to publish a magazine and put it into their hands, and because it’s so dynamic and tactile, it must be trusted because it’s fully published ... So actually, if you wanted to use a Trojan horse to push a message that wasn’t true and trustworthy, you’d actually use print because they’d believe you more!

Magazines also ranked high for the U&G motive of Identity. When analysed by total participant group, Magazines ranked first for Identity, however, when split by age, Magazines ranked second behind Social Media for Gen-Z, and equal first with Websites for the older cohort. The older cohort ranked Social Media third for Identity (See Table 6.18). It is, therefore, possible to suggest that this study shows that Magazines attract a high (although not the highest) ranking for Identity when compared to other media sources in this study.

**Table 6.18***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity, Age 1 and Age 2*

Media Source Age 1	Sig. Rank Age 1	Media Source Age 2	Sig. Rank Age 2
Social Media	1	Websites	1
Magazines	2	Magazines	1
Websites	3	Social Media	3
Television	4	Television	4

Erikson’s seminal theory of psychosocial development (1950) posits that individual and social identity formation occurs most intensely during adolescence. However, more recent studies recognise identity formation as an active and on-going affair throughout life (Chayko, 2021; Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Thompson, 1995). Many studies have shown that media use can influence identity formation (Kirsh, 2010; Markus and Nurius, 1986; Thompson, 1995). Other factors, such as products and brands have also been found to contribute to a “narrative of self-identity” (Thompson, 1995, p. 120). Interview data supports and adds empirical weight to the work cited above. Andrew (21), like most young participants, was quick to present himself as not caring about his identity but invariably, whether directly or indirectly, confirmed that he still very much does. He observed that,

So, like, posting where you are, who you’re with, you know - that creates your identity... I think back when I was younger, I thought people cared a lot more about who you were with, and what you’re wearing... It’s so funny, because it sounds like I’m contradicting myself, but I still probably do care about who I’m with, and what I’m wearing. But I think the difference is I don’t care about showing everyone about who I’m with or what I’m wearing.

Most of the Gen-Z interview participants reveal the media source that most shapes their identity is social media, which is consistent with their patterns of media use, and with the survey results of this study that shows that social media is their primary content

resource. As Alissa (20) testified, “(We see) the way surfers dress on social media. If they’re wearing Billabong, I’m going to go buy Billabong, like, it’s just like that”. There was clear acknowledgment, however, that when they see something that resonates in print, it has a more profound influence. This can be attributable to the high Trust ranking that magazines attract. When Trust is added to the high ranking for Identity, the combination makes it possible to argue that when combined with Trust, magazines have the capacity to exert more influence on identity development than if Trust was not considered. Indeed, when asked which media source has a greater influence, Abbey responded, “The magazine ...” adding that, “... it just pulls you in a bit more ...” And, referring to an image of pro surfer, Pacha Light, holding her favourite surfboard, she stated that, “This one, Pacha Light, holding that funky shaped one, now I want to try that”.

With regard to group identity, Abby (19) and Alissa (20) recently moved to the Gold Coast and revealed how aware they are of their evolving identity as surfers.

I would say the past year for us has been an identity crisis because we’ve just turned from, I don’t even remember what I was, and then we found surfing and we’re like, we’re like morphing right now, we’re still morphing.

Genner and Süß (2017) argue that the media “are considered a powerful agent of socialization, responsible for shaping an individual’s socialization process” (p. 1). Chayko (2021) explained the link between media and group identity, explaining that discovery and conformity to the values and standards of a social group occurs through a process of socialisation. The dynamic between individual self-identity (I am a surfer) and the broader social setting in which it is situated (surf culture), however, is described by Elliot and Wattanasuwan (1998) as a problematic one. They posit that, “endeavours to create the consumer’s self-identity often involve the consumption of products, services and media, and there is always a tension between the meanings we construct for ourselves and those we are exposed to socially” (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998, p. 133). This “dialectical tension” (p. 133) requires validation through social interaction (Jenkins, 1996). Referring to the process of socialisation, marketing expert, Anthony (57), explains that surfers take their cues from their peers and the surf magazine is, essentially, a proxy for another peer.



You take most of your cues from the water and the behaviour of your peers in the water ... Once you have learned enough of the code and etiquette to know what's special about surfing, and the right way to do things, so that you're not a kook anymore, you take more and more of your cues additional cues from your peers. And the job of the magazine has always been - because it's always been aimed at surfers - the magazine is a peer. It's a medium, but it's a peer. You take your cues from it.

Anthony then explained the camaraderie, or what Turner (1982) would term, *communitas*, that a group of surfers experience when they go on a surf trip together. He concluded that, "the magazine is one of those people in your social circle".

The foregoing discussion about the mechanics of learning and conforming to group identity, and the central role that media and, specifically, magazines, play in that process, adds an important dimension to Green and Chalip's (1998) assertion that participation in sport facilitates individuals' socialisation into that sport's subculture. Indeed, the trust placed in magazines adds to participants', especially those of Gen-Z, ability to learn and adopt the attitudes, outlooks, and values common to the sport, which then become part of their identity.

### 6.3 CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION

In this chapter the survey results concerning the uses and gratifications of Gen-Z surfers were presented, discussed and compared with the older cohort. It was determined that the high ranking by Gen-Z for the motives of Interaction and Habit aligns with Gen-Z's high use of social media. It was noted that Gen-Z ranks Magazines highest for Trust, and Social Media lowest, which presents a paradox that magazines can leverage. However, the fragility of this trust was also noted. It was suggested that the high ranking that magazines enjoy for the content category of Travel and the U&G category of Trust are factors that influenced the higher-than-expected ranking for the gratification of Entertainment and Information, respectively. And finally, it was shown that when bolstered by high ranking for Trust, magazines have the capacity to exert influence over Gen-Z's self and group identity development. This can be leveraged by publishers, editors and brand managers who understand personal identity development,

and recognise the mediating role magazines can and do play in it. According to psychosocial and generation theorists, this is especially important when targeting members of the Gen-Z age group (Browning, 2008; Erikson, 1950; Mannheim, 1952).

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CHAPTER 7: MEDIA SUBSTITUTION

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## 7.1 CHAPTER SEVEN INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the final research question, which draws on media substitution theory, and asks: *How can printed surf magazines achieve functional differentiation in the digital age?*

The chapter starts with an application of media substitution theory to the surf media sector in order to provide more specific context, to that which was contained in Section 1.2 (Research Context). It then discusses three factors drawn from the study's findings, and one factor derived from earlier work, that distinguish surf magazines from the digital disruptors that have come to now dominate the sector. The chapter concludes with four factors that hold the potential for printed surf magazines to functionally differentiate from online alternatives, and thus survive in the modern media landscape.

## 7.2 MEDIA SUBSTITUTION IN THE SURF MEDIA SECTOR

Media substitution theory asserts that when a new media source is introduced, audiences reallocate their time among available media options and, as a result, new patterns of media consumption emerge (Kaye & Johnson, 2003). Under these circumstances, Adoni and Nossek (2001) propose a dialectic model of media interaction that advances three possible outcomes relating to the extent to which one media option is substituted for another: (1) *Displacement*, which occurs as a result of the new medium being 'functionally equivalent', creating conditions that could cause the incumbent to become either displaced or rendered obsolete; (2) *Co-existence*, which results from a process of 'functional differentiation' whereby the incumbent makes adjustments that allow it to realise a functional point of difference and re-establish its unique nature; and, (3) *Convergence*, which is a 'functional synthesis' of the two media sources resulting in a new medium that simultaneously utilises the functionality of both.

This study's findings established the nature of Gen-Z's content needs, media source choices, and uses and gratifications of printed surf magazines. These findings, combined with unprecedented change across the surf magazine sector, suggest that co-existence based on functional differentiation is emerging as a likely strategic trajectory for surf magazines. Before consideration is given to the factors that may distinguish

magazines from other surf media sources, the dialectic model of media interaction by Adoni and Nossek (2001) will be applied to an analysis of the surf magazine sector.

The Australian surf magazine sector has many participants. There are more surfing magazines operating in Australia than any other country in the world. The major players in the Australian surf magazine market are, Surfing World, Tracks, Australia's Surfing Life (ASL), Stab, and White Horses. The first three are the oldest in the market and can be described as traditional printed surf magazines that have the same physical format and business model since their inception 30-40 years ago. In the United States of America, the surf magazine market has been dominated by Surfer Magazine, Surfing Magazine and The Surfer's Journal (TSJ). As already noted, Surfer and Surfing magazines have ceased publication, and so at present, only TSJ prevails. In order to demonstrate a real-world application of the dialectic model of media interaction (Adoni & Nossek, 2001), US-based Surfer, Surfing, and TSJ magazines; and, Australian-based Stab, and White Horses magazines will be used.

Surfer Magazine and Surfing Magazine were the two longest-running magazines in the surfing world. They were founded in 1962 and 1964, respectively, and published their final issues in 2020 and 2017, respectively. Although it was explained that, "The shift of advertising revenues from physical to online channels and the lack of readership changed the paradigm" (Surfertoday, 2020, line 59), these magazines remained largely the same in their physical format, editorial content and business model over most of their existence. They were eventually displaced when, due to flagging sales, their publishers (AMI and TEN) determined their business models were no longer viable.

Australian-based Stab magazine was founded in 2004 and quickly emerged as an exciting on-trend surf magazine that focused on high profile professional surfers and contemporary surf fashion. In May 2015, Stab was sold to Surfstitch, an online surf clothing retailer, and adapted its editorial content to facilitate the business objectives of Surfstitch. In September 2017, the partnership was abandoned and the title was sold back to the original publisher, Rolling Youth. Subsequently Rolling Youth promptly stopped publishing their printed Stab magazine to focus on providing free, advertisement-supported online content. In December 2020, Stab changed again, adopting a subscription-based pay wall model where premium content could only be accessed through a monthly (US\$9.99) or annual (US\$71.88) payment. The Surfstitch

acquisition and divestiture of Stab magazine and the recent move to a digital pay wall model are examples of Adoni and Nossek's (2001) convergence outcome, where a functional synthesis of the two entities results in an entirely new entity that combines the utility of both. In the case of Surfstitch's acquisition of Stab magazine, the new medium was a functional synthesis of the marketing activities of the online surf retailer and the editorial influence of the independent magazine. A clearer example of convergence was Stab's decision to stop print publishing and charge a fee to access digital content, in order to, as publisher, Sam Macintosh, promised, "reinvest in the written word, with deep dives formerly reserved for print" (McIntosh, 2020, line 49). The strategy was that the parts of the website that remained free-of-charge would contain, "the same shitty journalism you've come to hate from us..." [while] "...those who subscribe to Stab will have access to the good stuff" (McIntosh, 2020, line 36-41). The new website, therefore, comprises a convergence of the old, advertisement-supported, comparatively lower quality journalism, with the new, subscriber-funded, higher quality journalism that was formerly reserved for print.

The Surfer's Journal and White Horses have a physical format, editorial approach and a business model that is not standard in magazine publishing. Both magazines are high quality in presentation and appear more like a coffee table book than a magazine; as such, they are able to command a comparatively high cover price, which offsets their low dependence on advertising. Both publications focus on the acquisition and retention of subscriptions rather than newsstand sales. White Horses has an unconventional physical format being landscape in orientation while most others are portrait in orientation. The strategic approach to their digital channels also differentiates TSJ and White Horses from other printed surf magazines. Whereas competing surf magazines use websites and/or social media channels as extensions of their magazine content, supplying fresh, daily content for free, TSJ and White Horses produce no digital content, and use their digital channels as information hubs and ecommerce platforms to promote and sell their printed magazine and brand extension products. The publishing and business model of these two magazines relies on their ability to achieve and promote a functional point of difference between themselves and other surf media. Where TSJ and White Horses focus on publishing uniquely and exclusively for the print medium, other surf magazine publishers focus on producing content for print in addition

to digital platforms, or on digital platforms exclusively. Thus, White Horses and TSJ are examples of co-existence.

A summary of the dialectic model of media interaction (Nossek et al., 2015) as it applies to the surf magazine sector is provided in Table 7.1 below.

**Table 7.1**

*Application of Dialectic Model of Media Interaction (Nossek et al., 2015)*

Outcome	Magazines
Displacement	Surfer and Surfing
Convergence	Stab
Co-existence	The Surfer's Journal and White Horses

The above examples of displacement, convergence and co-existence in the surf magazine sector, provides a useful frame of reference for addressing the final research question. Against this backdrop, the final research question drew upon the results from research questions one and two, and the literature, to identify the following four factors that distinguish magazines from other surf media sources.

### 7.3 TRUSTED EXPERTISE

This study found trust to be one of the strongest differentiators between printed surf magazines and the other surf media sources studied. The strength of this point of difference is bolstered by the fact that social media, Gen-Z's preferred media resource, is least trusted by this cohort. Tsfaty and Cappella (2005), contend that media trust and credibility is fundamental to the business prospects of a media organisation; therefore, this is a differentiator worthy of maximum leverage. Koivunen and Vuorelma (2022) posit that a media source enacts authority when it gains trust. Based on Koivunen and Vuorelma's work, it can be argued that trust in a medium bears a close correlation to authority. A medium cannot be authoritative if it is not trusted and so trust is integral to authority. Indeed, interview participant, Ashton (18), illustrated this logic with the

comment, “(with) a magazine, you obviously know that it’s qualified because it’s got the right people in it. It’s been certified, I guess”.

It is important to point out, however, that as discussed in Chapter 6, the trust that Gen-Z attributes to print is predicated on their understanding of print’s production processes. As such, Gen-Z’s perceptions of the rigour of the magazine production process should be seen as a thin veneer that overlays all magazines, which should be treated as a platform on which to build and entrench. As already discussed, the lack of trust in social media is derived from user experience, and so user experience with magazines can either enhance or erode the trust that it has been fortuitously granted.

