

Winning with Positivity: Optimizing Event Success through Positive Instagram

Engagement at The 2025 Grammy Awards

By

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Winning with Positivity: Optimizing Event Success through Positive Instagram Engagement at
The 2025 Grammy Awards

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Abstract

Instagram plays an important role in the success of large-scale events by facilitating real-time engagement, online discourse, and public interaction (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). Many people turn to Instagram to fulfill both personal and entertainment needs, often engaging with content that not only reflects their interests, but also influences their emotional well-being (Kertamukti et al., 2019). This sense of engagement can foster a sense of belonging and validation within the comment section on Instagram.

This study aims to explore how Instagram can be strategically used to boost engagement during major events, such as The Grammy Awards, by examining factors such as post timing and content type, ultimately providing actionable insights for field professionals. Specifically, this Major Research Paper (MRP) examines how post timing and content type influence audience interaction and engagement on the official Grammy Awards Instagram account (@recordingacademy). This study focuses on posts published before and after 8:00 PM EST on February 2, 2025, analyzing their impact on comment volume, sentiment, and user engagement. This paper also aims to evaluate how different types of content posted on Instagram, such as live performances, red carpet arrivals, behind the scenes content, and award-winning moments, impacts both the volume and positive sentiment of comments made under each post.

This study will use a mixed-methods approach by applying content analysis to effectively analyze the data collected. This analysis will help determine whether both the timing of posts and types of content posted on The official Grammy Awards Instagram account influence the number of positive comments made under each post.

Thus, this MRP aims to suggest insights for communications professionals that may provide a foundation to leverage social media to increase audience interaction during large-scale events, ultimately by building meaningful, positive engagement within the comment section on Instagram to drive event success and viewer engagement.

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1.0 Introduction

Social media platforms like Instagram have become important tools for amplifying the reach and success of large-scale events. As Public Relations (PR) strategies increasingly depend on social media engagement to foster growth, understanding the dynamics that drive audience interaction has become increasingly valuable. Instagram's visual and interactive features such as likes, comments, and shares, offer a unique opportunity for accounts to engage global audiences in real time, facilitating conversations that shape public perception and sentiment (Kertamukti et al., 2019). Among these interactions, Instagram comments are valuable to discuss as they not only measure the volume and sentiment of interaction with the post, but also offer an enhanced level of dialogue among users discussing the content posted (Kertamukti et al., 2019). Instagram's other forms of interaction such as likes, shares or views do not provide detailed feedback to analyze.

This study aims to look at how specific factors on Instagram, such as post timing (before versus after 8:00PM EST) and content type, affects the volume and sentiment of positive comments on Instagram during The 2025 Grammy Awards. The study will also examine how post timing and content type influence both the frequency and sentiment of comments, with a particular emphasis on the importance of positivity in fostering a supportive online community. By analyzing the impact of different content types and the timeliness of posts, this research will demonstrate how strategically crafted posts can enhance PR efforts and suggest ways to create a positive impactful event experience for everyone. By creating this enhanced experience, these emotions and feelings create a heightened sense of community and togetherness amongst users and fans.

Furthermore, this study will employ content analysis methodologies to provide actionable insights into how social media can be leveraged to maximize audience engagement and influence event success by increasing the reach and viewership of large-scale events. The findings presented in this study will suggest valuable insights for PR specialists and communications professionals by suggesting strategies to maximize positive audience engagement and improve the overall success of future large-scale and high-profile events.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Instagram Features: Enhancing User Interaction within Comment Sections

Social media is becoming the modern force behind what can be deemed as prevalent or *trending* in today's digital age (Kertamukti et al., 2019). Although likes, shares, and views are important analytical statistics for understanding a social media post's overall reach, the comment section on platforms is interestingly enough, more invaluable to analyze (Kertamukti et al., 2019). Instagram specifically designs their platform to encourage users to continuously open the app, as the user gallery can be tailored to the users personal needs, based on searches, likes, views, shares, and most importantly, the tone of comments. Additionally, the sentiment of language used and the capacity of comments posted on Instagram posts, plays an important role in enhancing user interaction on the app (Ahmadi & Ieamsom, 2022). Instagram comments are a primary means of audience engagement on the platform, allowing users to share opinions, reactions, and emotions directly on a vast variety of content. However, Kertamukti et al. (2019) suggests that when Instagram users are consuming their personal time scrolling on the app, they are more likely to engage in posting comments on content types related to entertainment. This is

particularly relevant when analyzing large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, as the event is known to be *Music's Biggest Night of Entertainment*.

Furthermore, the comment feature on the app creates an avenue for real-time feedback, where users can express their thoughts on various elements of the event, from performances and award winners to fashion and genuine reactions. According to Chen (2021), Instagram's comment section enables users to not only engage with content posted, but also to participate in collective conversations. As Richards (2018) explains, the comment section specifically on Instagram, fosters a sense of community and togetherness, as users typically feel more connected to the post through their participation in public discourse. For events specifically, the comment feature also aids in building awareness around the event, as comments often prompt further interactions between accounts and amplify reach through the spread of content across Instagram's feed. Additionally, the comment section on Instagram can be further categorized into the sentiment through which comments are posted, offering insights into how audiences perceive different aspects of the post (Biancovilli et al., 2022). Aramendia-Muneta et al. (2020) highlight that comments can also provide valuable feedback on audience sentiment, enabling event organizers to understand public opinion in real-time. In relation to this study, analyzing how positive comments on The Grammy Awards Instagram posts, in relation to both timing and content, allows both communication professionals and PR specialists to gauge reactions to ultimately use social media platforms to maximize event success in the future.

Overall, the comment section on Instagram is integral to fostering engagement during large events. By offering an interactive platform on Instagram for users to voice their opinions, share feelings, and engage with other Instagram users, the platform enhances user participation and interactivity, turning passive followers into active contributors to the narrative of the post.

This in turn fosters a heightened sense of community in terms of business strategy, as it points towards long-term commitment and support that comes from the viewers as a result of having a platform and safe space to contribute and share their personal opinions and ideas.

2.2 Leveraging Instagram to Maximize Positive Engagement during Large-Scale Events

Instagram, the most widely used social media platform, can be used for many purposes. Many people leverage Instagram to enhance their personal and professional lives; whether that be through the content they post, the content they engage in, or simply the content they come across while scrolling on the app. Karacaer (2021) discusses the importance of leveraging social media platforms, like Instagram, to market and promote large-scale events. Within the study, Karacaer (2021) mentions that although some large-scale events are not always feasible or attendable, when social media is leveraged and used effectively, those watching at home can also feel like they are a part of the event. This directly relates to the exclusiveness of The 2025 Grammy Awards, specifically noting the unity and positivity that the public can experience, by leveraging Instagram to maximize the engagement each post generates. To be more specific, Instagram's comment section is particularly powerful in the context of large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, where enhancing engagement is important to maintain audience appeal and interest in the event itself.

The comment section on Instagram also provides a space for real-time discussion, allowing viewers and those interested in the event to actively engage with content during key moments happening during the event (Bioncovilli, 2022). This not only applies to The Grammy Awards, but also other high-profile events such as the Super Bowl, where viewership is high and attention to the event is purely obtained through the reach, amplification and strategy used on social media. To place a narrowed emphasis on Instagram's comment section, Richards (2018)

highlights that positive engagement during both live and large-scale events is often driven by audience reactions in the comment section, as followers share their thoughts and participate in ongoing conversations. This signifies the impact of leveraging Instagram in various ways to increase engagement, to ultimately enhance positive engagement. Positive engagement is particularly important for this MRP as it points to fostering a sense of community through social media by collectively coming together and contributing insights that allow for a safe and protected space where everyone can thrive and feel welcomed (Richards, 2018).

During large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, Instagram strategically uses its comment section to create a feedback loop. Described by Evelyn et al (2022), a feedback loop is a continuous cycle of user interactions that ultimately influences platform algorithms, which in turn shapes future and tailored content that appears on an individual feed. The most commented posts tend to gain more visibility through Instagram's algorithm, which amplifies engagement by promoting posts with high interaction.

This directly relates to The Grammy Awards as many feeds become consumed by content during the day of the event. The posts become the centre of attention for weeks to follow, allowing for an increased number of likes, comments, and shares on The Grammy Awards official Instagram profile (@recordingacademy). As shown below, Figure 1 displays a screenshot of this Instagram account.

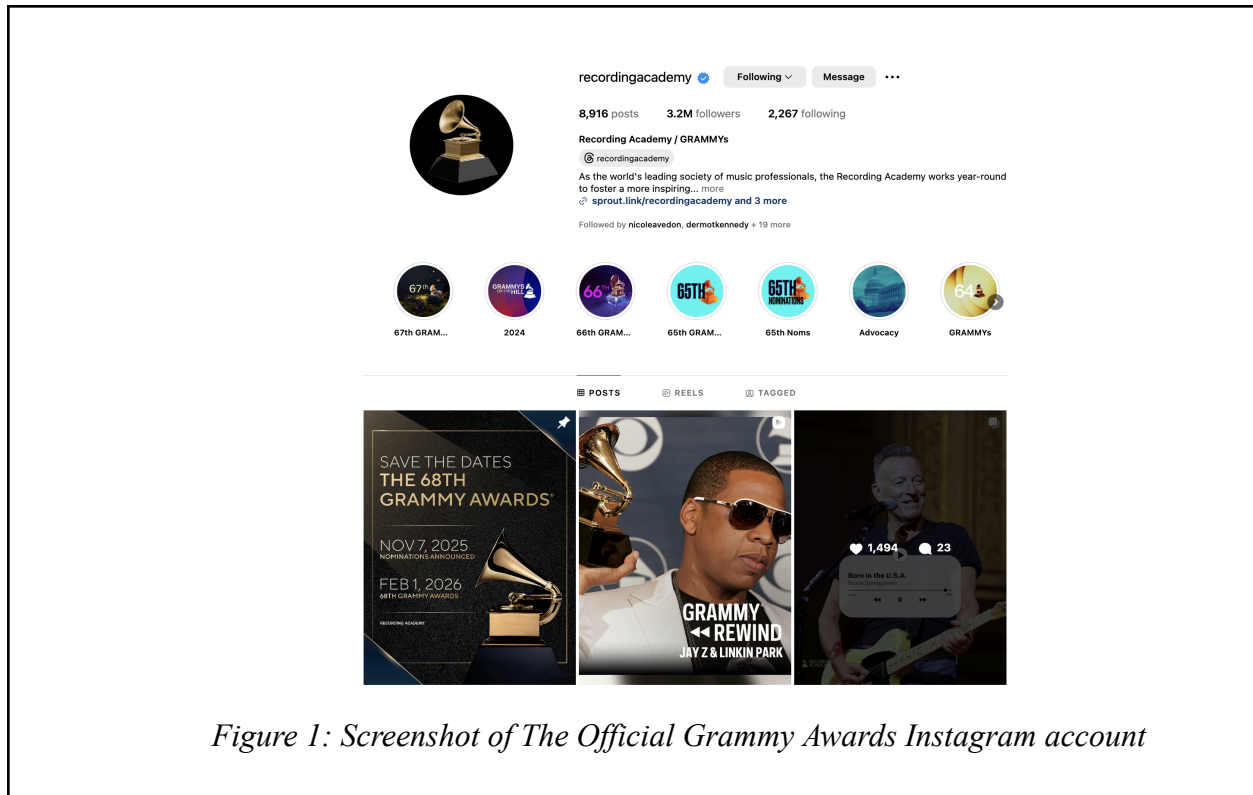


Figure 1: Screenshot of The Official Grammy Awards Instagram account

Furthermore, this notion is especially noticeable when different post content types are highlighted on an Instagram page (Chen, 2021). In this case, The Grammy Awards uses their platform to post content such as red carpet looks, backstage moments, award winning moments, and musical performances. Richards (2018) highlights that by posting content that differs to create a more complex, yet engaging marketing approach, viewers tend to want to engage more and most importantly, feel more prone to comment a positive message on the social media platform.

To further emphasize the role of positivity in engagement, it is important to recognize that the success of Instagram's comment section lies not only in fostering active interaction with posts, but also in the creation of a positive, inclusive atmosphere that encourages ongoing participation. Positive comments on Instagram specifically, act as a catalyst for further engagement, fostering a ripple effect, similar to the feedback loop, where users feel motivated to

contribute their own thoughts and opinions because others are doing so as well (Bioncovilli, 2022). This is particularly relevant during large-scale events like The 2025 Grammy Awards, where the public's excitement and enthusiasm are at a peak due to the anticipation of the annual event. When Instagram comments are filled with positive and supportive messages, they help create a more favorable public perception of the event, attracting even more attention and engagement, ultimately contributing to a long-term commitment to engaging with the event. In addition to this, Haenlein et al. (2020) suggest that positive feedback on social media can significantly enhance an event's reputation and image, as comment sections on Instagram influence how the audience perceives the event itself. This ripple effect ensures that the event remains top-of-mind for most users, and continues to engage both current followers and potential new ones. By focusing on posts that generate positive reactions and foster a healthy, supportive online environment, Instagram accounts can maximize engagement and ensure the event's success by curating content that tailors to individual needs, ultimately creating a “show” for the show that The Grammy Awards displays.

By leveraging Instagram's comment section to nurture this sense of positivity and togetherness, event planners can use their platforms to enhance their PR efforts, build a stronger relationship with their followers, and expand their reach (Bioncovilli, 2022). Additionally, this positivity creates community and a sense of exclusivity, by showing viewers and fans that they are welcomed into this space to engage with the event in real-time. As social media continues to play a pivotal role in shaping the success of large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, understanding the power of positive engagement through Instagram's comment section will be important to achieve success for such events, especially in the digital age we live within today.

2.3 The Impact of Post timing on Instagram Engagement

In the evolving world of social media, upwards of 85 million posts are made on a daily basis on Instagram (Papa, 2012). However, the ones that get widely recognized are strategically posted at specific times of the day, as the timing of posts can significantly influence user engagement (Papa, 2012). Understanding the effectiveness of posting strategically during specific times of the day on Instagram, is a driving factor for engagement from users on the app. Papa (2012) highlights that the timing of posts influences user behavior, as followers and viewers are more likely to comment and interact with content when they are most engaged with the event. It is important to place an emphasis on timing in relation to comments on Instagram, as this is particularly relevant for those using Instagram to enhance reach or gain attention to their profile (Papa, 2012).

Timing is an invaluable factor to consider when preparing a social media post, as it can truly depict the trajectory of not only the post in terms of reach, but also the level of engagement that it generates. In terms of events, posts need to be strategically planned to be posted on Instagram in order for them to reach the desired audience at the desired time of the day. For instance, posts made before major events may serve informational or anticipatory needs, while evening posts, which often come after significant moments, may fulfill entertainment or emotional needs as users react to what they've experienced. This principle is particularly relevant to consider when looking at large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, where the excitement and anticipation surrounding live moments create a heightened state of engagement among followers. Posting content at strategic times ensures that the content remains fresh, relevant, and aligned with users' interests at that specific moment, to ultimately create and foster positive online discourse and engagement. Sloan & Quan-Haase (2017) suggest that Instagram posts

timed to align with the combination of both key moments during an event, and factually proven post times that foster the most engagement on the social media platform, will prompt users to comment and participate positively in the ongoing conversation in the comment section. Positive engagement is invaluable as it promotes deeper connections, amplifies organic growth, drives further participation and interaction, and ultimately enhances the overall reputation of any event (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). In terms of The Grammy Awards, these factors are important to prioritize to allow fans and event viewers to feel welcomed and a part of a community, which ultimately can help foster a sense of togetherness through this viewer-to-event relationship. By using the strategies presented by Sloan & Quan-Haase (2017), Instagram users can maximize audience interaction and drive more meaningful and positive engagement during the most intense and exciting parts of events, where emotions drive interaction and engagement.

Additionally, Papa (2012) underscores that posts made at the *right* time, not only captures attention by the audience, but also stimulates immediate reactions, creating an interactive environment where followers feel compelled to comment and share their thoughts. This is important to note as the notion can be applied to large-scale events like The Grammy Awards, to optimize success and positive engagement as a result of posting at the right time. Without considering post timing when strategically planning a social media strategy, posts risk being lost in the clutter of users' feed, failing to both reach the user in the first place, as well as generate the necessary engagement and interaction that keeps the audience actively involved.

Furthermore, post timing is important to consider to foster positive engagement. When posts are strategically timed (before or after the event start time, depending on the event itself), they are more likely to elicit positive responses from users who are already excited and engaged with the event. By carefully considering when to post, Instagram users can ensure that the

content they post resonates with their audience at the *right* moment, cultivating a space for positivity, unity and togetherness. The timing of Instagram posts is not only a technical aspect to consider, but more so a strategic decision that can directly affect the tone, reach, and success of the overall social media strategy. Thus, this can in turn hinder the relationship between the event and its audience if timeliness is not considered, exemplifying exactly that; the importance of posting content in a timely manner.

2.4 Content Types and Their Effect on Positive Audience Sentiment on Instagram

The type of content shared on Instagram plays a significant role in shaping the sentiment of user comments, especially when it comes to fostering positive engagement in the comment section (Chen, 2021). This content type differentiates with each event at hand, as every event has different schedules that resonate and/or attract viewers at various stages of the event. Instagram posts that feature emotionally charged (excitement, happiness, or admiration) or visually appealing content are more likely to elicit positive reactions from viewers (Chen, 2021). From a live events based standpoint, Aramendia-Muneta et al. (2020) highlight that content designed to evoke strong positive emotions, such as emotional performances, exciting behind-the-scenes footage, or even happy and uplifting moments, all tend to generate more positively themed comments and an increased level of engagement. This can directly be applied to large-scale, live events like The Grammy Awards, where fans and viewers are emotionally invested and eager to share their excitement and admiration for the artists that they support (Chen, 2021). Additionally, the presence of positivity in the comment section based on an outpouring of different content types, can help amplify the event's reach, ultimately contributing to a more positive and celebratory public discourse under each post. In relation to this, Kertamukti, et al. (2019) explain that Instagram content that elicits emotional responses, such as an inspiring speech or an

award-winning performance, fulfills users' emotional needs, prompting them to comment, like, or share. As displayed below, *Table 1* displays a case study of The Grammy Awards which describes both an example of a post and an audience member's reaction to it.

POST: The Grammy Awards	REACTION: Audience Member Comment
 <p>The screenshot shows an Instagram post from the account 'recordingacademy and teamsabrina'. It features a photo of Sabrina Carpenter on stage at the Grammy Awards, wearing a gold dress and holding her trophy. The post has a high number of likes (351,998) and several comments. One comment from 'marbulybooks' reads: 'Short n'sweet major que Eternal Sunshine? WIT'. Another comment from 'amelaxalison' says: 'she deserves this Grammy so much! I'm so happy for her!! Now go get your McDonald's Sabrina!'. The post is dated February 2.</p>	<p>“Crying so much! Sabrina has worked since she was 9 years old and deserves this so much!”</p> <p>(Ann, 2025)</p>

Table 1: The Grammy Awards Case Study Example: Post to Reaction

To place more of an emphasis on the importance of posting various content types, Instagram users are more likely to engage positively with content that resonates either emotionally or visually with them. In addition to this, Hudson & Hudson (2013) discuss how Instagram posts that offer a glimpse into exclusive moments tend to elicit more favorable reactions. By applying these strategies and posting these types of content, Instagram users can allow followers to feel more connected and engaged within the discourse following the post. In terms of events, posts made that elicit emotion or are visually appealing such as a heartfelt performance, or a red carpet moment, may spark praise in the comment section, as fans express their feelings towards each type of content. Thus, positive engagement is important for building a strong online community and enhancing the overall event experience for viewers and social media users who may not be physically attending the event. As previously mentioned, by offering different content to Instagram users, you can appeal to a wider range of followers, each

with different interests and connections to the post itself. Chen (2021) explains that offering a variety of content types within a social media strategy plan, increases the likelihood of attracting positive comments, as it gives followers the opportunity to engage with the specific content they enjoy and find most compelling.