Expert advice about the latest surf equipment and instruction about technique are examples of content that are more valued if delivered by an authoritative or trusted source. Indeed, this study found magazines are considered by Gen-Z to be superior for the delivery of content about technique and equipment (as well as travel, which will be discussed later in this chapter), because they are considered to be a highly trusted source. By focusing on content that requires an expert source, and delivering on that expert source, magazines will be able to leverage and cement their trust and authority and, therefore, their competitive position and survival in the surf media sector.

#### 7.4 IDENTITY INFLUENCE

Media trust is also closely linked to identity development, which occurs most intensively during Gen-Z’s current life stage (Erickson, 1950). Thompson (1995) describes the construction of self-identity as a process of seeking out symbolic materials, from which an individual’s self-identity can be narrated. Consumption choices, therefore, are based, in part, on the contribution their symbolic meanings make to the construction of the consumer’s identity. A strong theme emerging from the interviews is that clothing is a key symbolic material used by surfers to display their identity. After suggesting hair and music, Asher (18), concludes, “I think clothing is definitely probably one of the biggest ones. Like, all surfers obviously dress the same”. Anna (17) admits, “the clothes and swimmers I have from surf brands would probably (identify me as a surfer), because, you know, I buy certain bikinis to wear in the surf, and that makes me feel more like a surfer.”



Several researchers have explained that brands, peers and media are influential references in the development of both personal and group identity (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998; Kirsh, 2010; Thompson, 1995; Valkenburg and Piotrowski, 2017). Kirsh (2010) stated that, “multiple studies have shown that media use can influence identity formation in youth, especially during adolescence” (p. 21). While this study found magazines ranked highly for Identity for the total participant group, when the data were split by age, it revealed Gen-Z ranked Social Media highest for identity, with Magazines ranking a very decisive second (SD = .89), ahead of Websites. However, when one considers the low level of trust in social media and the high level of trust in print, the gap between first and second could be argued, on the basis of simple logic, to be narrower than not factoring in trust. Logically, trustworthy or authoritative media would have stronger influence on identity when compared with untrustworthy media. This was revealed in several interviews as exemplified by Abby (19) and Alissa (20) below. Despite citing social media as the source they refer to most when researching and validating their new-found identity as a surfer, both respondents said that magazines had a stronger influence, because:

(Abbey): It just pulls you in a bit more.

(Alissa): Yeah, even just like, you look at the swimmers (togs) they’re wearing and it’s like, wow, that’s cool.

(Abbey): You’re like, okay, I want that.

Anna (17) uses the difference between print and digital advertising to articulate the superior influence of printed magazines, opining that:

I’ll see lots of ads throughout the day on my screen, but I think if I see it in print, it makes me more interested. I’d probably be more likely to buy something if I see it like that (in print). So, I guess that’s a big part of their (magazine’s) influence.

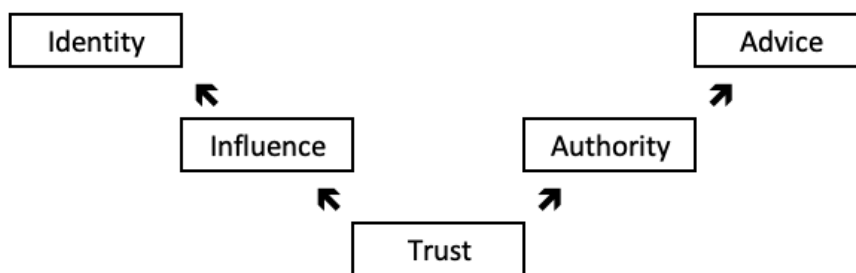
Veteran surfer and philosopher, Aaron (38), was more direct about the influence magazines used to have on his concept of identity: “When I was a teenager, surf magazines told me the words to say, the Fluro wetsuit to get, the t-shirt to wear.” Meanwhile, marketing expert, Anthony (57), was adamant that magazines have the

same influence as a peer, because, “The magazine is (effectively) one of those people in your social circle.”

The demonstrated superiority of magazines in gratifying the individual needs of trust and identity suggest the presence of a potent combination that helps to distinguish the magazine from its digital counterparts. Trust in a medium increases that medium’s influence on identity construction, and, trust in a medium increases the perceived value of the advice administered by that medium. Thus, trust is especially central to the first two differentiators discussed – trusted expertise and identity influence - and is depicted in Figure 7.2 below.

**Figure 7.2**

*The Centrality of Trust to Identity and Advice*



## 7.5 TRAVEL ESCAPISM

The search for the perfect wave is integral to the culture of surfing (Ford & Brown, 2006; Scheibel, 1995) and according to Preston-Whyte (2001), surf media plays a key role perpetuating the allure of surf travel. Preston-Whyte explains the link between surf media and the surfer’s desire to travel as follows:

Normative images of the wave environment are provided by surfing magazines that contain colour photographs of surfers demonstrating their skill on formidable waves ... The image of these waves becomes the model that informs the notion of the perfect wave... For surfers the ‘perfect wave’ represents this ideal and perhaps unattainable vision. It is assumed to exist, is difficult to describe, and is the source of a quest that leads surfers in search of spaces where this wave can be found. (Preston-Whyte, 2001, p. 309).

As discussed earlier, travel is closely associated with two attributes of print found in other studies; namely, escape (Green & Brock, 2000; Jere & Davis, 2012), and diversion (Randle, 2001; Payne et al. 1988; Towers, 1987). Green et al. (2004) explain the key psychological ingredients of media escapism take place regardless of communication modality but suggest that printed text (books and magazines) are more effectual because they allow “more imaginative investment from the individual as well as being self-paced” (p. 312). Originating in anthropological research, the concept of liminality inheres these characteristics of escapism and diversion.

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, the concept of liminality was originally used to describe the transitional phase experienced by a person during a rite of passage such as an initiation ceremony or a religious ritual (van Gennep, 1961). In its modern interpretation, the liminal stage is the period of transformation when individuals are temporarily divorced from the norms, structures, and traditions of their everyday lives (Mc Donnell, 2015). The liminoid consumption experience, therefore, is one that provides an environment that facilitates an escape from the mundane; is hedonic, ludic; allows for a temporary suspension of an existing social identity and the assumption of a new one; and elicits a feeling of *communitas*, or sense of community. As a concept, liminality has been applied across the social sciences, but not yet to sport media, and certainly not surf magazines. An application of Turner’s (1967) three liminal stages is provided below to develop a deeper understanding of the surf magazine as a liminoid consumption experience.

The liminoid experience starts with *separation* from the everyday routine (Turner, 1976). In this case, the act of purchasing a magazine and setting aside time and place to consume it represents a separation from the mundane, creating the conditions to enter a liminal space. Ashton (18) describes this phase when he said, “I guess with magazines, you’ve made a conscious effort to buy it, and so you’re going to make a conscious effort to consume it.” The second stage of the liminoid consumption experience is *transition*. This occurs as the reader, or liminar, is drawn into the curated world of words, photos, graphic design elements. The magazine consumption experience features no distractions or diversions and as such is a one dimensional or linear journey. Stories and features about people, places and experiences transport the liminar into an imaginary space, and for this period of time, their identity is blurred as the identity and experiences of the editorial subject matter are assumed. During this

stage, the liminar experiences *communitas* as the vocabulary, subcultural norms and values shared by all surfers, are interpreted and validated, giving rise to a sense of kinship with likeminded others. Alissa (20) describes the momentary suspension of reality when she compares the experience of reading print media to social media: “There’s so much more to get distracted by on social media, whereas when you read print, you’re in the moment... you’re not distracted by what else is going on at the time”. The final stage, *Incorporation*, occurs when the feature or whole magazine is consumed and the liminar returns to the everyday, having completed the consumption experience. The liminoid experience may or may not have altered their surfing worldview, but the liminar would have experienced a temporarily altered state. Alfred (24) reflects the above when he attempted to articulate the feeling of consuming travel content in print:

I don’t know if it’s, like, an attachment I have to print, but I get a different feeling from reading a story or a travel story when I read it in print, compared to if I was to read it on a screen, or on my phone. I like having the words there that I can flip, and the pages that I can sort of feel in my hands, and pictures there. It just feels better to me; it feels nicer to read something about travel in that form for me.

It can be argued that most, if not all, surfing content, regardless of modality, has the ability to deliver a liminoid consumption experience, and so the liminal experience is, therefore, not unique to printed magazines. Indeed, Kozinets (2019) and Kozinets et al. (2017) conceptualise digital media consumption as a facilitator of liminal consumer experience, in relation to identity. The discussion below, however, suggests the magazine consumption process may have the potential to be distinctively more liminoid than the two more popular media sources in this study (social media and websites).

As Turner (1967) reveals, the liminal experience is a linear one with a start and end point. The linear consumption experience is a unique feature of magazines when compared to digital media alternatives. The ubiquitous presence of hyperlinks in digital media, offering further explanation, opportunity to purchase, or related articles, are diversions that tempt the user to change course, and sometimes never return. Similarly, social media content is governed by the vagaries of an algorithm that determine what content consumers are fed. What enters a feed is an aggregate of the user’s interests, opinions and worldviews as determined by historical patterns of consumption, and it changes constantly. The content experience on websites and social media is not linear

and is generally unpredictable and varied. Under these conditions, a content narrative that facilitates a liminoid consumption experience cannot be engineered, and thus, a liminoid consumption experience would be coincidental and inconsistent.

Based on the above, it can be argued that magazine content, about surf travel especially, provides escapism, diversion and a liminoid experience. This was confirmed by interviewee Andrew (21) and surf industry practitioner, Alec (55) below. When asked why magazines were found to be superior for the delivery of travel content, Andrew attempted to articulate the notion of escapism and diversion:

Because I think what I said before about how, I think the images are so vivid when you see them in print, because of that your, like your imagination ... and it's not just images it's something you have to think about and create .... When you're reading along with it you're simultaneously kind of using your experience in the surf, and then relating it to what you're reading.

Alec was more eloquent about the power of magazines to deliver a liminal experience:

I think with the magazine, it forces you to travel in your mind, it forces your imagination to actually be active, and to dream, and to fill in the gaps in what you're reading in black and white, to form the mental images. Whereas with the digital thing, you don't have a chance to use your imagination because it's all there for you.

Since the liminoid experience also involves a temporary suspension of self-identity and the adoption of a fictional identity, the aforementioned links between trusted expertise, and identity influence, can now be extended to travel escapism, creating a more powerful combination of differentiating factors; namely: trusted expertise, identity influence, and, travel escapism. These three factors individually and collectively are therefore empirically identified as key differentiators between surf magazines and their digital disruptors.

## 7.6 EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT

In addition to the findings of this study, which were distilled into the three differentiators of trusted expertise, identity influence, and, travel escapism, other studies have identified characteristics of print that are also unique and distinctive. Some of

these characteristics can be distilled into one differentiator, which is what Randle (2003) and others refer to as the affective characteristic of printed magazines. Sax (2016) posits that because we are, “surrounded by digital, we now crave experiences that are more tactile and human-centric” (p. xvii). As a result, he opines that we “want to interact with goods and services with all our senses,” and this attraction is so profound, that, “many of us are willing to pay a premium to do so” (p. xvii). A related theoretical construct is what Feldman (2010) describes as sensory hedonism. Sensory hedonism as a state of happiness or well-being that is achieved when there is a positive balance between sensory pleasure and sensory displeasure (Feldman, 2010). Thus, it could be argued that the affective experience of consuming high-quality magazine can be likened to sensory hedonism.

The ability of magazines to elicit an emotional connection is also explained by Rosenblatt’s (1986) transactional theory, which analyses the reciprocal interactions between the reader and text. Rosenblatt’s aesthetic stance recognises that the reader derives an emotional, aesthetic and intellectual experience when consuming texts (such as books and magazines). The aesthetic stance recognises that the reader is attentive not only to the content but also to the feelings evoked. These feelings are experienced when the reader is open to the “experiential aura” (p. 125) that the text offers. This experiential aura can also originate from the aesthetics of the text, such as colour, design and images, and can also apply to objects such as “a painted canvas or shaped marble” (p. 127).

Referring to aesthetics specifically, Bonner and Roberts (2017), Webb and Fulton (2019), and Haniff (2006) found aesthetics, which includes overall look and feel, design and photography, to be a unique feature of magazines when compared to other media sources. Webb and Fulton (2019) found these aesthetic attributes to be something “online content can find difficult to compete with” (p. 283). Gen-Z respondent, Asher (18), relates the magazine to art:

I guess you can use it as like anything, like an art piece, or like a feature piece or something like that. But with something on your phone, you never, like you look at the photo, you’re never going to see it again, you scroll past it and maybe you like it, but it doesn’t imprint in your mind.