Furthermore, posts that evoke positive emotions or encourage positive discussions tend to also create a snowball effect. As described by Zhang et al (2019), a snowball effect occurs when something small in scope ultimately builds upon itself, causing a gain in momentum and a larger outcome. In the context of posting on social media, posts that initiate with a small number of positive comments are likely to increase in size, resulting in even more positive comments, causing the snowball effect to occur.

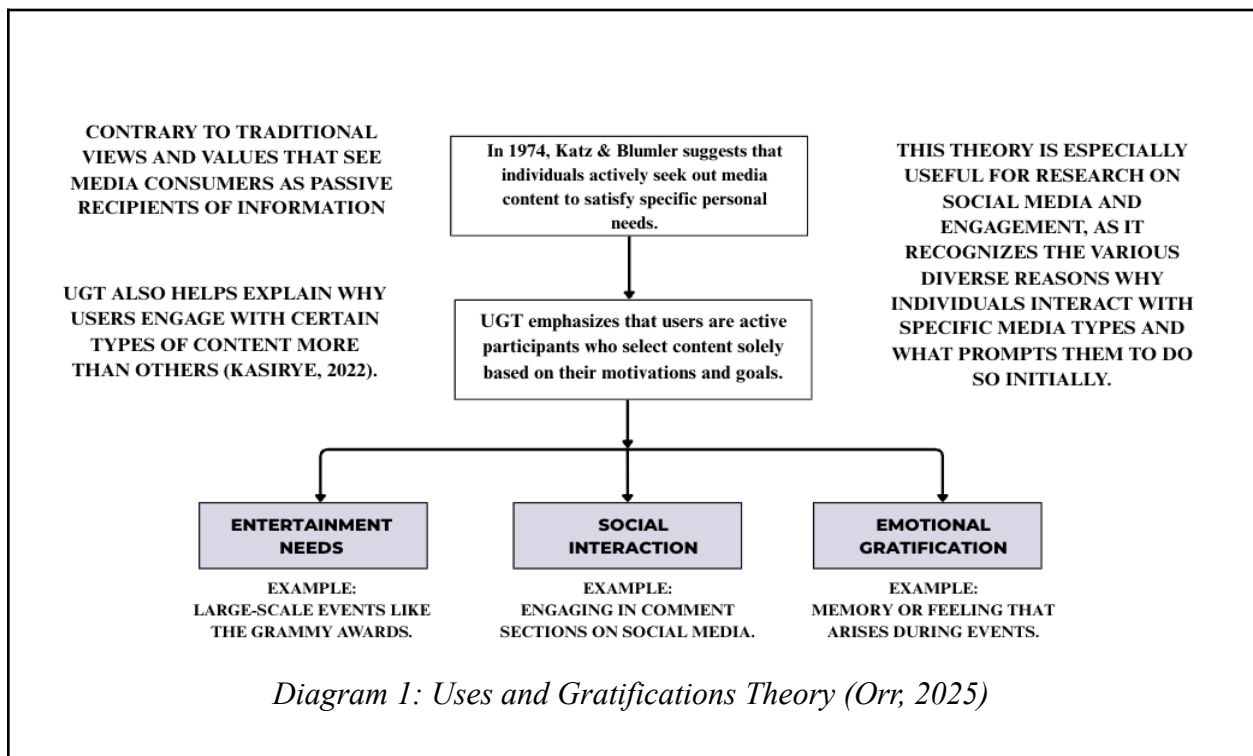
Additionally, Sloan & Quan-Haase (2017) highlight how content that taps into users' emotions, and particularly joy, excitement, or admiration, fosters a positive feedback loop. When users see others expressing enthusiasm in the comments, they are more likely to contribute their own positive thoughts, reinforcing the positive sentiment and environment that surrounds the post. This engagement not only strengthens the relationship of the Instagram account posting and their viewers, but also the audience that is actively engaging within the post. Additionally, this directly relates back to the notion of both the snowball effect and the feedback loop as initial themes of enthusiasm throughout comments can inspire others to join in, causing engagement to build rapidly. As each positive contribution reinforces the welcoming environment, it encourages even more interaction, creating a self-sustaining cycle of positivity and community building.

3.0 Theoretical Approaches to Social Media Engagement

To understand why users engage with different types of content during different times of the day on social media platforms like Instagram, two theories can be applied. Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and Media Dependency Theory (MDT) offer frameworks that account for both how and why individuals engage with content on social media platforms. Each of these theories also provide a unique lens and structure for analyzing user behavior and assist within the explanation as to why people engage with specific types of content and specific times of the day on social media platforms as mainstream as Instagram.

3.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT)

The Diagram (1) below introduces UGT and provides context, examples, and history of the theory that can be heavily applied throughout this MRP.



For an event as largely recognized as The Grammy Awards, followers may tend to engage more with posts that offer entertainment, such as performances, celebrity appearances, or fashion, as they are looking to fulfill a personal desire for enjoyment, or even more complex, an escape from reality. Users engage with these posts not only to experience the thrill of a performance or the glamour that surrounds celebrities, but also to momentarily escape into a world of excitement and spectacle (Kasirye, 2022). The following is a quote directly pulled from an Instagram post made in 2025 on The Grammy Award's profile:



(CBS, 2025)

“Watching this video made me feel like I was actually there. These are the moments that remind me why I love watching live shows. Even watching the performances from home, it's a whole escape for me ”.

- Harley, 2025

Similarly to this, UGT suggests that the type of content that users engage with on social media platforms, depends on the kind of satisfaction they seek (Kasirye, 2022). While some users might seek these forms of entertainment or escapism, others may be looking for social connection, seeking out content that allows them to share experiences and engage in conversations with others who share similar interests.

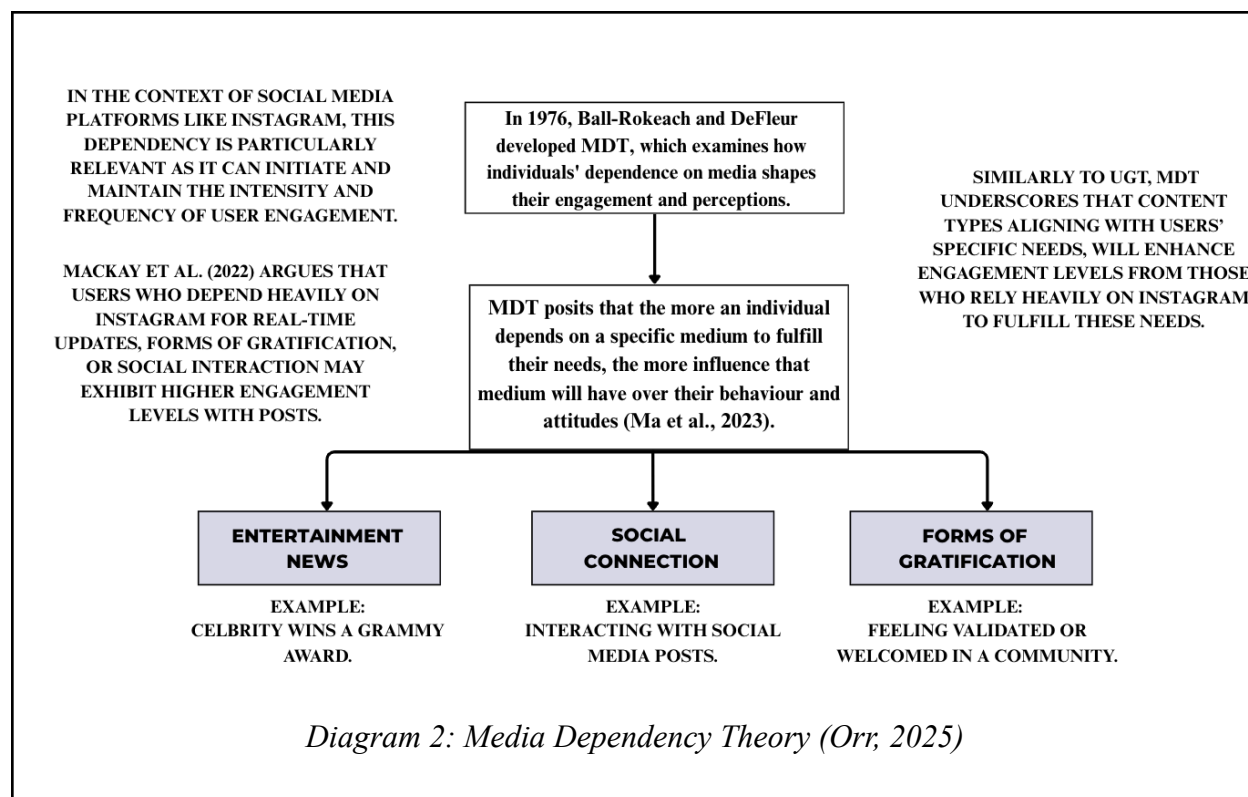
For a large-scale event like The Grammy Awards, Instagram posts that are made on the official profile of the event, specifically related to celebrity interactions or behind-the-scenes moments, may serve users' social and connectedness needs (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). Fostering engagement also helps to create safe spaces on social media surrounding common interests, ultimately making users feel more connected to peers online, and the broader scope of social media.

Furthermore, UGT helps explain why certain content types resonate with audiences on social media platforms like Instagram. Users often engage more deeply with content that not only aligns with their goals, but also resonates with them on a personal and emotional level. The idea of instant gratification is a driver of Instagram engagement, especially in social media environments where interactions often occur in response to moments that are felt on some degree or level. The timing of posts also plays a role in UGT, as it can determine how well posts fulfill users' immediate needs. This aspect of UGT highlights how social media content can fulfill a wide range of needs that can be tailored to individual desires (Kasirye, 2022).

Thus, UGT provides a framework for understanding the motivation behind why individuals initially engage with social media content, and what immediately attracts them to a post. It is important to note that everyone does view things differently, and are drawn in by various entertainment, emotional and social needs, but by embracing these diverse needs, professionals can likely increase user engagement (Kasirye, 2022).

3.2 Media Dependency Theory

Diagram 2 below introduces MDT and provides context, examples, and history of the theory that can be heavily applied to this MRP.