When probed on their higher levels of trust in magazines, a common theme emerged around the pure enjoyment derived from the quality and impact of still photography when seen in print. Asher (18) expressed an example of this sentiment, “printed pictures are better than pictures you see on social media, I don’t know, you get more of an understanding of the picture when it’s right in front of you”. Reference to the quality of photography and the feelings elicited by it also emerged in descriptions about the suitability of magazines to travel. Allen (18), when asked what makes magazines so well-suited to content about travel, he responded with, “I think photography, like travel photography I find really interesting”. Ford and Brown (2005) recognised the ability of the still surfing photograph in surf media to influence both the culture and consumption on a profound level. They argue that, “within the mediatisation (of surfing), which is so fundamental to the development of surfing culture the photographic image still is the most hallowed and predominant medium of recording surfing” (p. 41). Rich and evocative images tap into a repository of memories and, “engage the body and senses with powerful mythologies” (p. 41) and elicit, “a powerful aesthetic, contemplative experience” (p. 42). Based on this, Ford and Brown argue that surfing photographs are, “a stronger stimulant to action (such as surf travel, the pursuit of surfing lifestyles and so on) than intellectual lines of argument” (p. 42) as they create “fantasies of possible lives that may influence consumption and mobility patterns” (p. 52). The transformative potential of a still photo in print was communicated by the owner of a globally distributed surfwear brand, Vissla. Paul Naude wrote:

What’s cool about print (surf magazine) advertising is that you really need to have that iconic shot because it’s immediately judged and going to be around for a while. Unlike digital advertising that’s got such a short shelf life and most shots are good but not iconic. There just aren’t that many iconic memorable photos... So maybe, just maybe, there’s something to be said for those really brand defining ads in print media again (personal communication, September 1, 2021).

Based on the foregoing discussion, the physicality of magazines is an obvious differentiator when comparing print and digital. According to Haniff (2012), “the visual and textural aspects of paper copies provide a rich context for print magazines that simply cannot be translated through digital magazines (p. 58). Indeed, Bonner and

Roberts (2017) found that the tactile appeal of print “consistently outweighs the convenience of digital content” (p. 9). Meanwhile, Nossek et al. (2015) posited that readers favour specific features of print that go beyond their functional utilitarian value, such as the smell and touch of paper. Webb and Fulton (2019) found the attraction to the tactility of magazines by their participant group of 18–24-year-old females was significant enough to declare, “the continuation of print could be partly dependent on a younger generation of readers” (p. 274). This study suggests that the attraction to the tactility of magazines is also felt by a younger age demographic, as demonstrated by the reflection made by Anna (17) below.

I think having the actual information you’re getting right in front of you in the hard copy might make it feel more special, more important, being able to actually hold it in your hands makes it feel a lot more real.

In this quote, Anna also alludes to the authority that appears to be intrinsic to the physical product, which contributes to the factor of Trusted Expertise. As Asher (18), explains; “Anyone can make a website, anyone can post on social media, but not everyone can just go make a surf mag”.

Indulgence is also a characteristic associated with magazines and books in the literature. Bonner and Roberts (2017) found magazines to be an indulgent experience as participants explained that they spent so much time on their phone, that sitting down to read a magazine felt like a relaxing experience. Anna (17) described a similar sentiment:

It’s, like, looking, flicking through a magazine is so much nicer than just getting it online. I guess it’s just the ease. It’s just bigger, right there, like something about a hard copy, is nicer than just a tiny little phone.

Haniff (2006) found that respondents reported the process of going to the store to buy the magazine was included in the experience of magazine consumption, suggesting the process makes it more personal and “you feel more connected to it” (p. 50). Surfing scholar and philosopher, Aaron, 38, concurs, saying “the buying of a magazine is a much more memorable event than the looking at a website”.

The combination of these characteristics – aesthetics, tactility and indulgence – evoke a personal and emotional attachment to the magazine medium, which Haniff (2006) asserts can “lead to a tendency of saving magazines and other print publications, such as books, as keepsakes or to display as décor” (Haniff, 2006, p. 51). Affective



attachment is not easily articulated and is often expressed in a colourful, if not idiosyncratic, description. Sax (2016), for example, expresses the alluring nature of magazines through a quote from Monocle magazine’s Editor, Andrew Tuck who states that:

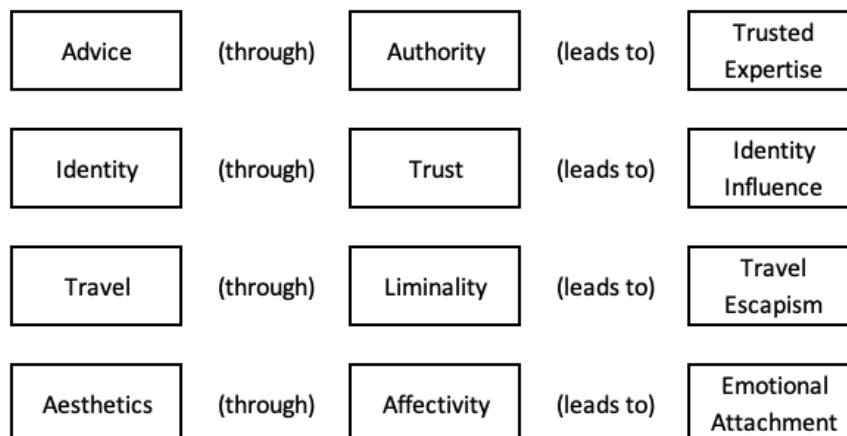
There is no romance in the world of digital. In a gentle way, there is romance about the print product. It is tactile, beautiful, and you can smell the ambition on the page. You can’t smell ambition when you are on a website (p. 113).

## 7.7 CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

In this chapter, Adoni and Nossek’s (2001) dialectic model of media interaction was applied to the surf media organisational field and examples of Displacement, Convergence and Co-existence were provided. Following this, and drawing from the results of this study, a powerful set of differentiators were proposed, that individually and collectively, distinguish magazines from their digital disruptors. It was argued that magazines are distinguishable in the areas of trusted expertise, identity influence, and, travel escapism. In addition, it was proposed that the affective quality of magazines, found in other studies, make it possible to add emotional attachment as a fourth differentiator. Figure 7.3 shows how the four differentiators emerged from empirical findings and the literature.

**Figure 7.3**

*The Connection Between Empirical Findings and the Proposed Four Differentiators*



This chapter, therefore, concludes with the identification of four factors that individually and collectively provide surf magazines opportunity for differentiation from other media options. Such opportunity presents attractive strategic opportunities for surf magazines to achieve co-existence through functional differentiation, and thereby avoid displacement and ultimate demise.

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## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

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The purpose of this final chapter is to discuss the study's most salient findings and present the major conclusions of this thesis. After a brief overview of the research, empirically grounded responses to the study's research questions are presented. This is followed by a discussion of the study's implications for both theory and practice. The limitations of the study are then addressed before concluding with recommendations for future research.

## 8.1 THE CASE FOR CO-EXISTENCE

Media and technology are constantly evolving as newer methods of production and content distribution are developed. Each new technological development has changed the way consumers view the value and utility of magazines (Sax, 2016). This has made the magazine publishing industry dynamic and resilient for the past two hundred years (Haniff, 2006). Over the last two decades however, magazines have lost scale and influence as they struggle to adapt to the disruptive effect of new media offerings (Bonner, 2015; Mowatt & Young, 2005; Pérez-Latre, 2012; PwC, 2021; Sax, 2016). If adaptation remains slow or if there is failure to adjust, magazines are at risk of being displaced. For decades, magazines related to the surfing lifestyle have held a seminal place in the creation and dissemination of the subculture, yet even the surf magazine sector has not escaped digital disruption. Indeed, surf magazines' intimate connection to youth means they were among the first to feel the disruptive effects of digital media technologies, and the displacement of the iconic *Surfing and Surfer* magazines sent a clear message that surf print media is under imminent threat (Warshaw, 2017; Doherty, 2020).

According to media substitution theory, there are three possible outcomes that result from the arrival of a disruptive media alternative (Adoni & Nossek, 2001). These outcomes - Displacement, Convergence, and Co-existence – were discussed in the context of the surf magazine sector in Chapter 7. Of the three outcomes, Displacement is not an option any surf magazine publisher would pursue as this is the outcome arising from a failure to either converge or co-exist, and ultimately results in closure. Convergence involves a synthesis of new and old media capabilities, and in the context of surf media, this has taken the form of one magazine “going digital”. By consolidating

their content and offering it on the Internet, the publisher experienced monetisation challenges as digital advertising revenue was insufficient to compensate for the loss of circulation revenue (Macintosh, 2021). Additionally, this study found digital content distribution also raises questions of authority and legitimacy. This is supported by many studies (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Edelman, 2021; Haniff, 2012; Karsen & Allberg, 2021; Park et al., 2020; Webb & Fulton 2019). Indeed, one of Bonner and Roberts' (2017) concluding findings was that because of low trust in digital platforms, print content should be prioritised over digital content. Moreover, increased access to ad blocking software suggests that monetisation will continue to be difficult for online publishers. In this sense, the findings suggest that Convergence is also an undesirable outcome for surf magazine publishers.

The findings suggest that the print model, where both advertising and circulation revenue can be collected, is fundamentally more viable provided magazines are able to re-establish relevance and demand. Thus, it is argued, the option of Co-existence should be pursued by printed surf magazines if they are to survive and continue as a seminal component of the sport's subculture and development. This form of adaptation requires a detailed analysis of the surf media ecosystem, and the surf magazine's role within it. At its most basic level, such analysis involves identifying, then capitalising on print's strengths, especially those strengths that counteract digital's weaknesses. This process could surface print's innate utility and become the foundation of the surf magazine's survival, and perhaps even, revival. Such findings add empirical flesh to Adoni and Nossek's (2001) conceptual work, and demonstrate that, given the ongoing digital disruption of recent years, their 20-year-old framework has never been more relevant, nor more in need of modern contextualisation.

## 8.2 SUMMARY OF SALIENT FINDINGS

Through the lens of generation theory, U&G theory and media substitution theory, this study investigated three research questions, which are sequential in nature, and as such, the final research question - which was to explore ways that surf magazines might achieve functional differentiation - represents a culmination of the research project's aims. By surveying Gen-Z's content needs and media source preferences, and

comparing and contrasting these with older respondents, a substantial body of data was generated.

The three research questions were:

**Research Question 1a:** *What are the surf content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1b:** *What media sources best satisfy the content needs of Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 1c:** *How do Gen-Z surfers prioritise the use of these media sources?*

**Research Question 2:** *How do information, personal identity, social integration, entertainment, force of habit, and, trust influence media choice among Gen-Z surfers?*

**Research Question 3:** *How can printed surf magazines achieve functional differentiation in the digital age?*

Regarding the characteristics of the participant group, it was found that surfing participation is higher for the older cohort than Gen-Z. This is significant because although surfing is widely considered a youth sport, the modern reality is different. This study as well as AusPlay (2021) show that peak participation occurs at an age that is well outside of that which defines youth.

In response to RQ1a, concerning content needs, it was found that the top three content categories that interest Gen-Z were: (1) surfing technique and equipment; (2) surf conditions and forecasts; and, (3) surf travel. These content categories were abbreviated as Technique, Conditions, and Travel. Interestingly, the older cohort reported the same content categories in their top three, the only difference being that Travel ranked first and Technique ranked third. The higher preference for Travel content by older surfers was explained in Chapter 5.2, and is relevant to this study because it potentially represents an indication of the future preference of Gen-Z as they age. The data addressing RQ1b and c, about media source perceptions and use, revealed that magazines are well suited to the delivery of two of the three most preferred content categories, namely Technique and Travel. Despite this acknowledgement, however, the

data were clear that, in practice, Gen-Z use social media to access most of their content. Table 8.1 presents a snapshot of the above findings.

**Table 8.1**

*Gen-Z Top Five Content Needs, and Media Source Suitability and Use*

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Content need</b>	<b>Media source suitability</b>	<b>Media source use</b>
1	Technique	Magazines	Social media
2	Conditions	Websites	Websites
3	Travel	Magazines and social media	Social media
4	Competition	Television	Social media
5	Interviews	Social media	Social media

When investigating the media uses and gratifications (RQ2), the motives of Trust, Identity and Habit emerged as salient themes among Gen-Z participants. While Gen-Z admit to heavy use of social media, they also confess to having very little trust in the content these platforms generate. Conversely, Gen-Z participants admit to light use of magazines, yet indicated that they trust them more than any other media source. This presents an interesting paradox which was explored in Chapter 6 and conclusions will be drawn from it in Section 8.5.

The need for a sense of identity is a compelling driver in the life of an adolescent (Erikson, 1950). In fact, studies show that the construction and maintenance of self-identity remains present throughout adulthood (Elliott & Wattanasuwan, 1998). Multiple studies have shown that the mass media exerts profound influence on identity formation (Kirsh, 2010). Wheaton (2003) showed how sports magazines play an essential role in communicating sporting lifestyles and identities within their subcultures. For this reason, it was not surprising that Identity featured prominently in this study’s findings. When combined, the high ranking of surf magazines for the motives of Identity and Trust has compelling implications for the value of surf magazines to the surf apparel industry. This will also be discussed in the Practical Implications (Section 8.5).

Habit also featured prominently as a U&G motive, with both age cohorts admitting that habit is part of the reason they use their preferred media source. The data showed that Social Media ranks high for Habit with Gen-Z, and Websites rank high for Habit with the older cohort. Their prominence in the data suggests that Habit and Trust are worthy additions to a U&G typology of media use. The theoretical and practical implication of this will be discussed in Section 8.4 and 8.5.

The final research question (RQ3) explored what (if anything) functionally differentiates the printed surf magazine from its digital disruptors. Drawing from the data of this study as well as the literature, four factors were advanced: Trusted Expertise, Identity Influence, Travel Escapism, and Emotional Attachment. It is proposed that these four factors present an opportunity for surf magazines to distinguish themselves in the modern media environment, and in so doing achieve Co-existence (Adoni & Nossek, 2001). The theoretical and practical implications of these four distinguishing factors, as well as other findings emerging from this study, will be discussed next.

### 8.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

U&G theory has become a popular theoretical lens through which media choice is examined and is especially useful for developing understanding of new media sources (Lin, 1998; Ruggiero, 2000; McQuail, 2010). Recent U&G studies on magazines, however, have been scarce because scholarly focus has been on newer digital communication platforms, the methods of which do not easily translate to studies on printed media (Payne et al., 1988; Randle, 2003; Sundar & Limperos, 2013; Webb & Fulton, 2020). While the MAIN model advanced by Sundar and Limperos, (2013) appears well-suited to a modern media environment dominated by computer-mediated technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones and social media platforms, it fails to accommodate print media to the extent that interactivity and navigability are utilities associated more with digital media than print media. This study therefore adopted McQuail's (1983) typology of four U&G motives upon which media choice can be categorised, and tested the addition of two more; namely, trust and habit, which is argued to be relevant to both old and new media. It is hoped that the six-motive



typology advanced by this study is considered more inclusive of both old and new media.

According to LaRose (2010), the U&G dimension of Habit has been, “periodically discovered, forgotten, and rediscovered in communication research” (p. 194). She further proposed that Habit has often been “confounded with other constructs” (LaRose, 2010, p. 218). In this study, it was found that Habit ranks highly for Social Media use by Gen-Z, and for Website use by the older cohort. Its prominence in the data suggests that Habit is a worthy addition to a U&G typology of media use.

Trust also featured prominently in this study’s data and arises as another key finding of this study; specifically, that Gen-Z accord surf magazines the highest level of trust among their media choices. This finding, against the backdrop of rising public concern about data breaches, misinformation and disinformation, and the impact these have on perceptions of reliability and trust in media (Edelman, 2021), means there should be no doubt about the legitimacy of adding Trust to a U&G typology of media use. And thus, with the addition of Habit and Trust, it is proposed that this study’s six-motive typology of needs represents a theoretical extension of McQuail’s (2010) work. In the spirit of constructive scholarly debate, however, a counter argument is provided below, and this critique gives rise to a second possible theoretical contribution.

A potential criticism of extending McQuail’s (2010) typology of needs to include Trust and Habit concerns whether these two dimensions can actually be described as “needs”. The issue, as discussed in Chapter 6, is that the underlying tenet of U&G theory is that media selection is an active and conscious process, and habit and trust could be argued to be indirect or subconscious influences on the process of media selection. LaRose (2010) advanced that habit is generally understood to be an “automatic and nonconscious” factor in media selection (p. 207), adding that this was addressed by Stone and Stone (1990) who defined habits as, “willful acts that are repeated until their pattern becomes automatic and routine” (LaRose, 2010, p. 207). Classifying Trust as a need could also be challenged on similar grounds. Trust could be argued to be a means to an end, rather than a need. For example, *I consume a certain media source because it gratifies my need for information, and I trust it*. Indeed, it could be argued that trust and habit are a preferred means to an end, making them qualifiers, not needs. An example of habit in this context would be, *I consume a certain media*

*source because it gratifies my need for entertainment, and it's where I've always gone to get my entertainment.* If this position were to be taken, it would give rise to another theoretical advancement, namely: the application of a second tier of measurement to a typology of needs, that serve as qualifiers, and which hold the potential to provide deeper insight into the motivations behind media choice. Researchers could measure a range of motives and apply a second tier of measurement that includes, but is not limited to, Trust and Habit. In so doing, this could contribute to a better understanding of the psychological and sociological aspects of media choice.

One of the criticisms of U&G research is the vast array of typologies in use, which results in disparate studies with little common ground for consensus (Weiss, 1976; Ruggiero, 2000). With the rapid pace of media change, the U&G dimensions should be broad enough to be resilient (as in, both robust and elastic) to change. For studies concerning the uses and gratifications of magazines, the proposed updated version of McQuail's (2010) typology of motives for media use may help to create more consistency in the future – regardless of whether it is adopted as a six-motive typology or the original four-motive typology with Trust and Habit applied as qualifiers in a second layer of analysis.

Krishen et al. (2016) used the psychological concepts of the power law of practice and cognitive lock-in to explain how the repetitive practice of consuming content via one medium fosters a perception of efficiency and familiarity, and ultimately, value in that medium. And this results in cognitive lock-in, which occurs when a consumer is reticent to digress from that which he or she has become accustomed or practised, even though a potentially better alternative may exist (Krishen et al., 2016). In the context of this study, the work of Krishen and colleagues suggests that transition to alternative media consumption patterns takes time. To be more specific, there is a lag between technological change and adoption that goes beyond the normal process of diffusion (Rogers, 2003). The results from this study extend the work of Krishen et al. to Gen-Z media consumption by showing that even though they do not trust it, Gen-Z continues to use social media because they are habitually connected to it, and this dissatisfaction is yet to reflect in their patterns of media use.

The next theoretical contribution was not attached to stated aims of this study. Randle (2003) compared the uses and gratification of print magazines with the Internet

and suggested further research into identifying the suitability of media sources for the delivery of particular content types. After analysing respondents' content needs, this inquiry focused on respondents' perceptions of the media sources that best meet these needs. A high degree of consensus about the preferred content types for each media source was found, and based on this, it was possible to propose two content types that best matched each of the four media sources studied. These were discussed in Chapter 5 and are presented in Table 8.2 below:

**Table 8.2**

*Content Suitability by Media Source*

Media Source	Content Type
Magazines	Travel and Technique
Social Media	Competition and Interviews
Websites	Conditions and Travel
Television	Competition and Conditions

While the above finding cannot be generalised as it only applies to the five content types and four media sources specific to this study, it does provide a starting point for further research into “what subject matter is best for each medium” (Randle, 2003, p.21). If such studies prove valid and reliable, they will also make a valuable contribution to media substitution theory because discovering a match between a content type/s and a media type provides the opportunity for media sources to optimise their content offering based on their natural strengths, which in turn, will help to distinguish their offering from competing media sources.

Nossek et al. (2015) used media displacement theory to investigate the differences in print and digital media consumption of a population sample from nine different European countries. While they found that print media are still an important component of the new communications environment among European audiences, they found their cross-national results to be inconsistent and ambiguous. They suggested further research in different cultures is required so a better understanding of the cultural differences in media choice can be obtained. This study, while limited to sport media

and surf media in particular, provides a contribution toward understanding the Australian perspective of print and digital media consumption, as it applies to media substitution theory. Therefore, this study extends the media displacement work of Adoni and Nossek (2001) by adding insight from a very different cultural context to their original study's findings.

The nexus between sport and identity has been widely addressed in the literature (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Anderson & Stone, 1981; Donnelly & Young, 1988; Green & Chalip, 1998; Heere & James, 2007; Newson, 2019). The link between surfing and identity has attracted similarly high levels of research interest (for example: Booth 2008; Ford & Brown, 2006; Langseth, 2012; Lanagan, 2002; Stranger, 2011; Wheaton, 2019). In most of these studies, media is acknowledged as one of the factors exerting influence on the shaping of individual and group identity. In this context, media is used as a broad term encompassing all media types and formats. This study addresses the influence of a specific media type - surf magazines - on identity in the modern media context, and this has two theoretical implications. Firstly, it advances both sets of work cited above regarding the contribution of surf magazines to individual adherents' notion of a surfing identity; and secondly, it examines the extent to which an old medium (magazines) maintains influence in a media landscape dominated by new media. In the last two decades, magazines have not featured prominently in media studies (McQuail, 2010) and so this study makes theoretical contributions in an understudied area.

Consumer research on the liminoid experience has been applied to many consumption-related contexts but not, as yet, to magazine consumption in the context of surf travel escapism. This study applies the concept of liminality and media transportation theory to advance a perspective about magazines being uniquely positioned to deliver a temporary altered state. As such, the study's findings add to a growing body of literature about the application of Turner's (1965) seminal work to various consumption experiences such as events, advertising, tourism, and nightclubbing.

Finally, this study proposes four factors that differentiate magazines in the modern media environment. These four factors represent an extension of Adoni and Nossek's (2001) work and a much-needed contribution to the small body of work conducted on the future of printed magazines in the digital age. Additionally, there is

sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that the “print is dead” narrative appears to be merely moral panic but more work is needed to understand what makes printed magazines so resilient. This study makes a contribution to understanding the resilience of magazines against the extreme pressures of digital disruption, through a combination of three theoretical lenses: generation theory, U&G theory, and media substitution theory.

#### 8.4 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The finding that the Australian surfing population is aging, with peak participation occurring at 45 to 49-years-of-age (AusPlay, 2021), suggests that surfing should be conceptualised as a youthful sport and surfers form part of a youthful subculture. The youthful appeal of the surfing lifestyle is therefore merely an aspirational positionality. This has implications for the surf brand manufacturers and marketers who might reconsider their sizing, styling, and pricing because the average surfer today is most likely employed and has more disposable income than 30 to 40 years ago. It might also influence their brand messaging because there is a difference between communicating to youth and communicating a youthful aspiration.

As mentioned in this chapter’s introduction, in the context of this research, Co-existence through functional differentiation for surf magazine publishers requires identifying and capitalising on print's strengths, especially those strengths that counter digital's weaknesses. The four differentiating factors that conclude this study’s findings can be used as a foundation upon which the differentiation of surf magazines, as an industry sector, can be built. Within the surf magazine sector, each magazine is positioned uniquely, so a more nuanced layer of differentiation will inevitably be added to the foundational layer this study provides. A discussion of the practical implications of the four differentiators follows below.

The first differentiator, Trusted Expertise reminds publishers and editors to focus on protecting, embedding and leveraging the trust that is attributed to magazines. Chiefly, this can be achieved by delivering and promoting content that depends on its trustworthiness for impact, and to use the most trusted sources to originate this content. For example, tips about technique, reviews about equipment, and explanations of surf-related phenomena delivered by widely recognised experts in each field will satisfy the need for trusted expertise and reinforce the magazine’s role as a trusted and

authoritative source within a media landscape awash with misinformation, disinformation and “fake news”. Trust is a rare and valuable asset in the post-truth era (Chayko, 2021; Sismondo, 2017) and publishers and editors should nurture this carefully.

The second differentiator, Identity Influence, provides publishers and advertising sales staff empirical evidence to demonstrate the important role magazines play in individual and group identity, and the link this has to the commercialisation of surf culture. This is especially relevant to the commercial success of surf apparel companies, and is explained and elaborated upon below.

Elliott and Wattanasuwan (1998), theorise that branded products and media, are among the most important symbolic resources used for the construction and maintenance of identity. Surf brands have a range of channels to communicate their respective symbolic meanings to consumers in search of identity; however, the results from this research suggest that as a trusted and authoritative media source, surf magazines have a superior ability to gratify consumers’ need for identity. So, for this reason, surf magazines should be seen as an important transmitter of a surf brand’s symbolic meanings.

From a consumer perspective, the distinctive style of surf clothing is attractive to those looking to construct an identity that aligns with surf culture. The symbolic resource of surf clothing has surf culture – or aspects of it - as its symbolic meaning. It follows then, that the attraction of surf culture is dependent on how it is presented and disseminated. Ultimately, the extent to which surf culture appeals to the general public has a causal influence on the success of surf apparel stakeholders.

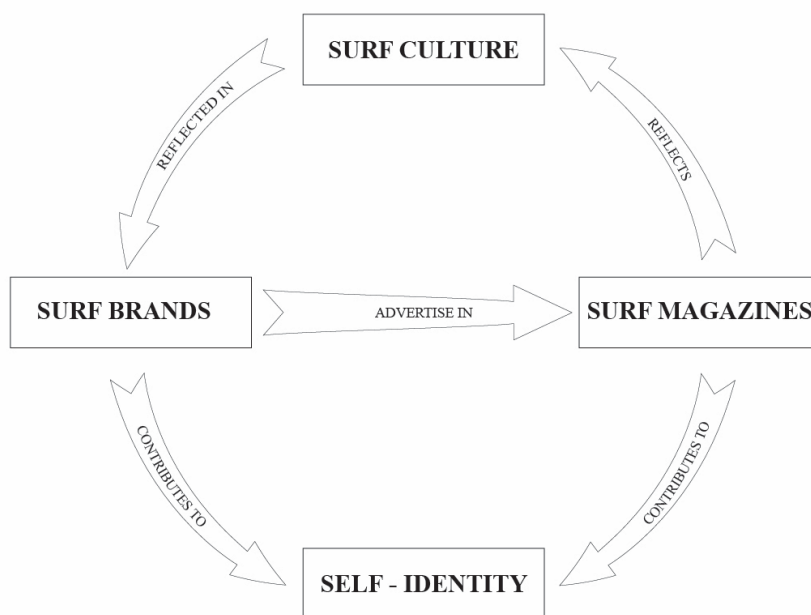
Regarding the way in which surf culture is presented and disseminated, Ford and Brown (2005) posit that surf media plays a key role. Booth (2008) referred to the use of the “transmission model of communication” by Stedman (1997) and Henderson (2001, 2002) to show how a surfing magazine influences surf culture by framing the precepts of young surfers, telling them how to think and act. Wheaton (2003) concurs, suggesting that lifestyle sports magazines “play a central part in the way in which the sporting lifestyles and identities are learnt and displayed” (p. 197). Thus, it can be argued that just as this trust and authority of surf magazines gives them a special

capacity to exert influence on identity, the trust and authority also gives them a special capacity to contribute to the ongoing creation, maintenance and dissemination of surf culture.

Given the centrality of surf magazines to surfers' identity, and the creation, maintenance and dissemination of surf culture, their role here cannot be underestimated. Publishers and editors could use these findings to promote the unique role surf magazines play in supporting the underlying drivers of demand for surf brands. An added benefit is the knowledge that by promoting their brand's symbolic meanings through magazine advertisements, surf companies are also supporting a sector that helps to perpetuate the appeal of surf culture at the broader societal level, creating a virtuous cycle that supports their own business logic. A model of the interactions between surf magazines, surf culture, surf brands and identity formation is proposed below.