In addition, the power of Instagram, as the most widely used social media system, enhances its own role in shaping user engagement. MDT highlights that media systems that allow users to post consistent, emotionally resonant, and easily accessible content, are more likely to become a priority for individuals to use in their daily lives (Kim, 2020). The app offers followers an ongoing connection to real-time events, entertainment, and social interaction, making it a primary platform to initiate, maintain and promote user engagement (Kim, 2020). The more dependent users are on Instagram, the more they will engage with the platform, which in turn suggests the increase of frequency of their interactions and deepening their connection with the content posted on the accounts they engage within (Kim, 2020). To be specific, 92% of users who engage with posts on Instagram are within the top 10% of those who use Instagram on a daily basis (Dixon, 2025).

Ultimately, MDT underscores how the degree of media dependence influences engagement levels, which is especially relevant and applicable to Instagram. Furthermore, understanding MDT provides a clear framework for analyzing user interaction under content posted on users' Instagram accounts, emphasizing the importance of fulfilling specific needs and how dependence on the platform can drive more frequent and meaningful engagement.

4.0 Research Questions

As Instagram has become a primary platform for engaging with large-scale events, it is also important to understand the factors that influence user comments to maximize positive audience interaction. The comment section on Instagram serves as a key form of engagement, providing real-time feedback and reflecting audience sentiment. Paying close attention to comments made on Instagram is valuable to act upon when developing a social media strategy.

For high-profile events like The Grammy Awards, both the timing of posts and the type of content shared are likely to influence and fluctuate the volume and positive sentiment of comments. On average, 16 million viewers worldwide tune in to watch The Grammy Awards on live television (Stoll, 2024). Thus, it is important to develop research questions that comprehensively address the complexities inherent within such a vast topic. Thus, the following (four) research questions are designed to guide the examination of this research and provide valuable insights for PR specialists and communications professionals looking to enhance engagement strategies for similar high-profile, large-scale events:

Question 1a:

Do Instagram posts made before 8:00 PM EST or after 8:00PM EST (up until 11:59 PM EST) on the official Grammy Awards Instagram account receive a higher or lower number of comments on the day of the event?

Question 1b:

Do posts that receive comments before 8:00 PM EST or after 8:00PM EST on the official Grammy Awards Instagram account have a higher number of **positive** comments?

Question 2a:

What type of content on The official Grammy Awards Instagram account receives the highest number of comments: performances, behind the scenes content, red carpet arrivals, or award winning moments?

Question 2b:

Which content type receives the highest number of **positive** comments: performances, behind the scenes content, red carpet arrivals, or award winning moments?

5.0 Conceptual Framework

The central focus of this research is understanding how social media engagement, placing a specific emphasis on positively themed comments, contribute to the overall success and public perception of a large-scale event. Below is a summary of how MDT and UGT will work together to provide the foundation research and framing of this MRP.

Suggested Theory	Description
UGT	<p>Motivations & Engagement</p> <p>UGT assists in providing an explanation of the motivations behind users' engagement with specific types of content posted on Instagram, emphasizing how individuals actively seek out media that satisfies their emotional, informational, and social needs.</p>
MDT	<p>Dependency & Interactivity</p> <p>MDT actively provides insight into the level of dependency that users have on Instagram as a source of both social interaction and entertainment needs, influencing the intensity and frequency of engagement on the app.</p>
Interconnectedness of Theories (UGT & MDT)	<p>Content & Timing</p> <p>Both theories will work together to assess how different types of content (performances, award-winning moments, red carpet arrivals, behind-the-scenes content) and the timing of posts (before 8:00PM EST or after 8:00PM EST) impact both the quantity of comments, as well as the occurrence of positively themed comments under each post.</p> <p>Positive Engagement & Success</p> <p>By examining these factors, this research aims to offer actionable insights into how PR professionals, as well as future or current large-scale event planners can optimize their social media strategies to foster and prioritize positive engagement, ultimately enhancing the overall success and impact of large-scale events like The Grammy Awards.</p>

Table 2: Conceptual Framework

6.0 Broader Implications for Field Professionals

This research suggests ways to enhance positivity within audience engagement by leveraging social media platforms like Instagram. By focusing on the role of positive Instagram comments during The Grammy Awards, this MRP suggests ways to foster positive sentiment and drive more meaningful interaction with audiences. The findings of this MRP highlight the importance of tailoring content types to maximize interest and further engagement with posts, specifically by understanding which types of posts generate the most positive reactions from followers and/or viewers.

For communications professionals, this research provides actionable strategies for optimizing social media content. Additionally, by recognizing which content types resonate most with audiences, PR teams can focus on creating posts that align with viewers' interests and emotional connections, ultimately boosting both the volume and sentiment of audience interactions. The findings of this study also emphasize the value of positive engagement in shaping the overall success and public perception of an event. It is important and valuable to prioritize enhancing the volume of positive comments to not only to reflect audience satisfaction, but also contribute to building a positive narrative around the event, which can in turn foster a sense of community and shared excitement. For future events, these insights can be used to craft strategies that build anticipation, increase real-time engagement, and create a lasting impact on audiences long after the event has concluded.

By framing this MRP as a case study of the 2025 Grammy Awards, this research serves as a relevant example for other large-scale events like the Super Bowl, demonstrating how social media can be leveraged to optimize audience engagement and enhance the PR impact of major cultural events. The broader implications of this research suggest that social media engagement,

when strategically managed and utilised, has the potential to significantly improve the success and longevity of large-scale events, making it an invaluable tool for communications professionals.



7.0 Methodology

The methodology framework of this MRP analyzes the posts made on the official Grammy Award Instagram Account (@recordingacademy), solely on February 2, 2025 (the day of the event).

This research will employ content analysis to analyze how both timing of posts, content types, and positive sentiment within comments, play an important role in enhancing event success. It is important to note that The Grammy Awards begins at 8:00PM EST, which provides foundational reasoning behind the time selected to compare and contrast posts, signifying meaning for both pre-event and during-event highlights. By understanding these patterns, event organizers can optimize their social media strategies to align with audience behavior, ensuring content is posted at the most effective times for maximum engagement.

This MRP will utilise methodology to systematically interpret the content of communication, specifically through visuals posted on Instagram. Content analysis will allow for further examination of the presence, meanings, and relationships between both post timing and content type throughout the posts made on the day of the event. Additionally, content analysis is often used to examine media, particularly social media content, to quantify and analyze the messages being conveyed for broader research implications. The types of posts that will be analyzed include: performances, award-winning moments, red carpet arrivals, and behind the scenes content, which cover all posts made on The official Grammy Awards Instagram account.

To provide an example of what this may illustrate, Table 3 displays posts pulled from the dataset that falls under each content type as described above.

Post Type	Image Example
Performances	 <p>(RecordingAcademy, 2025)</p>
Award Winning Moments	 <p>(RecordingAcademy, 2025)</p>

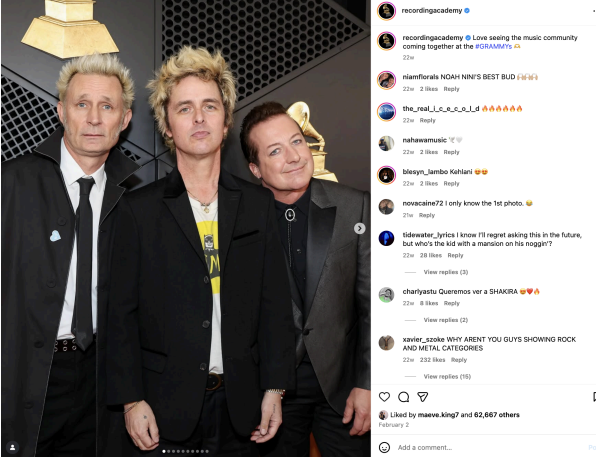

<p>Red Carpet Arrivals</p>	 <p>(RecordingAcademy, 2025)</p>
<p>Behind-The-Scenes Content</p>	 <p>(RecordingAcademy, 2025)</p>

Table 3: Content Type Examples

By categorizing posts and analyzing audience sentiment in the comment section, we gain a powerful tool for understanding how content, timing, and audience engagement intersect. To understand audience sentiment and what makes a comment positively themed, I will employ In Vivo coding. In Vivo coding is a form of data that places emphasis on the actual spoken words of participants, which in this case represents the audience’s comments on each post made (Manning, 2017). This form of coding can be useful when highlighting how the audience uses or comments specific words or phrases in their interactions that might not otherwise be understood when using other forms of coding (Manning, 2017). By assigning a form of code to specific

words and phrases, it allows researchers to more deeply analyze their findings (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). In relation to this, In Vivo coding can be used to identify which comments on posts made on the day of the event (both before 8:00 PM or after 8:00PM) can be deemed as positive. This information will aid in answering my research questions and help develop further knowledge upon completion of this MRP. Identifying themes of positivity is a focal point within this research as it seeks to determine how to maximize a welcoming and engaging online environment. When an event's audience or even attendees share positive feedback, it encourages others to participate and interact, enhancing the overall experience. Thus, positively toned comments help build a sense of community, as they make people feel valued and appreciated in terms of engagement within the event's online space (Elayan et al., 2022).

8.0 Data Collection - Content Analysis

This collection of data will include analyzing 85 posts made on the official Grammy Award Instagram account solely on February 2, 2025. The Grammy Awards was selected to be analyzed in this MRP, as it is the biggest annual event that recognizes music to date, and holds amounts of controversy and audience appeal every single year. This event is one of the most discussed large-scale events that streams annually on live TV, which allows for further analysis on both fan/audience discourse and proposed social media strategies (Dixon, 2025). The time frame of using posts solely made on the day of the event (before versus after 8:00PM EST), was created to foster and aid within the development of event related recognition and reach, as well as to allow for a more in depth analysis of real-time audience engagement as a result of posts made before and during The 2025 Grammy Awards. These posts will be categorized into the following post types shown in *Diagram 3*:

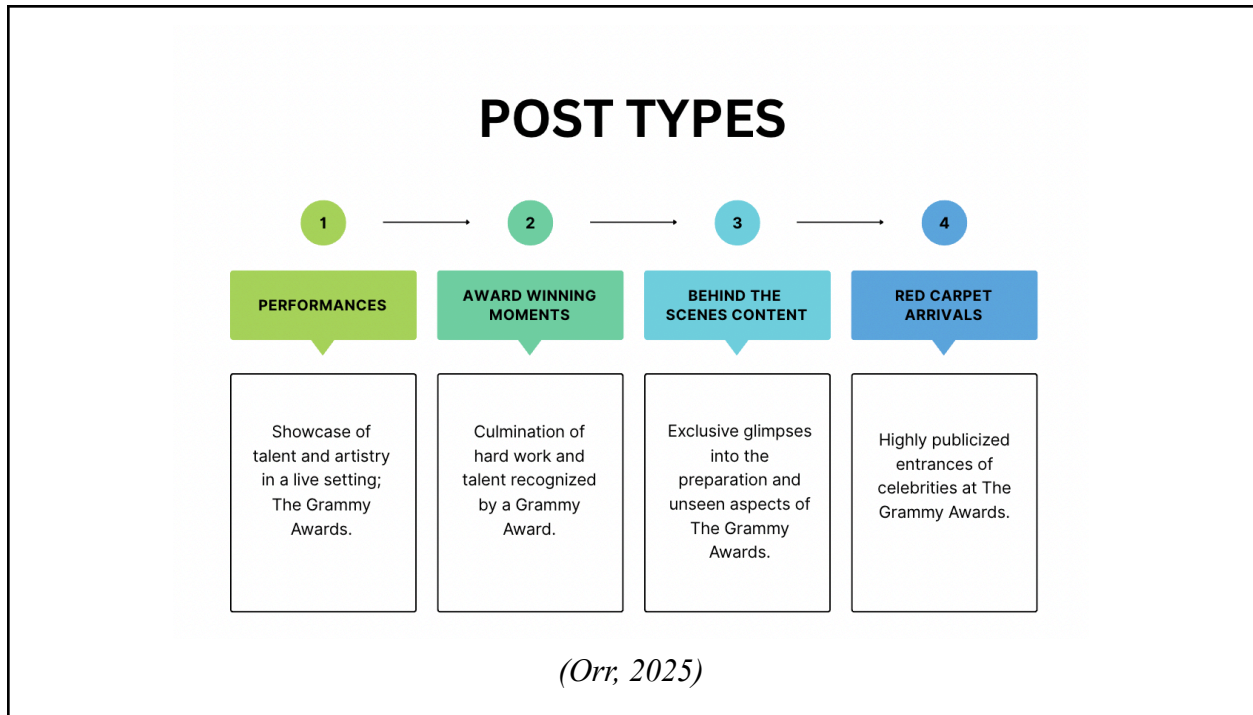


Diagram 3: Post Types & Descriptions

By organizing posts into these categories, it will be possible to determine which types of content generate the most favourable reactions and to identify the patterns that contribute to a successful social media strategy for high-profile events.

Additionally, this categorization allows for a more refined analysis of the relationship between post timing and engagement. For instance, posts featuring live performances or award announcements may prompt different levels of interaction compared to posts showcasing red carpet moments or behind-the-scenes footage, depending on when they are posted during the event. By analyzing engagement data in the context of both content type and post timing, this study aims to provide actionable insights that can help optimize the timing and type of content shared on social media to maximize positive audience sentiment and increase the overall success of future events.

Table 4 provides a general overview of numerical values that correspond to both the number of posts and comments made in response to post type (red carpet arrivals, award winning moments, performances, and behind-the-scenes content).

Post Type	Number of Posts (Day of Event)	Number of Comments made on each Type of Post	Number of Comments as a Percentage Total: n = 37,134
Red Carpet Arrivals	22	8,300	22%
Award Winning Moments	28	12,734	32%
Performances	18	9,600	25%
Behind-The-Scenes Content	17	6500	17%
All Post Types (Total Posts)	85	37,134	100%

Table 4: Instagram Post Types & Number of Comments made Under Each Post Type

Once categorized, the posts will be sorted based on content posted before 8:00 PM or after 8:00PM (up until 11:59 PM EST), and determine whether all post types receive a higher volume of comments either before or after 8:00PM EST. *Table 5* contains two numerical values that provide insight on the number of points made within the set time period noted above.

Number of Posts made Before 8:00PM	Number of Posts made After 8:00PM
23	62

Table 5: Numerical Values of Posts Made Before Versus After 8:00PM

It is important to understand the general number of comments made both before and after 8:00PM, as it will aid in the analysis of findings in response to RQ1A. *Table 6* holds data collected that can assist in providing context as to whether posts made before or after 8:00PM generate more comments, and sets the tone for the remainder of the data collection and research

analysis process. See *Table 6* for the numerical values in terms of comments under posts made both before and after 8:00PM EST.

Number of Comments on Posts Made Before 8:00PM	Number of Comments Made on Posts After 8:00PM
13,046	24,088

Table 6: Number of Comments made on Posts Before Versus After 8:00PM

8.1 In Vivo Coding

The data collection noted above provides a foundational basis for the coding process. In Vivo coding will be used to do exactly this. The coding process will organize the data that is already collected; Instagram comments in relation to both post type and timing, to gather further information that can be used to create a more in depth analysis of findings. Additionally, In Vivo coding will help categorize the data in a way that captures the natural tone and context of the comments, rather than imposing predetermined themes upon them.

As previously described, Instagram comments will be analyzed in relation to two key variables: the type of content posted (e.g., performances, award wins, behind-the-scenes moments) and the timing of the posts (8:00 PM or after 8:00PM).

The illustration (*Diagram 4*) positioned below displays a comprehensive directional process that will be utilised throughout this MRP as data is collected and analyzed.

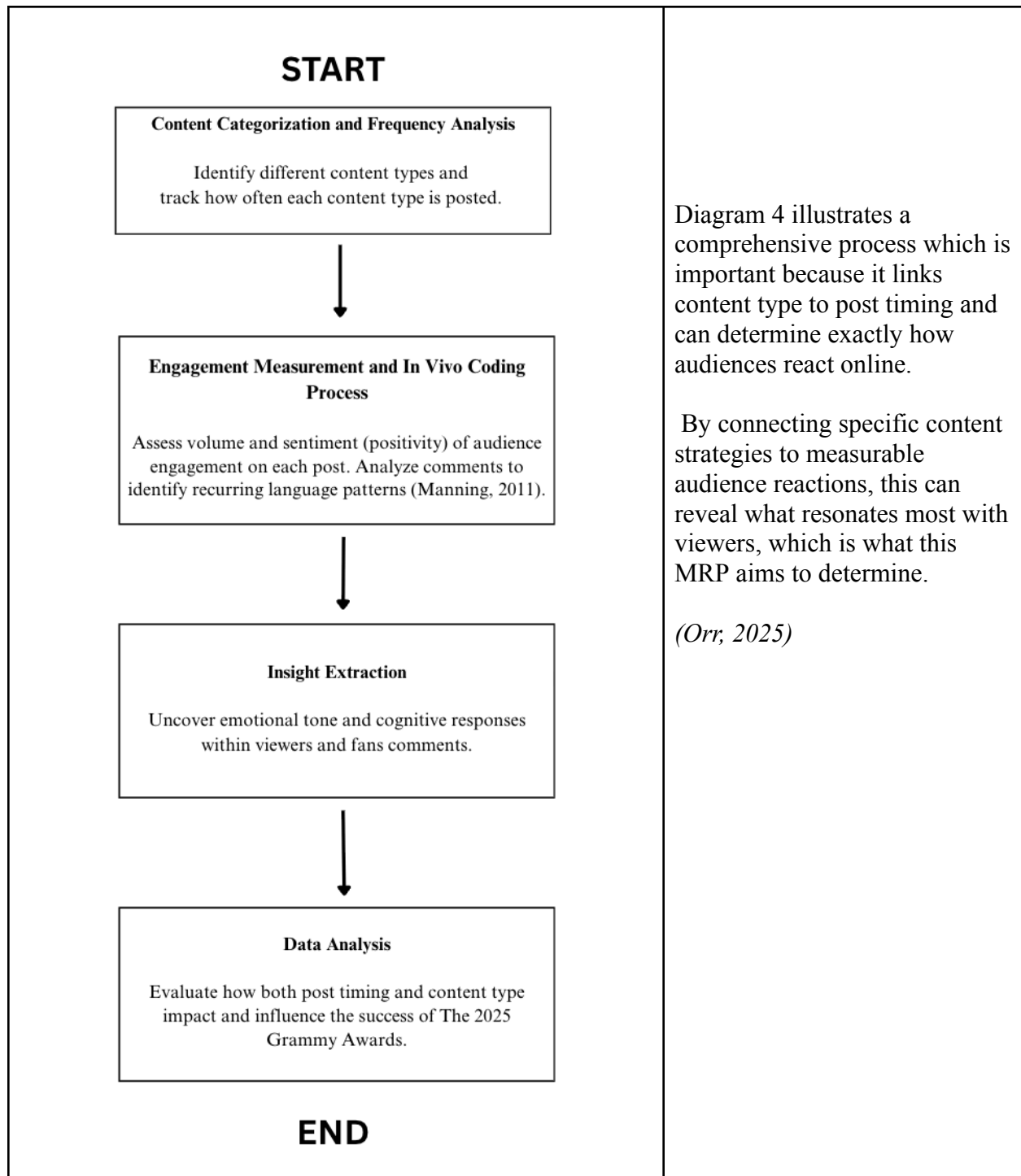


Diagram 4: Illustrated Comprehensive Process

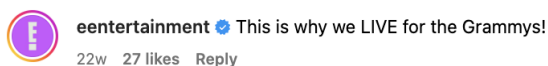
By organizing the data into meaningful categories, In Vivo coding will provide a clearer picture of the dynamics of engagement, enabling a deeper, more nuanced examination of the

findings. Understanding what constitutes a "positive" comment is crucial to the foundation of this research, as it directly informs how we interpret engagement on social media platforms. Positive comments are not only an indicator of audience satisfaction, but they also help shape the overall perception of an event, contributing to its success and PR impact. In the context of the 2025 Grammy Awards, identifying and categorizing positive comments allows for a more targeted analysis of how Instagram engagement, specifically in the form of comments, reflects broader audience sentiment towards different content types and the timely manner through which this content was posted. The outline below provides two (of many) nuanced examples of a positive comment under an example of an Instagram post pulled from the dataset.