**Figure 8.1**

*Model of Interactions Between Surf Magazines and Surf Culture, Surf Brands and Identity Formation*



Travel Escapism, the third differentiator, should prompt publishers and editors to maximise features and high-quality imagery about exotic and distant surfing locations. This is because surf magazines have a superior capacity to transport readers away from the mundane and temporarily place them into the sublime (Stranger, 2010).

As discussed in Chapter 5, the spirit of travel and even the “Nirvanafication” of certain surf destinations (Ponting & O’Brien, 2015) is deeply embedded into the psyche of all surfers (Ford & Brown, 2006; Preston-Whyte, 2001; Scheibel, 1995). Indeed, the data revealed that Travel featured in the top three of all respondents’ list of favourite content types, and later in the study, it was found that magazines are particularly well suited to the delivery of content about surf travel. If publishers and editors pay close attention to providing travel content in a manner that caters to the various meanings it has to Gen-Z, and indeed, to surfers of all ages and approaches to the sport, they would be capitalising on one of the unique strengths of the surf magazine and specialising in a content category that resonates with all surfers.

Finally, the fourth differentiator, Emotional Attachment should drive publishers to be uncompromising with achieving premium production values, a contemporary design aesthetic, and seeking out the highest quality images. These are characteristics that, collectively, cannot be translated through digital media platforms (Bonner, 2015; Webb & Fulton, 2019), and help to conceptualise the surf magazine as something that is indulgent, desirable and collectable. These are also characteristics that contribute to an experience of heightened sensory pleasure, or what Feldman (2010) describes as sensory hedonism. These characteristics and experiences contribute to increased emotional attachment and engender loyalty. The final related experiential concept that fuels emotional attachment is the liminoid (liminal-like) experience that a magazine can offer. The liminoid, or liminal-like experience, describes the consumer temporarily entering a zone that is out of the ordinary and transformative (Duignan et al., 2020). Few studies have been done on objects containing liminoid features (Laviolette, 2019). Laviolette argues that there should be consideration for, “the conceptual implications of thinking about objects in terms of the liminal characteristics that they might have or the liminal states which they might help induce” (p. 4). Rosenblatt’s (1986) assertion that art can exude an “experiential aura” (p. 125) is suggestive that beautifully produced objects (such as paintings and sculptures) can induce a sensory experience that is out of the ordinary. Indeed, Nossek et al. (2015) found that their respondents, “may also view their books as art objects and enjoy them as such” (p. 380). Thus, it is argued that a beautifully constructed magazine can elicit both pleasure and attachment, and magazine producers should therefore focus on positioning their magazines as premium products that are indulgent, aesthetically desirable and collectable.



As mentioned above, these four differentiating factors may provide guidance to magazine stakeholders outside of the scope of surfing, meaning they may prove to be more generalisable. This is because Gen-Z's perceptions about the unique nature of printed surf magazines contain principles that can be applied to other sports and subcultures.

The content preference findings have practical implications that also could extend beyond the realm of magazine publishing to surf content creation on any content delivery platform, and even surf brand marketing. This research represents the first time an empirically-grounded hierarchy of content needs of surfers has been produced, and as such, can be seen as valid and reliable enough to warrant consideration in wider industry editorial and marketing planning. The fact that Travel, Technique and Conditions top the list of content needs, and Competition occupies the lowest rank for the total participant group, may raise questions about the allocation of marketing and promotional spend by some industry practitioners. For decades, it has been assumed that the biggest influencers in the sport are the elite, professional surfers, as determined through the formalised structures of international competition. Consequently, marketing, sponsorship and promotional spend have tended to favour high ranking competitive surfers. While industry stalwart, Rip Curl, developed a marketing campaign around their concept of "The Search" (founded on travel escapism); and fellow industry leader, Billabong, used the slogan, "Only a Surfer Knows the Feeling" (founded on the principles of group identity), both companies also invest much more heavily into the competitive side of surfing (Jarratt, 2010).

Surf content creators should also consider the hierarchy of content needs when determining their editorial mix and it is recommended, additionally, that surf magazine publishers should overlay these needs with other findings in this study such as the proposed schedule of content suitability by media source referred to in sections 8.3, 5.10 and 5.11, and the four differentiating factors of surf magazines referred to in Chapter 7. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that a pragmatic approach would be for printed surf magazines to accept their inability to compete with digital media as an information resource when currency or temporality are paramount. Magazines will always be suboptimal for anyone needing information for immediate decision making.

Thus, the argument for magazines co-existing should be supplemented by getting entirely out of the “immediacy” business, where online platforms will inevitably thrive.

Finally, this study shows that low trust in digital media is a seed of discontent that has already taken root in Gen-Z. The double paradox identified in this study – that Gen-Z are heavy users of social media but trust them the least and light users of magazines but trust them the most – presents an opportunity for surf magazines. However, the power law of practice and cognitive lock-in theories suggest that if surf magazines adapt their offering to capitalise on their superiority for Trust (as well as the other three differentiators), sustained and repetitive use is required before the new pattern of media use becomes embedded (Krishen et al. 2016). So, publishers and editors need to exercise patience and persistence in their pursuit of co-existence, and marketers should consider that although the media habits of the youth may appear embedded, the current environment is ripe for change.

## 8.5 FINAL REFLECTION

This study joins others that assert the moral panic surrounding the so-called death of print is overstated (Bonner & Roberts, 2017; Loda & Coleman, 2009; Webb & Fulton, 2019). There is no doubt, however, that the disruption of print media by new media technologies is significant and ongoing. A failure to evolve will result in Displacement (Adoni & Nossek, 2001). This outcome is consistent with Lin (2001) who found that even if an old and new medium are perceived to be functionally similar, audience attention will favour the newcomer. It has been proposed that surf print media can avoid Displacement by pursuing the path of Co-existence. Accordingly, it is proposed that surf print media’s future lies in its collective ability to execute functional differentiation in order to re-establish its unique value proposition and distinguish itself from its digital disruptors. The four differentiating factors that conclude this study’s findings can be used as a foundation upon which the differentiation of surf magazines, as a sector, can be built. However, within the surf magazines sector, each magazine is positioned uniquely, so a more nuanced layer of differentiation will inevitably be added to the foundational layer this study provides. It should be noted that Co-existence should not be mistaken for isolation. Chayko (2021) states that, “the online, digital world is not a separate entity from the offline, physical world. It is part of it, or perhaps,

more accurately, it is all one, huge, multidimensional space.” (p. 2). This study, therefore, addresses one part of the surf magazine’s suite of goods and services – the printed magazine – and acknowledges that a digital presence is an essential and expected part of a magazine’s customer facing repertoire. Jain, Zulfia and Roy’s (2017) study on magazines and social media platforms, and Randle’s (2003) study comparing gratification niches between magazines and websites, are examples of studies on how magazines interact with other platforms in the media landscape.

## 8.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the online survey was clear about participation being limited to Australian residents only, a significant number ( $n = 104$ ) of people participated from other countries, as shown in Table 8.3 below.

**Table 8.3**

*Ranking of participants from unsolicited countries (Qualtrics survey data)*

Country	Number of Participants
New Zealand	23
USA	23
South Africa	16
United Kingdom	10
France	7
Spain	7
Portugal	5
Brazil	4
Germany	3
Indonesia	3
Norway	3

The above suggests that interest in surf media research is high and a replica of this study in New Zealand, USA and Europe (including the UK) could be as enthusiastically received as this study was. The same study across major surfing countries would reveal interesting insights into the levels of homogeneity/heterogeneity of the global surfing population's media habits and perspectives.

A longitudinal application of this study could yield interesting data about the changing habits and perceptions of surfers in Australia over the long term, and contribute greatly to understanding the constant and ongoing adjustments that occur as the media landscape changes. This would support dialectic model of interaction advanced by Adoni and Nossek (2001), which allows for continuous adjustments by incumbent media as their environment evolves. Indeed, Nossek, et al. (2015) posit that Displacement is a protracted process of change that requires a longitudinal study approach rather than a cross sectional one. Kim et al. (2020) concur, suggesting any form of adaptation by incumbents to the arrival of a new entrant would result in a "*process* of reconfiguring the media ecosystem" (p. 66, emphasis in original).

The data that were captured to develop a hierarchy of content needs (RQ1a) offers the potential for exploration into content needs broken down by gender and surfing frequency, which adds scope for further research beyond merely comparisons by age. This could inform industry stakeholders looking to segment their markets by gender and/or surfing ability.

The matching of content types to media sources, as called for by Randle (2003), is another recommendation for further research. This study found two content types that best match each of the four media sources studied. Further research into what subject matter is best for each medium would make a valuable contribution to media substitution theory and provide the opportunity for media sources to optimise their content offering based on their natural strengths.

As mentioned in Section 8.3, the application of a second tier of measurement to a typology of needs that could serve as qualifiers, might assist U&G researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the psychological and sociological aspects of media choice. The two-layered approach could also allow for a typology of more broadly defined motives which would be more resilient to the rapid pace of change in media, and thus be

utilised over a longer period of time. This could allow researchers to achieve consistency in their use of typologies over time, making longitudinal U&G studies more possible, and addressing one of the long-standing criticisms of U&G research about the vast array of typologies in use that result in disparate studies with little common ground for consensus (Weiss, 1976; Ruggiero, 2000).

While this study explored the prospects of printed surf magazines, the same study applied to magazines from other sport codes could reveal interesting insights into the levels of homogeneity/heterogeneity of the sport magazine readers. More studies of this nature would also validate or improve the methodological approach of this study so future studies can become more refined.

Finally, although magazine studies seem to be increasing in scarcity, magazines still seem to find markets around the world. It is hoped the resilience of the medium inspires further research into the Co-existence of printed magazines in the digital age.

One of the conclusions of this study is that by identifying and capitalising on print's strengths, especially those strengths that counter digital's weaknesses, surf magazine publishers can achieve co-existence by pursuing functional differentiation. It should be noted, however, that as already stated, media choice involves a variety of factors, some of which are unrelated to the benefits that result from optimising a medium's innate utility. This research project found that cost and convenience are two key factors that drive Gen-Z's preference for social media. Ultimately, these factors could supersede the appeal of a fully optimised and functionally differentiated magazine. For example, in live sports media, 96% of people still would prefer to watch the competition on television, yet mobile devices continue to erode television programming's market share because mobile devices are cheaper, more accessible and can be activated from any locality (PwC,2022). To consolidate the point, just because print magazines are "better" than another media option does not necessarily mean that they will survive as other mitigating factors could hold greater sway. Econometric research, using utility theory, could quantify the force of these mitigating factors (such as price and ease of access), shedding light on consumer attempts to maximum media utility and allowing media owners, including sport magazine publishers, to understand the extent of the competitive forces that exist between media types.

## 8.8 LIMITATIONS

Digital media have evolved since the commencement of this research project, which means the findings do not include some of the more recent changes in the digital media landscape such as the rise of TikTok, which by the time of final submission, had become the most downloaded app globally (Oktarini et al., 2022). Also, over the duration of this study, the dominant social networks have become less distinct. Snapchat, for example, has Spotlight, which is similar to Instagram Reels, and while Twitter has Spaces, Facebook has Rooms to take on the audio upstart Clubhouse, and they all have Stories. The rapid pace of change in the digital media landscape represents a limitation to this research because as media substitution theory posits, incumbent media are impacted by and adjust to, new media. So, this study represents a mere snapshot in the continuum of change and could feasibly be somewhat outdated by the time it is released.

A limiting aspect of the survey design was the failure to capture age data as a continuous variable. Instead, age was presented in categories, which limited the ability to conduct some statistical techniques and to re-categorise the age data into age categories that correspond with those of the different generational cohorts. Also, with Age being a categorical variable, a range of parametric statistical tests were not possible. This could result in different findings if, *ceteris paribus*, the age variable was captured as a continuous variable in another study and parametric tests were applied.

While there are various suggestions that the findings of this study may be generalisable to the broader population of Gen-Z, or to members of other sporting codes or subcultural niches, it should not be forgotten that Generation-Z is a theoretical construct and it is possible that other members of the Gen-Z cohort may not all have the same attitudes and perceptions towards media. Nonetheless, it should be added that McCrindle and Wolfinger (2014) suggest that significant homogeneity can and does exist among those who are technologically connected, and Valkenburg and Piotrowski (2017) found that Western youth are remarkably homogenous in their media preferences. So, while this study's findings may not be generalisable to the global population of Gen-Z, it might be so for Western youth or youth who have access to similar technological capacity as Australia.

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APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS BY MEDIA SOURCE, FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores of the total participant group's responses, a ranking of preferred content types for each of the four media sources was established. A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the content types were statistically significant for each of the four media sources [Magazines:  $X^2(4, n = 974) = 498.94, p < .001$ ; Social Media:  $X^2(4, n = 974) = 39.28, p < .001$ ; Websites:  $x^2(4, n = 974) = 1216.50, p < .001$ ; Television:  $x^2(4, n = 974) = 475.07, p < .001$ ]. Further within-group analyses were undertaken by means of a series of Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests, which compares pairs of content preferences within each of the four media sources, and the following findings were observed.