Example #1 - Theme: Excitement



(RecordingAcademy, 2025)

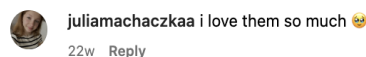


(EEntertainment, 2025)

Example #2 - Theme: Support



(RecordingAcademy, 2025)



(Machaczkaa, 2025)

Understanding these expressions helps to establish a framework for analyzing the emotional tone of the comments, providing insight into how the audience is emotionally

connecting with the event. It is important to define what makes a comment positive, as not all interactions on social media are necessarily constructive or supportive. For this research specifically, defining positive comments allows for more accurate and meaningful analysis. By focusing on positive comments, this study can isolate the aspects of Instagram engagement that contribute to a favorable public perception of The 2025 Grammy Awards. Moreover, understanding the distinction of what constitutes a positive comment enables this research to evaluate the effectiveness of post timing and content type through the context of fostering positive engagement. The criteria to determine whether a comment can be deemed as positive is described in *Table 7*.

Sentiment	Definition	Examples of Positive Comments (2)
Positive (P)	<p>Positive comments on Instagram reflect a clear, enthusiastic, and supportive emotional response to a post on Instagram related to the event.</p> <p>These comments express admiration, excitement, appreciation, or encouragement and also contribute to creating a positive public perception.</p> <p>Positive comments are typically tied to high-energy moments at The Grammy Awards, and they can also highlight the audience's personal connection to the event, the performers, or specific content.</p> <p>These comments help amplify</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>"The energy in this performance was absolutely unreal!"</i>. (Brown, 2025). This comment expresses admiration for the performance, focusing on the emotional impact it had on the viewer, and reinforces positive feelings toward the content. 2. <i>"So happy for them! This award is so well-deserved, they've worked so hard for it. Congrats to all the nominees!"</i> (Jesiyn, 2025). This comment highlights excitement and support

	the event's success by encouraging further engagement, boosting morale, and reinforcing the positive atmosphere surrounding the event.	for the artist's win, emphasizing both the achievement and the overall positive sentiment surrounding the award.
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Table 7: Classification of Positive Comments

To tie in the previous data collected, *Table 8* plays an important role in examining the impact of post timing on the frequency of positive comments. By analyzing how strategically timing posts influences the volume of positive comments, researchers can gain valuable insights into when the audience is most engaged and emotionally responsive. Positive sentiment will be coded manually by using the foundation provided in Table 7 above, specifically looking at key words that correspond with the definition of what makes a comment positive. In relation to this, *Table 8* displays the total number of positive comments made both before and after 8:00PM EST on The official Grammy Awards Instagram account.

Post Timing	Number of Positive Comments Total (<i>n</i> = 14,624)	Number of Positive Comments as a Percentage Totals (all comments): Before 8pm: 13,046 After 8pm: 24,088
Posts made before 8:00PM (<i>n</i> = 23)	4501	34%
Posts made after 8:00PM (<i>n</i> = 62)	10,123	42%

Table 8: Total Number of Positive Comments Made in Response to Post Timing

By analyzing the frequency of positive comments across different post types, communications professionals can identify patterns of engagement and determine which types of content are most effective at eliciting positive feedback from the audience. As shown below,

Table 9 presents the number of times a positive comment occurred under each post type (refer back to Table 4 to see all post types).

Post Type	Number of Positive Comments Total ($n = 14,624$)	Number of Positive Comments as a Percentage Total Comments: Red Carpet Arrivals (11,133); Award Winning Moments (17,612); Performances (6406); Behind-The-Scenes (2854)
Red Carpet Arrivals ($n = 22$)	4,116	37%
Award Winning Moments ($n = 28$)	7,699	43.8%
Performances ($n = 18$)	2004	31.3%
Behind-The-Scenes Content ($n = 17$)	805	28.2%

Table 9: Total Number of Positive Comments Made in Response to Post Type

9.0 Research Findings and Analysis

9.1 Research Question 1a:

<p>Do Instagram posts made before or after 8:00PM EST</p> <p>(up until 11:59 PM EST) on the official Grammy Awards Instagram</p> <p>account receive more or fewer comments on the day of the event?</p>
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The analysis of Instagram posts from the official Grammy Awards Instagram account reveals a clear pattern that posts made after 8:00PM generate significantly more comments compared to posts made before 8:00PM. To be more specific, 23 posts made before 8:00PM EST received a total of 13,046 comments, while 62 posts made after 8:00PM EST generated 24,088

comments, which almost doubled the amount made before the event began. This data underscores the importance of considering post timing when it comes to maximizing audience engagement during live events.

From a theoretical standpoint, UGT helps provide an explanation as to why posts made after 8:00PM receive more comments. According to UGT, users actively seek content that fulfills their specific needs, whether that be for entertainment, information, or even social connection (Ruggiero, 2000). Before 8:00PM, posts typically include promotional content or pre-event anticipation, such as red carpet arrivals or behind the scenes exclusive moments, which may generate a higher level of interest in the event itself, but are typically less emotionally engaging overall. Although these types of posts fulfill the audience's need for informational purposes prior to the event start time, after a deep analysis of the data collected, the engagement tends to be lower as the audience is less interactive and involved in the posts at hand.

In contrast, posts made after 8:00PM EST typically coincide with key moments of the event, including performances and award winning moments. As The Grammy Awards continues to progress into more live moments, followers and viewers are more likely to comment as they react to these key milestones of the event. The heightened emotional connection with these moments leads to greater real-time engagement, ultimately resulting in a higher numerical value of comments as shown above. UGT suggests that content that is aligned with the audience's emotional gratification, such as the excitement of live performances or the satisfaction of award winning moments, as described above, will prompt more audience engagement (Ruggiero, 2000). Additionally, MDT provides further insight into why posts after 8:00PM generate more comments. MDT suggests that the more dependent individuals are on a particular medium to fulfill their needs, the more influential that medium becomes (Ruggiero, 2000). During an event

like The Grammy Awards, Instagram becomes a valuable tool for real-time interaction, and represents the medium that MDT is referring to. As the event unfolds and key moments are posted on Instagram in real-time, viewers and followers heavily rely on the app to stay connected with others, engage with content posted, and share their reactions to it. Additionally, posts made after 8:00PM are particularly well-timed to fulfill this dependency, aligning with the audience's heightened emotional investment and need for social interaction. Furthermore, as the event reaches its climax and progresses throughout the night, viewers are highly engaged and often actively commenting as they participate in the collective experience of the event online.

9.2 Implications for Social Media Strategy

The data collected in *Table 5* and *Table 6* is valuable for informing future social media strategies for high-profile events like The Grammy Awards. The analysis above highlights the importance of strategic timing when it comes to driving engagement on social media. Additionally, these findings elucidate that event planners and PR specialists are suggested to prioritize scheduling posts that coincide with real-time, emotionally charged moments at times when followers are most likely to engage with the content. Additionally, content posted during these peak times has the potential to drive higher engagement and strengthen the audience's emotional connection with the event. Both UGT and MDT can help provide explanations as to why post timing is important to consider within the field of communications, and these findings can ultimately prove the validity and reliability of these theories. The increased volume of comments after 8:00PM (13,046) versus before 8:00PM (24,088) suggests that posts made during this time can significantly enhance the success of a large-scale event's social media outreach and strategy. Furthermore, social media managers and event planners can use these findings to emphasize the importance of strategically timing posts to coincide with peak

engagement periods, to ensure that content is shared when Instagram users are most active and emotionally invested on the platform.

9.3 Research Question 1b:

Do posts that receive comments before 8:00PM or after 8:00PM (up until 11:59 PM) on the official Grammy Awards Instagram account have a higher number of positive comments?

The data collected and analyzed in RQ1A above, provides a solidified foundation and framework for RQ1B. While the numerical value of the intersection between both comments and post timing is valuable for this study, understanding why positive comments contribute to more favourable event outcomes is also an important factor for field professionals to consider when planning and executing large-scale events.

Thus, the data collected from the official Grammy Awards Instagram account highlights a significant difference in the number of positive comments generated by posts made before 8:00PM and those made after 8:00PM on the day of the event. Specifically, posts made before 8:00PM (n = 23) generated 4,501 positive comments, which is 34% of all comments made under content posted before 8:00PM. On the other hand, posts made after 8:00PM (n = 62) gathered 10,123 positive comments, which is 42% of all comments made under content posted after 8:00PM. These results suggest that post timing is an important factor in driving positive audience engagement as posts made during the later stages of the event (After 8:00PM), lead to a higher volume of positive comments. Thus, despite having more posts before 8:00 PM (32 posts), posts made after 8:00PM (53 posts) generated more than twice the number of positive comments, underscoring the effectiveness of timing content during peak emotional moments.

9.4 Theoretical Perspectives on the Intersection of Post Timing and Positive Comments

To help provide reasoning as to why posts made after 8:00PM elicit more positive engagement, both MDT and UGT can be utilised. UGT suggests that audiences engage with content to satisfy specific emotional, as well as entertainment needs (Ruggiero, 2000). Before 8:00PM, the content shared on Instagram generally fulfills more informational and anticipatory needs, which in this case can be representative of red carpet arrivals or even pre-show behind the scenes content. UGT suggests that this leads to a higher number of comments based solely on curiosity and interest, which do not particularly represent, nor fall into the classification of what constitutes a positive comment in this study. However, as the event progresses after 8:00PM, the content shifts to cater to viewers' needs, in terms of entertainment, gratification and emotional relatability. After deeply analyzing UGT, it is clear to note that these fulfilling types of posts tend to engage the audience at a deeper emotional level, which often elicits stronger and more frequent reactions (Ruggiero, 2000). Thus, when content fulfills viewers' needs (typically emotional needs), UGT suggests that they are more likely to engage and express their feelings in the form of positive comments, as they want to contribute to the online discourse in ways to support and give rise to the event they feel a part of (Ruggiero, 2000).