For Magazines:

*Travel and Technique* ( $z = -4.09, p < .001$ ); *Technique and Interviews* ( $z = -7.59, p < .001$ ); *Interviews and Competition* ( $z = -5.27, p < .001$ ); *Competition and Conditions* ( $z = -5.55, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 2.2 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table A1**

*Content Ranking by Media Source: Magazines*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Travel	3.32	1.031	1
2	Technique	3.19	1.064	2
3	Interviews	2.90	1.012	3
4	Competition	2.71	1.099	4
5	Conditions	2.47	1.376	5

For Social Media:

*Travel and Competition* ( $z = -2.07, p = .039$ ); *Competition and Technique* ( $z = -1.40, p = .161$ ); *Technique and Interviews* ( $z = -1.49, p = .136$ ); *Interviews and Conditions* ( $z = -.749, p = .454$ ). The last column of Table 2.3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table A2**

*Content Ranking by Media Source: Social Media*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Travel	3.38	1.203	1
2	Competition	3.29	1.311	2
3	Technique	3.24	1.224	2
4	Interviews	3.17	1.237	2
5	Conditions	3.15	1.497	2

For Websites:

*Conditions and Travel* ( $z = -18.61, p < .001$ ); *Travel and Technique* ( $z = -1.11, p = .267$ ); *Technique and Competition* ( $z = -3.02, p = .003$ ); *Competition and Interviews* ( $z = -13.12, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2.4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.



**Table A3***Content Ranking by Media Source: Websites*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Conditions	4.49	0.862	1
2	Travel	3.66	1.015	2
3	Technique	3.63	1.016	2
4	Competition	3.50	1.167	4
5	Interviews	2.98	1.109	5

For Television:

*Competition and Conditions* ( $z = -9.32, p < .001$ ); *Conditions and Interviews* ( $z = -3.04, p = .002$ ); *Interviews and Travel* ( $z = -1.41, p = .157$ ); *Travel and Technique* ( $z = -7.90, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2.5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table A4***Content Ranking by Media Source: Television*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Competition	2.69	1.370	1
2	Conditions	2.24	1.294	2
3	Interviews	2.12	1.174	3
4	Travel	2.09	1.114	3
5	Technique	1.91	1.080	5

## APPENDIX B

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF CONTENT NEEDS BY MEDIA SOURCE, SPLIT BY AGE

Mean scores were used to establish a ranking of preferred content types for each of the four media sources, split by Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. Standard deviation was analysed to provide further support for, and confidence in, the rank orders. In order to test for general significance of within-group rank orders, Friedman tests were conducted for each ranked group. Follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were then conducted to establish a more accurate within-group ranking for each group. The results are shown below.

Surf Magazines:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(4, n = 249) = 47.70, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(4, n = 725) = 535.31, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1, the following results were observed:

*Travel and Technique* ( $z = -1.15, p = .250$ ); *Technique and Competition* ( $z = -2.72, p = .007$ ); *Competition and Conditions* ( $z = -.425, p = .671$ ); *Conditions and Interviews* ( $z = -1.30, p = .193$ ). The last column of Table 1 reflects the adjusted for significance rank order.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Travel and Technique* ( $z = -4.09, p < .001$ ); *Technique and Interviews* ( $z = -5.82, p < .001$ ); *Interviews and Competition* ( $z = -7.65, p < .001$ ); *Competition and Conditions* ( $z = -6.13, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is therefore, no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table B1***Content Ranking by Media Source: Magazines, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	3.46	0.961	1
2	Technique	3.45	0.976	1
3	Competition	3.20	1.094	3
4	Conditions	3.19	1.326	3
5	Interviews	3.02	0.982	3

**Table B2***Content Ranking by Media Source: Magazines, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	3.20	1.070	1
2	Technique	3.10	1.084	2
3	Interviews	2.79	1.028	3
4	Competition	2.60	1.091	4
5	Conditions	2.32	1.374	5

**Social Media:**

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(4, n = 249) = 10.57, p = .032$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(4, n = 725) = 60.68, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Competition and Interviews* ( $z = -.248, p = .804$ ), *Interviews and Technique* ( $z = -2.10, p = .035$ ); *Technique and Travel* ( $z = -.013, p = .990$ ); *Travel and Conditions* ( $z = -1.09, p = .277$ ). The last column of Table 3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed: *Travel and Competition* ( $z = -3.63, p < .001$ ); *Competition and Technique* ( $z = -.419, p = .675$ ); *Technique and Conditions* ( $z = -2.03, p = .042$ ); *Conditions and Interviews* ( $z = -.564, p = .573$ ). The last column of Table 4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table B3**

*Content Ranking by Media Source: Social Media, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Competition	3.82	1.055	1
2	Interviews	3.78	1.054	1
3	Technique	3.75	0.978	3
4	Travel	3.69	0.989	3
5	Conditions	3.60	1.249	3

**Table B4**

*Content Ranking by Media Source: Social Media, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Travel	3.26	1.253	1
2	Competition	3.11	1.334	2
3	Technique	3.09	1.265	2
4	Conditions	3.00	1.530	4
5	Interviews	2.96	1.236	4

Websites:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(4, n = 249) = 238.81, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(4, n = 725) = 992.79, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Conditions* and *Technique* ( $z = -8.42, p < .001$ ), *Technique* and *Travel* ( $z = -1.72, p = .086$ ); *Travel* and *Competition* ( $z = -.814, p = .415$ ); *Competition* and *Conditions* ( $z = -9.45, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Travel* and *Competition* ( $z = -3.95, p < .001$ ); *Competition* and *Technique* ( $z = -2.16, p = .031$ ); *Technique* and *Conditions* ( $z = -17.62, p < .001$ ); *Conditions* and *Interviews* ( $z = -20.50, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 6 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

### Table B5

*Content Ranking by Media Source: Websites, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Conditions	4.34	0.943	1
2	Technique	3.65	1.068	2
3	Travel	3.42	1.078	2
3	Competition	3.41	1.157	2
5	Interviews	3.01	1.192	5

**Table B6***Content Ranking by Media Source: Websites, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Conditions	4.56	0.810	1
2	Travel	3.71	0.996	2
3	Technique	3.64	0.992	3
4	Competition	3.56	1.148	4
5	Interviews	2.99	1.100	5

Television:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(4, n = 249) = 123.98, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(4, n = 725) = 361.99, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Competition and Interviews* ( $z = -5.66, p < .001$ ), *Interviews and Conditions* ( $z = -.349, p = .747$ ); *Conditions and Travel* ( $z = -1.71, p = .087$ ); *Travel and Technique* ( $z = -6.44, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 7 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Competition and Conditions* ( $z = -8.10, p < .001$ ); *Conditions and Travel* ( $z = -3.77, p < .001$ ); *Travel and Interviews* ( $z = -.425, p = .671$ ); *Interviews and Technique* ( $z = -4.75, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 6 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table B7***Content Ranking by Media Source: Television, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Competition	3.31	1.270	1
2	Interviews	2.85	1.289	2
2	Conditions	2.83	1.345	2
4	Travel	2.69	1.185	2
5	Technique	2.43	1.186	5

**Table B8***Content Ranking by Media Source: Television, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Competition	2.41	1.326	1
2	Conditions	1.95	1.194	2
3	Travel	1.80	0.988	3
3	Interviews	1.79	0.995	3
5	Technique	1.67	0.931	5

## APPENDIX C

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY CONTENT TYPE, SPLIT BY AGE

Mean scores were used to establish the ranking of media sources for each of the five content types, split by Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. Standard deviation was analysed to provide further support for, and confidence in, the rank orders. In order to test for general significance of within-group rank orders, Friedman tests were conducted for each ranked group. Follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were then conducted to establish a more accurate within-group ranking for each group. The results are shown below.

Travel:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 249) = 110.69, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 725) = 920.97, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -6.48, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -1.46, p = .144$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -21.13, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is therefore, no different to the original rank order in the first column.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -6.48, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -1.46, p = .144$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -21.13, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is therefore, no different to the original rank order in the first column.



**Table C1***Content Ranking by Media Type: Travel, Age Group 1*

Rank	Media Source	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.72	0.988	1
2	Websites	3.53	1.036	2
3	Magazines	3.52	0.916	2
4	Television	2.84	1.204	4

**Table C2***Content Ranking by Media Type: Travel, Age Group 2*

Rank	Media Source	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.71	1.005	1
2	Social Media	3.26	1.248	2
3	Magazines	2.26	1.059	2
4	Television	1.83	0.989	4

Interviews:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 249) = 122.09, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 725) = 544.17, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media and Websites* ( $z = -4.32, p <.001$ ); *Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -1.77, p =.077$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -15.50, p <.001$ ). The last column of Table 3.3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Social Media and Websites* ( $z = -4.32, p <.001$ ); *Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -1.77, p =.077$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -15.50, p <.001$ ). The last column of Table 3.3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table C3**

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Interviews, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.86	1.007	1
2	Websites	3.06	1.171	2
3	Magazines	3.06	0.986	2
4	Television	3.00	1.303	4

**Table C4**

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Interviews, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	2.95	1.086	1
2	Social Media	2.94	1.220	1
3	Magazines	2.85	1.016	3
4	Television	1.82	1.002	4

For Competition:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 249) = 72.97, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 725) = 377.50, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -4.62, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -12.34, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -0.79, p = .427$ ). The last column of Table 3.4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -4.62, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -12.34, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -0.79, p = .427$ ). The last column of Table 3.4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

### Table C5

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Competition, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.88	1.076	1
2	Websites	3.47	1.147	2
3	Television	3.41	1.245	2
4	Magazine	3.22	1.089	4

**Table C6**

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Competition, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.51	1.175	1
2	Social Media	3.09	1.325	2
3	Magazines	2.54	1.049	3
4	Television	2.44	1.328	4

Technique:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 249) = 184.25, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 725) = 982.90, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Websites* and *Social Media* ( $z = -8.99, p < .001$ ); *Social Media* and *Magazines* ( $z = -1.06, p = .292$ ); *Magazines* and *Television* ( $z = -10.29, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 3.5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites* and *Social Media* ( $z = -8.99, p < .001$ ); *Social Media* and *Magazines* ( $z = -1.06, p = .292$ ); *Magazines* and *Television* ( $z = -10.29, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 3.5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table C7***Content Ranking by Media Type: Technique, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.71	1.003	1
2	Websites	3.67	1.095	2
3	Magazines	3.45	1.007	3
4	Television	2.56	1.234	4

**Table C8***Content Ranking by Media Type: Technique, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.62	0.988	1
2	Magazines	3.10	1.070	2
3	Social Media	3.08	1.252	2
4	Television	1.68	0.923	4

### Conditions

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 249) = 173.25, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 725) = 1068.34, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -19.42, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -12.30, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -4.56, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last

column of Table 3.6 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -19.42, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -12.30, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Television* ( $z = -4.56, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 3.6 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

### **Table C9**

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Conditions, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.39	0.935	1
2	Social Media	3.61	1.265	2
3	Magazines	3.18	1.328	3
4	Television	2.96	1.333	4

### **Table C10**

*Content Ranking by Media Type: Conditions, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.53	0.833	1
2	Social Media	2.99	1.537	2
3	Magazines	2.22	1.304	3
4	Television	1.99	1.198	4

## APPENDIX D

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY MOTIVE, FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores, a ranking of media source choice by motive was established for the total participant group. A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the media sources are statistically significant for each of the six motives [Information:  $X^2(3, n = 816) = 655.97, p < .001$ ; Entertainment:  $x^2(3, n = 816) = 298.24, p < .001$ ; Identity:  $X^2(3, n = 816) = 422.17, p < .001$ ; Interaction:  $x^2(3, n = 816) = 724.09, p < .001$ ; Trust:  $x^2(3, n = 816) = 300.87, p < .001$ ; Habit:  $x^2(3, n = 816) = 162.11, p < .001$ ]. A Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was then conducted to establish the integrity of the ranking for each media source. The following results were observed:

Information:

*Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -6.75, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Social Media* ( $z = -2.38, p = .017$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -15.93, p < .001$ )]. As a result, the last column of Table 2.7.1 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table D1**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.25	0.822	1
2	Magazines	4.04	0.890	2
3	Social Media	3.93	1.187	3
4	Television	2.84	1.297	4

## Entertainment

*Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -2.08, p = .037$ ); *Magazines and Social Media* ( $z = -3.35, p = .001$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -11.43, p < .001$ )]. As a result, the last column of Table 2.7.2 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table D2**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Entertainment*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.30	0.793	1
2	Magazines	4.23	0.852	2
3	Social Media	4.09	1.148	3
4	Television	3.43	1.316	4

## Identity

*Magazines and Websites* ( $z = -1.83, p = .067$ ); *Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -2.51, p = .012$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -14.01, p < .001$ )]. As a result, the last column of table 2.7.3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table D3**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.33	1.073	1
2	Websites	3.29	1.047	1
3	Social Media	3.19	1.206	3
4	Television	2.50	1.132	4



## Interaction

*Social Media* and *Websites* ( $z = -7.64, p < .001$ ); *Websites* and *Magazines* ( $z = -11.77, p < .001$ ); *Magazines* and *Television* ( $z = -13.11, p < .001$ )]. As a result, the last column of Table 2.7.4 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table 4**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Interaction*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.62	1.231	1
2	Websites	3.31	1.113	2
3	Magazines	2.85	1.006	3
4	Television	2.26	1.147	4

For Trust there is a significant difference between all the pairs of media sources, except the last pair [*Magazines* and *Websites* ( $z = -6.472, p < .001$ ); *Websites* and *Social Media* ( $z = -10.090, p < .001$ ); *Social Media* and *Television* ( $z = -1.323, p = .186$ )]. The last column of Table 2.7.5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 5**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.62	0.921	1
2	Websites	3.34	0.931	2
3	Social Media	2.96	1.105	3
4	Television	2.89	1.189	3

## Habit

*Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -2.37, p = .018$ ); *Magazines and Social Media* ( $z = -0.69, p = .488$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -9.37, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 2.7.6 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 6**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.35	1.020	1
2	Magazines	3.27	1.072	2
3	Social Media	3.24	1.218	2
4	Television	2.78	1.184	4

## APPENDIX E

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF MEDIA SOURCES BY MOTIVE, SPLIT BY AGE

Mean scores were used to establish a ranking of media sources for each motive, split by Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. Standard deviation was analysed to provide further support for, and confidence in, the rank orders. In order to test for general significance of within-group rank orders, Friedman tests were conducted for each ranked group. Follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were then conducted to establish a more accurate within-group ranking for each group. The results are shown below.

Information:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 148.14, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 619.36, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -5.77, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Websites* ( $z = -1.21, p = .227$ ); *Websites and Television* ( $z = -6.25, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 1 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -8.19, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Social Media* ( $z = -4.97, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -13.38, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2 which reflects the adjusted for significance rank order, is therefore no different to the rank order in the first column.

**Table E1***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	4.45	0.825	1
2	Magazines	4.10	0.790	2
3	Websites	4.00	0.869	2
4	Television	3.46	1.120	4

**Table E2***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Information, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.34	0.787	1
2	Magazines	4.02	0.923	2
3	Social Media	3.75	1.240	3
4	Television	2.62	1.285	4

### Entertainment

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 58.98, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 321.34, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media and Magazines* ( $z = -5.74, p < .001$ ); *Magazines and Websites* ( $z = -2.05, p = .040$ ); *Websites and Television* ( $z = -2.21, p = .027$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 3 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites and Magazines* ( $z = -3.40, p = .001$ ); *Magazines and Social Media* ( $z = -5.28, p < .001$ ); *Social Media and Television* ( $z = -9.66, p < .001$ )]. As a result, the last column of Table 4 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

### **Table E3**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Entertainment, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	4.62	0.686	1
2	Magazines	4.39	0.748	2
3	Websites	4.25	0.868	3
4	Television	4.09	1.001	4

### **Table E4**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Entertainment, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	4.31	0.765	1
2	Magazines	4.18	0.881	2
3	Social Media	3.90	1.217	3
4	Television	3.20	1.336	4

## Identity

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 85.26, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 385.15, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media* and *Magazines* ( $z = -2.87, p = .004$ ); *Magazines* and *Websites* ( $z = -2.81, p = .005$ ); *Websites* and *Television* ( $z = -4.12, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 5 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Magazines* and *Websites* ( $z = -0.47, p = .639$ ); *Websites* and *Social Media* ( $z = -5.46, p < .001$ ); *Social Media* and *Television* ( $z = -11.71, p < .001$ )]. The last column of Table 6 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

### Table E5

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.81	0.962	1
2	Magazines	3.64	0.887	2
3	Websites	3.47	0.943	3
4	Television	3.22	1.037	4

**Table E6**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Identity, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.22	1.112	1
2	Websites	3.22	1.075	1
3	Social Media	2.96	1.207	3
4	Television	2.28	1.078	4

**Interaction**

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 201.0, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 547.38, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media* and *Magazines* ( $z = -9.88, p < .001$ ); *Magazines* and *Websites* ( $z = -2.90, p = .004$ ); *Websites* and *Television* ( $z = -6.98, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 7 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Social Media* and *Magazines* ( $z = -12.23, p < .001$ ); *Magazines* and *Websites* ( $z = -11.78, p < .001$ ); *Websites* and *Television* ( $z = -16.05, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 8 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table E7***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Interaction, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	4.19	0.972	1
2	Websites	3.44	1.102	2
3	Magazines	3.23	0.997	3
4	Television	2.74	1.161	4

**Table E8***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Interaction, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.42	1.251	1
2	Websites	3.26	1.113	2
3	Magazines	2.71	0.975	3
4	Television	2.09	1.093	4

**Trust**

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 37.84, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 299.39, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:



*Magazines and Television* ( $z = -4.46, p < .001$ ); *Television and Websites* ( $z = -.815, p = .415$ ); *Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -.928, p < .354$ ). The last column of Table 9 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Magazines and Television* ( $z = -13.65, p < .001$ ); *Television and Websites* ( $z = -10.96, p < .001$ ); *Websites and Social Media* ( $z = -10.91, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 10 is no different to the original rank order in the first column.

**Table E9**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.99	0.836	1
2	Television	3.61	0.976	2
3	Websites	3.53	1.047	2
4	Social Media	3.50	0.992	2

**Table E10**

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Trust, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Magazines	3.49	0.914	1
2	Websites	3.28	0.877	2
3	Social Media	2.77	1.079	3
4	Television	2.64	1.154	4

## Habit

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(3, n = 214) = 78.50, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(3, n = 602) = 181.48, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. For Age Group 1 the following results were observed:

*Social Media* and *Websites* ( $z = -5.98, p < .001$ ); *Websites* and *Magazines* ( $z = -2.58, p = .010$ ); *Magazines* and *Television* ( $z = -.361, p = .718$ ). The last column of Table 11 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2 the following results were observed:

*Websites* and *Magazines* ( $z = -1.30, p = .195$ ); *Magazines* and *Social Media* ( $z = -4.86, p < .001$ ); *Social Media* and *Television* ( $z = -6.62, p < .001$ )]. The last column of Table 12 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

### Table E11

*Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit, Age 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Social Media	3.97	1.007	1
2	Websites	3.50	1.011	2
3	Magazines	3.34	0.964	3
4	Television	3.28	1.073	3

**Table E12***Ranked Media Sources by Motive: Habit, Age 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Websites	3.30	1.019	1
2	Magazines	3.25	1.108	1
3	Social Media	2.98	1.181	3
4	Television	2.60	1.171	4

## APPENDIX F

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF MOTIVES BY MEDIA SOURCE, FOR TOTAL PARTICIPANT GROUP

Using mean scores of the total participant group's responses, a ranking of motives for media source choice was established. A series of Friedman tests confirmed that the within-group differences between the ranking of the motives are statistically significant for each of the four media sources [Magazines:  $X^2(5, n = 929) = 1502.76, p < .001$ ; Websites:  $x^2(5, n = 935) = 1471.55, p < .001$ ; Social Media:  $X^2(5, n = 926) = 1378.03, p < .001$ ; Television:  $x^2(5, n = 841) = 913.85, p < .001$ ]. A Wilcoxon Signed Rank test was then conducted to establish the integrity of the ranking for each media source. The following results were observed:

Magazines:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -9.01, p < .001$ ); *Information and Trust* ( $z = -14.27, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Identity* ( $z = -8.83, p < .001$ ); *Identity and Habit* ( $z = -.506, p = .613$ ); *Habit and Interaction* ( $z = -11.53, p < .001$ ). As a result, the last column of Table 2.6.1 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table F1**

*Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: magazines*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.23	0.866	1
2	Information	4.02	0.906	2
3	Trust	3.59	0.929	3
4	Identity	3.30	1.078	4
5	Habit	3.26	1.085	4
6	Interaction	2.80	1.019	6

Websites:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -2.29, p = .001$ ); *Information and Trust* ( $z = -19.56, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Habit* ( $z = -.110, p = .913$ ); *Habit and Interaction* ( $z = -1.40, p = .160$ ); *Interaction and Identity* ( $z = -.800, p = .424$ ). The last column of Table 2.6.2 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table F2**

*Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Websites*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.30	0.790	1
2	Information	4.25	0.841	2
3	Trust	3.34	0.923	3
4	Habit	3.34	1.017	3
5	Interaction	3.28	1.120	3
6	Identity	3.25	1.062	3

Social Media:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -7.22, p < .001$ ); *Information and Interaction* ( $z = -8.81, p < .001$ ); *Interaction and Habit* ( $z = -9.85, p < .001$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -1.69, p = .001$ ); *Identity and Trust* ( $z = -6.21, p < .001$ )]. The last column of Table 2.6.3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table F3***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Social Media*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Entertainment	4.08	1.144	1
2	Information	3.92	1.184	2
3	Interaction	3.62	1.229	3
4	Habit	3.23	1.210	4
5	Identity	3.17	1.204	4
6	Trust	2.94	1.102	6

Television:

*Entertainment and Trust* ( $z = -15.27, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Information* ( $z = -1.22, p = .223$ ); *Information and Habit* ( $z = -.005, p = .996$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -9.10, p < .001$ ); *Identity and Interaction* ( $z = -9.40, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2.6.4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table 4***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Television*

Rank	Content Type	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Sig. Rank
1	Entertainment	3.42	1.322	1
2	Trust	2.88	1.193	2
3	Information	2.82	1.300	2
4	Habit	2.77	1.184	2
5	Identity	2.49	1.137	5
6	Interaction	2.24	1.144	6

## APPENDIX G

### FULL SET OF RESULTS AND TABLES FOR RANKING OF MOTIVES BY MEDIA SOURCE, SPLIT BY AGE

Mean scores were used to establish the ranking of motives for each media source, split by Age Group 1 and Age Group 2. Standard deviation was analysed to provide further support for, and confidence in, the rank orders. In order to test for general significance of within-group rank orders, Friedman tests were conducted for each ranked group. Follow-up Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were then conducted to establish a more accurate within-group ranking for each group. The results are shown below.

Magazines:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(5, n = 227) = 327.08, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(5, n = 702) = 1223.34, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The following results were observed.

For Age Group 1:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -5.23, p < .001$ ); *Information and Trust* ( $z = -1.68, p = .094$ ); *Trust and Identity* ( $z = -4.85, p < .001$ ); *Identity and Habit* ( $z = -4.33, p < .001$ ); *Habit and Interaction* ( $z = -1.50, p = .133$ ). The last column of Table 1 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -5.33, p < .001$ ); *Information and Trust* ( $z = -12.69, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Habit* ( $z = -4.41, p < .001$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -.841, p = .400$ ); *Identity and Interaction* ( $z = -11.34, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 2 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table G1***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Magazines, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.39	0.770	1
2	Information	4.07	0.812	2
3	Trust	3.97	0.836	2
4	Identity	3.63	0.890	4
5	Habit	3.30	0.969	5
6	Interaction	3.18	1.0008	5

**Table G2***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Magazines, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.17	0.889	1
2	Information	4.01	0.934	2
3	Trust	3.47	0.924	3
4	Habit	3.24	1.120	4
5	Identity	3.20	1.112	4
6	Interaction	2.68	0.992	6

Websites:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(5, n = 227) = 209.85, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(5, n = 708) = 1301.80, p < .001$ ].



Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. The following results were observed.

For Age Group 1:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -4.90, p < .001$ ); *Information and Trust* ( $z = -6.08, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Habit* ( $z = -.247, p = .805$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -.259, p = .796$ ); *Identity and Interaction* ( $z = -.542, p = .588$ ). The last column of Table 3 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2:

*Information and Entertainment* ( $z = -.814, p = .416$ ); *Entertainment and Habit* ( $z = -17.80, p < .001$ ); *Habit and Trust* ( $z = -.272, p = .786$ ); *Trust and Interaction* ( $z = -1.06, p = .289$ ); *Interaction and Identity* ( $z = -1.22, p = .223$ ). The last column of Table 4 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

### **Table G3**

*Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Websites, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.29	0.863	1
2	Information	4.00	0.890	2
3	Trust	3.54	1.057	3
4	Habit	3.50	1.015	3
5	Identity	3.42	0.952	3
6	Interaction	3.48	1.100	3

**Table G4***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Websites, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Information	4.33	0.810	1
2	Entertainment	4.31	0.765	1
3	Habit	3.29	1.013	3
4	Trust	3.28	0.867	3
5	Interaction	3.23	1.123	3
6	Identity	3.18	1.085	3

Social Media:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(5, n = 230) = 322.88, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(5, n = 696) = 1066.82, p < .001$ ].

Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, and the following results were observed.

For Age Group 1:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -4.09, p < .001$ ); *Information and Interaction* ( $z = -4.00, p < .001$ ); *Interaction and Habit* ( $z = -3.02, p = .002$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -2.37, p = .018$ ); and, *Identity and Trust* ( $z = -6.64, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 5 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2:

*Entertainment and Information* ( $z = -5.96, p < .001$ ); *Information and Interaction* ( $z = -4.00, p < .001$ ); *Interaction and Habit* ( $z = -9.50, p < .001$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -.621, p = .534$ ); and, *Identity and Trust* ( $z = -5.21, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 6 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table G5***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Social Media, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.62	0.700	1
2	Information	4.43	0.837	2
3	Interaction	4.17	0.977	3
4	Habit	3.97	0.997	4
5	Identity	3.79	0.968	5
6	Trust	3.46	1.026	6

**Table G6***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Social Media, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	3.91	1.207	1
2	Information	3.76	1.234	2
3	Interaction	3.44	1.251	3
4	Habit	2.98	1.175	4
5	Identity	2.96	1.205	4
6	Trust	2.76	1.071	6

Television:

A Friedman test found significance in the within each of the two age categories [Age Group 1:  $\chi^2(5, n = 218) = 260.64, p < .001$ ; Age Group 2:  $\chi^2(5, n = 623) = 665.62,$

$p < .001$ ]. Further within group analysis was conducted by means of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, and the following results were observed.

For Age Group 1:

*Entertainment and Trust* ( $z = -6.38, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Information* ( $z = -2.05, p = .040$ ); *Information and Habit* ( $z = -2.14, p = .032$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -2.39, p = .017$ ); *Identity and Information* ( $z = -4.40, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 7 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

For Age Group 2:

*Entertainment and Trust* ( $z = -11.87, p < .001$ ); *Trust and Information* ( $z = -0.58, p = .560$ ); *Information and Habit* ( $z = -1.28, p = .898$ ); *Habit and Identity* ( $z = -7.49, p < .001$ ); *Identity and Information* ( $z = -8.37, p < .001$ ). The last column of Table 8 shows the revised ranking, adjusted for significance.