In addition to UGT, MDT further explains the increase in engagement after 8:00PM by suggesting that viewers' dependency on Instagram grows as the event unfolds (Ma et al., 2023). MDT posits that the more dependent individuals are on a social media platform (in this case Instagram) to meet their needs, the more influence that platform has over their behaviors and attitudes (Ma et al., 2023). After deeply analyzing the posts that The Grammy Awards posts after 8:00PM (once the event has commenced), the account tends to post more emotionally charged and highly-engaging content after 8:00PM. As a result of this, viewers become more dependent

on Instagram to stay updated, express their reactions, and connect with others who are sharing similar experiences, which are all key stages of MDT. Thus, this increased dependency on Instagram during the later stages of the event (after 8:00PM) leads to more intense engagement, which leads followers to feel more inclined to leave positive comments as they engage with the content in real time (Ma et al., 2023).

9.5 Research Question 2a).

What type of content on the official Grammy Awards Instagram account receives the highest number of comments: performances, backstage moments, behind the scenes moments, red carpet looks, or award winners?

Both RQ1A and RQ1B are important to analyze prior to the examination of RQ2A. Although all research questions are closely related, all of which suggest different findings, contributing to the diversity of large-scale event success. In terms of this research question, the analysis of the official Grammy Awards Instagram account highlights a significant variation in the number of comments generated by different types of content shared on the day of the event. As displayed in *Table 1*, the content types are categorized into four main types: red carpet arrivals, award-winning moments, performances, and behind-the-scenes content. The data collected in *Table 1 (Column 3)* also reveals that award-winning moments (12,1734) and performances (9600) receive the highest number of comments, representing both 32% (award-winning moments) and 25% (performances) of the total number of comments made on all post types. On the other hand, red carpet arrivals (8,300) and behind-the-scenes content (6500) attract fewer comments, representing both 22% (red carpet arrivals) and 17% (behind-the-scenes content) of the total number of comments made on all post types. This finding underscores the importance of understanding which types of content elicit the most

engagement from the audience, as it directly influences social media strategies aimed at maximizing interaction and emotional connection.

According to the data, award-winning moments (28 posts) generated a significantly higher volume of comments compared to other content types, reflecting the emotional significance these moments hold for viewers. Performances (18 posts) also drew considerable engagement, likely due to the entertainment value and emotional resonance these moments provide. Both of these content types are emotionally intense, satisfying the audience's emotional gratification needs as outlined in UGT. This theory also suggests that when social media users are satisfied with a post, simply scroll upon a post that they enjoy, or feel emotionally invested in a post, viewers are more likely to engage and comment on said post (Ruggiero, 2000). This theoretical view can be applied within this case study. In relation to this, fans or viewers witnessing an artist receive an award or watching a performance from their favourite musician, can be representative of an event feature they enjoy, are satisfied with, or even emotionally attached to. Parallel to what UGT suggests, as a result of this, fans and social media users are more likely to engage with the content, which ultimately influences the volume of comments for these post types specifically.

In comparison to this, red carpet arrivals (22 posts) and behind-the-scenes content (17 posts) received a fewer number of comments. MDT theory suggests that these content types primarily fulfill informational and curiosity-driven needs rather than emotional ones (Ma et al., 2023). In relation to this study, red carpet arrivals focus on fashion and behind-the-scenes content featuring celebrity appearances, which are typically exciting posts for viewers, but generally do not elicit the same level of emotional attachment as live performances or award winning moments do. *Table 10* below displays an example of an emotionally toned comment on both a

live performance and award winning moments, in comparison to a comment left on a red carpet arrival post.

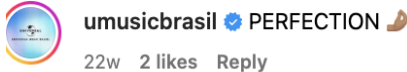
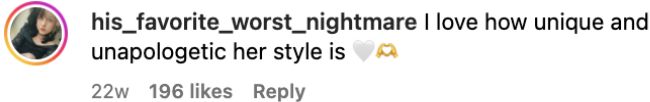
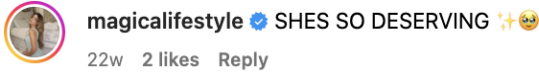
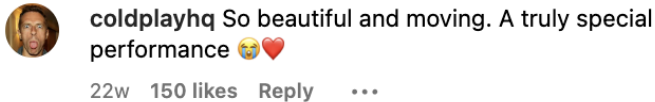
Post Type	Comment (s)
Red Carpet Arrivals & Behind the Scenes Content	<p>Example 1:</p>  <p>(Nann, 2025)</p> <p>Example 2:</p>  <p>(Britt, 2025)</p>
Live Performances & Award Winning Moments	<p>Example 1:</p>  <p>(Kitt, 2025)</p> <p>Example 2:</p>  <p>(Justin, 2025)</p>

Table 10: Post Types & Comment Examples

As both MDT and UGT suggest, emotional investment and viewer satisfaction is deemed as a priority over excitement and anticipation when it comes to post types on social media. This explains why red carpet arrivals and behind-the-scenes content types, despite being highly visible and exciting to some viewers, generated fewer comments overall in comparison to award winning moments and performances.

Beyond the raw data collected between both post timing and comments, *Table 6* points to the effectiveness of content type when aligned with post timing. Posts made after 8:00PM tend to showcase performances and award winning moments, which are likely to be viewed as highly engaging, interactive moments for viewers online. These content types, paired with the timing of the posts, directly correlates with increased engagement (Ruggiero, 2000). As the audience's emotional investment in The Grammy Awards increases, they are more likely to react in real-time by commenting on what they see directly, ultimately amplifying the volume of comments and driving event success. Furthermore, understanding which types of content elicit the most engagement can shape more effective social media strategies for future high-profile, large-scale events, leading to an enhanced audience connection and overall event success.

9.6 Research Question 2b).

Which post type receives the most positive comments: performances, behind the scenes content, red carpet arrivals, or award winning moments?

The research questions previously analyzed (RQ1A, RQ1B, and RQ2A) are all closely intertwined amongst one another, as they provide context and a strong foundation for RQ2B. As previously noted, positive comments are key to event success when analyzing social media because they help generate buzz and excitement around the event (Elayan et al., 2022). Additionally, positive engagement can also amplify the event's reach, as attendees are more likely to share their favourable experiences on social media, spreading the word and increasing visibility. In relation to this, The Grammy Awards Instagram account reveals significant patterns in the distribution of positive comments across different types of content shared during the event.

According to *Table 6*, the number of positive comments for each content type shows notable differences in engagement, with award-winning moments generating the highest number of positive comments and performances following closely behind in numerical value. The data collected also shows that award-winning moments (n = 28) generated 7,699 positive comments, which accounts for 43.8% of the total positive comments across all post types. This is the highest percentage of positive engagement, indicating that award announcements resonate strongly with followers and elicit emotional reactions. Performances (n = 18) followed closely behind with 2,004 positive comments (31.3%), showing that performances are also a significant driver of positive engagement, though they do receive fewer comments than award winning moments. Red carpet arrivals (n = 22) generated 4,116 positive comments (37%), making them a highly engaging content type but not as effective in eliciting positive emotional reactions as award wins or performances. Lastly, behind-the-scenes content (n = 17) garnered 805 positive comments (28.2%), the lowest among all content types, reflecting that while this type of content is interesting, it does not create the same level of emotional engagement as the other content types.

9.7 Frequency Distribution of Positive Comment Words by Post Type

To further understand the emotional tone and sentiment in the comments, it is valuable to examine the specific words that commonly appear in positive comments under each post type. The following list of words are frequently used in positive comments on The Grammy Awards Instagram account to express enthusiasm, admiration, and strong emotional reactions, all contributing to having a positively themed comment:

1. “Amazing”

Frequently used in positive comments on social media, expresses enthusiasm and

strong emotional reactions, and often found in responses to emotionally engaging content like performances and award-winning moments.

2. ***“Incredible”***

Conveys admiration and excitement, helps signal a strong positive sentiment, and often appears in reactions to standout or memorable events.

3. ***“Beautiful”***

Used to express aesthetic appreciation, adds to the overall positive sentiment of a comment, and occurs in comments about visually impactful content.

4. ***“Proud”***

Reflects a sense of shared achievement or support, signals emotional investment and positivity, and is typically used in responses to accomplishments or recognition moments.

5. ***“Unbelievable”***

Emphasizes awe or amazement, enhances emotional intensity in a positive context, and frequently appears in comments on unexpected or extraordinary moments.

Table 11 below displays a frequency distribution Table that includes the number of times each positive word occurred across each post type individually.

Positive Word	Red Carpet Arrivals (Frequency)	Award Winning Moments (Frequency)	Performances (Frequency)	Behind-The-Scenes Content (Frequency)
Amazing	153	309	211	55
Incredible	120	378	279	45
Beautiful	98	293	190	56

Proud	122	390	290	71
Unbelievable	70	245	213	92

Table 11: Frequency Distribution of Positive Words

Table 11 as shown above suggests that posts that satisfy the audience's emotional and entertainment needs, such as those related to performances and award winning moments, generate higher positive sentiment. This table is valuable for social media strategists and event organizers, as it helps them identify which types of content resonate most emotionally with their audience. Award-winning moments generate the most use of words like “*amazing*”, “*incredible*” and “*proud*”, reflecting the high emotional intensity these moments provoke. For example, the word “*incredible*” appears 378 times in comments on award-winning moments, highlighting the audience's strong emotional reaction to these posts. Performances also generate a high frequency of positive words, with “*incredible*” and “*amazing*” appearing frequently. The word “*proud*” is commonly used in response to live performances, particularly when viewers are emotionally moved by the artist's performance. Conversely, red carpet arrivals and behind-the-scenes content produce fewer instances of intense emotional words. For example, “*incredible*” is used 309 times in comments related to award-winning moments, but only 120 times in red carpet arrivals, demonstrating the difference in emotional engagement between these content types.

9.8 Relevance to Social Media Strategy

Understanding which content types generate the most positive comments is valuable for social media strategists and event organizers, especially for live events like The Grammy Awards. This insight enables content optimization, ensuring that posts focus on the emotionally engaging moments of the event, such as award winning moments and performances.

Additionally, by prioritizing these content types in social media strategies, event planners and PR specialists can increase audience interaction and enhance positive sentiment surrounding not only The Grammy Awards, but also other large-scale events. This analysis is especially relevant as it suggests that social media efforts should align with the most impactful moments of the event, which can in turn foster a stronger emotional connection with the audience. Thus, the findings also provide a strategic foundation for other large-scale future events, such as the Super Bowl or other award shows, guiding organizers in creating content that maximizes positive engagement and optimizes the impact of social media efforts.