**Table G7**

*Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Television, Age Group 1*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	4.09	0.996	1
2	Trust	3.61	0.970	2
3	Information	3.45	1.120	3
4	Habit	3.28	1.066	4
5	Identity	3.12	1.033	5
6	Interaction	2.73	1.154	6

**Table G8***Ranked Motives for Media Source Choice: Television, Age Group 2*

Rank	Content type	Mean score	Standard deviation	Sig. rank
1	Entertainment	3.19	1.343	1
2	Trust	2.62	1.158	2
3	Information	2.60	1.288	2
4	Habit	2.59	1.289	2
5	Identity	2.26	1.087	5
6	Interaction	2.07	1.091	6

## APPENDIX H

### EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS FOR SURVEY AND INTERVIEWS



June 2019

**"The nature of Gen-Z's influence on the future of surf magazines."**

Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee (BUHREC)

**Explanatory Statement (Survey)**

You are being invited to participate in a research study about generational changes in media choice by Craig Sims, Dr Danny O'Brien, Dr Lisa Gowthorp from Bond University, Australia, and Dr Olan Scott from Brock University, Canada.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey. This survey is open to Australian citizens aged 15-years or older, who surf or consume media content that relates to surfing. It will ask about your surfing content needs, where you source your content from, and why you choose to use those sources. Your responses will help surf magazine publishers as well as other publishers and businesses associated with surfing to understand the effects of the changing media landscape on the media choices of different generational groups.

This is the first of two surveys in this study. It will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete, and at the end you can provide your details if you would like to go into the draw to be one of two participants to win a Firewire surfboard.

We will also ask if you would like to participate in a short telephone interview. If you agree to participate in this, you will go into the draw to be one of two participants to win a Rip Curl Next Tide surf watch.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time, upon which the information you have provided will be immediately destroyed. The information we obtain from you will be dealt with in a manner that ensures confidentiality. Your name and contact details will not be linked to any data and will only be used for the competition draw.

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted please make contact with –

Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee, Bond University Office of Research Services.  
Bond University, Gold Coast, 4229, Australia

Tel: +61 7 5595 4194 Fax: +61 7 5595 1120 email: [ethics@bond.edu.au](mailto:ethics@bond.edu.au)

Ethics application ID: 16164.

By ticking "I agree" below you are indicating that you have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate in this research study.

Yours sincerely,

**Craig Sims**



December 2020

**"The nature of Gen-Z's influence on the future of surf magazines."**

Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee (BUHREC)

**Explanatory Statement (Interviews)**

You are being invited to participate in a research study about generational changes in media choice by Craig Sims, under the supervision of: Dr Danny O'Brien and Dr Lisa Gowthorp from Bond University, Australia, and Dr Olan Scott from Brock University, Canada.

As part of this study, I will invite you to participate in an interview lasting approximately 30 minutes, at a time and place convenient to you. After reading and discussing this Explanatory Statement, your continued participation shall be taken as your informed consent to participate.

However, participation in this study is **completely voluntary** and you may withdraw at any time without risking any negative consequences. If you choose to withdraw your participation in this study, the information you have provided will be immediately destroyed. All the data collected in this study will be treated with complete **confidentiality** and not made accessible to any person other than the researcher. The information I obtain from you will be dealt with in a manner that ensures you remain **anonymous**. Data will be stored in a secured location at Bond University for a period of five (5) years in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee.

The data collected during this study will assist me in developing new knowledge around the effects of the changing media landscape on the media choices of different generational groups. Upon request, a report explaining the aggregate results of the study will be shared with you at the completion of the research process. Please note that all results will be deidentified to protect the confidentiality of individuals.

All participants will go into a draw to be one of two participants to win a Rip Curl Next Tide surf watch. Lucky winners of the watch will be contacted by phone.

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted please make contact with:

Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee, Bond University Office of Research Services.  
Bond University, Gold Coast, 4229, Australia  
Tel: +61 7 5595 4194, email: [ethics@bond.edu.au](mailto:ethics@bond.edu.au) Ethics application ID: 16164.

I thank you for taking the time to assist me with this research.

Yours sincerely,

**Craig Sims**

|

# APPENDIX I

## COPY OF ONLINE SURVEY

### Craig Sims PhD Survey

Start of Block: Introduction/demographics

Q1

Thank you for taking this survey. Your responses will help surf magazine publishers as well as other publishers and businesses associated with surfing to understand the effects of the changing media landscape on the media choices of different generational groups.

This is the first of two surveys in this study. It will take you approximately 10 minutes to complete, and at the end you can include your details if you would like to go into the draw to be one of two participants to win a Firewire surfboard.

At the end of this survey we will ask if you would like to participate in the second survey. This will take the form of an interview. If you agree to participate in this, you will go into the draw to be one of two participants to win a Rip Curl GPS2 watch.

End of Block: Introduction/demographics

Start of Block: Demographics

Q2b What is your age?  
age?

- Younger than 15 years-old (1)
- 15-19 years-old (2)
- 20-29 years-old (3)
- 30-38 years-old (4)
- 39-49 years-old (5)
- 50-65 years-old (6)
- older than 65 years-old (7)

Page 1 of 11

Q3 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q4 How often do you surf?

- I don't surf (1)
- More than once a week (2)
- More than once a month (3)
- Less than once a month (4)

Q5 Do you buy surfing magazines?

- Never (1)
- A few times a year (4)
- Once or twice a month (3)
- Weekly (2)

Display This Question:

If Do you buy surfing magazines? Is Never

Page 2 of 11

Q6 Why do you buy surfing magazines?

(Please drag and drop in order of importance, with 1 being most important to you, 6 being least important)

- Information (1)
- Entertainment (2)
- So I can relate to other surfers like me (3)
- Because it reflects who I am (4)
- Because I trust the content (5)
- Because I've been doing it since forever (6)

Q7 In which country do you reside?

▼ Argentina (7) ... Yemen (191)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Content Needs

Q7

This question concerns your content preferences:

What type of surf content do you consider important?

(Please drag and drop in order of importance, with 1 being most important to you, 4 being least important).

- Surfer interviews and profiles (309)
- Surfing technique and equipment (310)
- Surf travel destinations (311)
- Competitive surfing results and analysis (312)

End of Block: Content Needs

Start of Block: Content Sources

Page 3 of 11

Q8a The following six questions concern where you source your surf content:

I use magazines to source information about?

	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Often (3)	Always (4)
1. Surfer interviews (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Surf travel (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Surf technique and equipment (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Competitive surfing (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If The following six questions concern where you source your surf content: I use magazines to source... [Never] [Count] <= 3

Q8a1 By surfing magazines do you mean printed magazines or digital editions of printed magazines

- Printed (1)
- Digital (2)

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Q8b I use **websites** to source information about?

	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Often (3)	Always (4)
1. Surfer interviews (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Surf travel (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Surf technique and equipment (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Competitive surfing (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8c I use **social media** to source information about?

	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Often (3)	Always (4)
1. Surfer interviews (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Surf travel (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Surf technique and equipment (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Competitive surfing (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If I use social media to source information about? [Never] (Count) => 3

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Q9a The following questions concern the reasons you choose to use these content sources.

To what extent do **surfing magazines** (printed or digital) satisfy the following needs?

	Strongly disagree (12)	Somewhat disagree (13)	Neither agree nor disagree (14)	Somewhat agree (15)	Strongly agree (16)
They keep me informed about my passion (359)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They provide me with entertainment (360)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They make me feel like I'm a real surfer (361)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They have more trustworthy content than other sources (362)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's just a habit; it's what I've always done and I'm used to it (363)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If I use websites to source information about? [Never] (Count) Does Not Contain 4

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Q8c1 In order of frequency, which social media platforms do you use most? (Please drag and drop in order of frequency, with 1 being most important to you, 5 being least frequent).

- Facebook (1)
- Twitter (2)
- YouTube (3)
- Instagram (4)
- Snapchat (5)

Q8d I use **television** to source information about?

	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Often (3)	Always (4)
1. Surfer interviews (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Surf travel (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. surf technique and equipment (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. competitive surfing (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Content Sources

Start of Block: Motivations for Choices (Uses and Gratifications)

Display This Question:

If the following six questions concern where you source your surf content: I use magazines to source... [Never] (Count) Does Not Contain 4

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Q9b To what extent do **websites** satisfy the following needs?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
They keep me informed about my passion (359)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They provide me with entertainment (360)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They make me feel like I'm a real surfer (361)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They have more trustworthy content than other sources (362)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's just a habit; it's what I've always done and I'm used to it (363)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Display This Question:

If I use social media to source information about? [Never] (Count) Does Not Contain 4

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Q9c To what extent do **social media** satisfy the following needs?

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
They keep me informed about my passion (359)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They provide me with entertainment (360)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They make me feel like I'm a real surfer (361)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
They have more trustworthy content than other sources (362)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's just a habit; it's what I've always done and I'm used to it (363)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

-----

Display This Question:  
If I use television to source information about? [Never] (Count) Does Not Contain 4

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End of Block: Motivations for Choices (Uses and Gratifications)

Start of Block: Thank you

Page 9 of 11

Q10 Thank you for completing this survey!  
If you would like your name to go into the draw to be one of two lucky participants to win a Firewire FRK surfboard by Slater Designs, please insert your name and email address below. Your details will only be used to contact you if you are one of the two winners, and will not be shared with anyone else.

Your name (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Your email address or mobile number (2) \_\_\_\_\_

-----

Q11

Can we contact you to participate in our second survey, which will involve a 10 minute phone call to find out more about your survey responses and media choices?  
If you agree to participate in this survey you will go into the draw to be one of two participants to win a Rip Curl GPS2 watch.

Yes, I would like to participate in the second survey (1)

No, I would prefer not to be included in the second survey (2)

-----

Display This Question:  
If Can we contact you to participate in our second survey, which will involve an interview... = Yes, I would like to participate in the second survey

Q12 Thank you for agreeing to participate in the second survey!  
Please submit your name and phone number below. This information will only be used to contact you for the second survey and to notify you if you are one of the two winners of the Rip Curl GPS2 watch, and will not be shared with anyone else.

Your name (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number (2) \_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Thank you

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## APPENDIX J

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(Depending in the interviewee, different questions will be given more/less emphases, and some new questions may arise in discussion)

1. Do you like to read surf magazines?

a. Why/why not?

2. What is it you especially like about surf magazines?

3. What do you think distinguishes a surf magazine from the other media sources surveyed (television, websites, social)?

4. We had two groups of survey respondents (Gen-Z and Older than Gen-Z, which we call The Older Cohort). We asked them to rank five content types listed in our survey. The overall rank order for the five content types was: [list the final ranking of total participant group]. But when broken down by the two groups:

Gen-Z is more interested in Technique than Travel and the Older Cohort is more interested in Travel than Technique [explain what the abbreviations mean].

a. [Gen-Z participant]: Why is improving technical performance more important than travel, and why do you think the older cohort prefer Travel more than Technique?

b. [Older Cohort participant]: Why is travel more important than improving technical performance, and why do you think Gen-Z prefers Technique more than Travel?

Gen-Z ranked Competition second last, and the older cohort ranked Competition last.

c. Does it surprise you that content about competitive surfing ranks so low for all age groups?

d. What do you think it is about competitive surfing that is less preferred than the others?

e. How do your content needs differ from the ranking derived from this survey?

5. We also asked them to indicate where they source their content from (TV, social media, websites, magazines). I'd like to discuss the results with you.

[list the final ranking of total participant group].

But when broken down by the two groups:

[Gen-Z participant]: The Gen-Z age group rank social media highest for the sourcing of content for 4 of the 5 content types [list them] except Surf Conditions, which they use websites for. And they rank websites as second for 4 of the 5 content types (except Surf Conditions, where social media is ranked second). Magazines are ranked third for all 5 content types and television is ranked last for all 5 content types.

a. Does this apply to you, and what are your thoughts about this ranking?

[Older Cohort participant]: The older cohort use websites primarily, to source content for all of the 5 content types.

b. Does this apply to you, and what are your thoughts about this ranking?

However, when we ask what content you use surf magazines for, both age groups said, content about Travel and Technique.

c. Do you think surf magazines are a good media source for content about Travel and Technique, and why?

d. Do you use social media/websites to source content about Travel and Technique anyway, and why do you do that?

6. Let's talk about media trust.

a. Which of these surf media outlets do you personally rate as the most and least trusted media sources: television, websites and social media, magazines

b. Do you trust magazine content? Why/why not?

c. What is it you especially trust/distrust about surf magazines compared to the other media sources surveyed?

The survey results show that magazines are the most trusted media source, over television, websites and social media, with social media ranked last for Gen-Z and second last for the older cohort.

- d. [Gen-Z participant]: What do you think makes surf magazines trustworthy, and what makes social media least trustworthy?
- e. [Older Cohort participant]: What do you think makes surf magazines trustworthy, and what makes social media and television the least trustworthy?
- f. [Older Cohort participant]: Why do you think Gen-Z ranks social media last for Trust?

7. Let's talk about your identity as a surfer.

- a. Do you identify as a surfer?
- b. What informs your identity as a surfer (what is your source/s of reference)
- c. What goods or services you have bought recently that helps to define you as a surfer?
- d. Do you see yourself reflected in a surf mag?
- e. How does consumption of a surf mag fit into your identity as a surfer?

8. And finally, let's talk about the role of surf magazines in surf culture.

- a. What do you understand surf culture to be?
- b. What do you think informs and drives surf culture?
- c. Where do you see surf magazines' place in surf culture?