Furthermore, award-winning moments and performances consistently receive the highest number of positive comments across the Grammy Awards Instagram account, as these types of content fulfill the emotional and entertainment needs of the audience. By leveraging both UGT and MDT in the context of social media presence and its online community, it is clear that emotionally engaging content leads to higher levels of positive engagement.

10.0 Discussion

The findings from this research suggest that emotional engagement underscores the importance of both content type and post timing in generating positive comments on social media during The Grammy Awards. By examining the relationship between these two variables (time and content), this study reveals how strategic decisions about content and timing can influence the volume and positive sentiment within audience engagement. Furthermore, the analysis shows that emotionally resonant content, particularly award-winning moments and performances, generates a higher volume of positive comments. Moreover, the timing of posts, especially those made after 8:00PM EST, plays a pivotal role in increasing engagement, further

emphasizing the need for careful content scheduling in social media strategies for large-scale events. This timing applies to The Grammy Awards, and other large-scale events, as the average *peak* or start time for such events is also 8:00PM EST (Dixon, 2025).

10.1 Content Types and Emotional Engagement

As displayed above, award-winning moments and performances consistently generate the highest volume of positive comments across all post types, which is in alignment with the major tenets of UGT. Thus, award-winning moments and performances are both high at stake, as well as emotionally charged event moments that evoke a strong emotional response from the audience. There are many instances that help prove the importance of ensuring content is strategically added to the event at specific times and during specific moments. In relation to this, the following three main moments (as shown in *Table 12*) from The Grammy Awards are still being discussed today, despite happening years ago:

Example 1:

Michael Jackson's "Man in The Mirror" performance for the 30th Anniversary of The Grammy Awards (1988).



(Mazur, 1988)



<p>Example 2:</p> <p>Adele’s Tribute to George Michael “Fastlove” at The 2017 Grammy Awards.</p>	 <p>(Winter, 2017)</p>
<p>Example 3:</p> <p>Taylor Swift, First Woman to Win Album of the Year Three Times at The Grammy Awards (2021).</p>	 <p>(Lewis, 2021)</p>

Table 12: Examples of Monumental Grammy’s Moments

When an artist wins an award or delivers a performance that leaves a lasting impact on the crowd similar to the examples above, the audience is naturally moved and compelled to comment. This emotional engagement is evident in the frequency of positive words such as “amazing”, “incredible”, “proud”, and “beautiful” that are frequently used in comments, as shown in Table 7. Award-winning moments (n = 28) and performances (n = 18) reflect the peak emotional moments of the event, aligning with UGT’s idea that audiences engage most intensely with content that satisfies emotional gratifications. The higher volume of positive comments in

these categories can be attributed to the fact that they fulfill viewers' emotional needs.

Additionally, these posts also provide opportunities for followers to connect emotionally with the content, whether they are celebrating their favourite artists win or reacting to a performance.

In contrast, post types such as red carpet arrivals and behind-the-scenes content generated significantly fewer positive comments. While these both post types did attract some engagement, it was not as positive, nor as high of volume as the rest of the content. Red carpet arrivals (n = 22) are highly visual, but generally fulfill a more informational or curiosity-driven need, with followers expressing admiration for celebrities' outfits rather than an intense emotional reaction. Similarly, behind-the-scenes content (n = 17), while offering exclusive access to the event, tends to evoke more neutral or inquisitive responses rather than strong emotional reactions. As these posts cater to viewers' curiosity and desire for insider knowledge, they do not achieve the same level of emotional engagement as the live, high-energy moments associated with performances and award winning moments.

10.2 The Impact of Post Timing on Engagement

One key finding of this study is the significant impact that post timing has on positive comments. After analyzing the findings, the data indicates that posts made after 8:00PM EST generate significantly more positive comments than those made before 8:00PM EST. This reinforces the idea that live moments, which typically occur later in the evening, drive higher engagement. When significant moments such as performances or award announcements take place in real-time, they encourage viewers to comment on the excitement, joy, and surprise they experience, which contributes to the volume and positivity of the engagement.

This finding aligns with MDT, which suggests that the more dependent individuals are on a specific medium (in this case, Instagram) to fulfill their emotional, social, and informational

needs, the more influential that medium becomes in shaping their engagement (Ma et al., 2023). As The Grammy Awards unfold and viewers become more immersed in the event, they increasingly rely on Instagram to engage with the content and share their emotional reactions. This is particularly true for the most exciting, emotionally charged moments that happen later in the event. The higher post engagement after 8:00PM EST reflects the escalating emotional intensity as the event progresses, suggesting that viewers' dependence on Instagram for real-time reactions and updates drives the heightened levels of positive interaction.

11.0 Results

11.1 Positive Comments as an Indicator of Event Success

The prevalence of positive comments is a valuable indicator of the success of The Grammy Awards from a PR and audience engagement perspective. Positive comments reflect audience satisfaction, emotional connection, and support for the event, artists, and content being shared. These comments are not only valuable because they reflect audience sentiment, but also because they contribute to amplifying the event's presence and reach on social media platforms. The more positive engagement a post receives, the more it is likely to be shared, liked, and commented on, which in turn increases its visibility, enhancing overall event success. This is evident through the examples previously provided that include a list of viral moments that are still remembered to this day as a part of The Grammy Awards' history. The findings suggest that posts designed to trigger emotional responses, such as award wins and performances, are more likely to generate positive comments and boost engagement.

11.2 Practical Implications for Social Media Strategy

The findings suggest strategies that can be used for content creation and social media strategy in future events. First, highly emotional content, such as award-winning moments and performances, may be prioritized for posts shared during peak times of audience engagement (after 8:00 PM EST). This ensures that posts are aligned with the audience's emotional peak during the event, thus maximizing the likelihood of positive comments. Additionally, the strategic timing of posts can play a significant role in driving an increased level of engagement. As demonstrated by the high volume of positive comments for posts made after 8:00PM, posts shared during live moments are suggested to be scheduled to coincide with emotional moments.

11.3 Connecting Engagement to Event Success

The connection between positive engagement and event success is evident in the way audience sentiment, expressed through positive comments, amplifies the event's reputation. Positive engagement helps shape the public's perception of The Grammy Awards, turning it into not only a successful broadcast but also a highly praised cultural event. The Grammy Awards is not a public event, so being invited to this event comes with exclusivity. In addition to this, *Seatfillers*, an app created to allow fans to participate in exclusive events, annually promote The Grammy Awards for fans to get the opportunity to attend the event in person. By using this app, combined with a heightened presence on social media, The Grammy Awards, and other large-scale event organizers can foster their relationship with the audience and allow for a closer sense of community and long-term commitment and support for the event itself (Ruggiero, 2000). Thus, communications professionals can use social media to advertise the exclusiveness of the event to allow fans to feel as though they are a part of something bigger and are welcomed into a shared community with fellow fans and other viewers (Ruggiero, 2000).

12.0 Limitations and Future Recommendations

While this MRP suggests valuable insights into the relationship between content types, post timing, and positive comments on The Grammy Awards Instagram account, there are four limitations that must be addressed to provide a more in depth understanding of the research findings, as shown in *Table 13* below.

Limitation	Description	Impact on Study	Future Recommendations
Limitation 1 of 4: Unique Audience	Study focuses only on The Grammy Awards, a unique entertainment event with emotionally charged, visually rich content that may not represent other event types.	Limits generalizability to other event types in different industries.	Future studies may examine events from various sectors to better understand engagement patterns in different contexts.
Limitation 2 of 4: Social Media Platform Exclusivity (Instagram)	The analysis is restricted to Instagram, which is highly visual and functions differently from platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or TikTok. Each has unique engagement mechanisms and user behaviors.	Engagement insights may not apply to other platforms with different audience interaction styles.	Comparative studies across platforms are needed for broader insights.
Limitation 3 of 4: Lack of Audience Demographics	Study does not account for demographics such as age, gender, or location, which affect engagement.	Results may overlook important variations in engagement patterns among different demographic segments.	Include demographic segmentation in future research to better tailor content.

Limitation 4 of 4: Time Zone Exclusions (EST)	Audience members in different time zones may experience the event and engage on social media at varying times, affecting the timing and volume of engagement observed.	Engagement data might be skewed or inconsistent depending on when audiences view and react to the event content.	Future research could account for time zone variations to better capture global engagement patterns and optimize posting strategies.
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Table 13: Limitations and Future Recommendation

While this study contributes valuable insights into the role of content types, post timing, and positive comments in audience engagement, it is still important to acknowledge its limitations. Therefore, expanding the research to include other types of events, platforms, audience demographics, and emotional sentiment analysis would provide a more comprehensive understanding of social media engagement. These insights would be beneficial for PR professionals and social media managers who seek to optimize their strategies for other large-scale events, ensuring that content aligns with the emotional needs of their audience and drives positive engagement.

13.0 Final Conclusion

This study examines how content types and post timing influences positive audience engagement on Instagram during The 2025 Grammy Awards. By analyzing patterns of comments, the research suggests valuable strategies for maximizing emotional connection and interaction with event-related posts. The findings of this MRP provide important insights for optimizing social media practices that revolve around both live and large-scale events.

13.1 Positivity and Engagement

The findings from this research suggest how specific types of content, as well as the timing of posts, can impact audience sentiment and interaction with event-related content on social media. Through a detailed analysis of engagement patterns, this research highlights the importance of strategically using emotionally resonant content and posting at times that align with peak audience engagement to drive positive feedback and enhance the success of an event.

The analysis of positive comments further highlights their role as an indicator of audience satisfaction and event success. Positive comments serve not only as a reflection of how well the event is being received by the public, but also as a tool for amplifying the event's presence and support on social media. Positive comments encourage further interaction, increasing visibility and reach, which is valuable for event organizers and PR professionals aiming to enhance the reputation of the event and extend its cultural impact (Ruggiero, 2000). The findings suggest that generating positive engagement is important for shaping public perception, especially for high-profile events like The Grammy Awards, where social media serves as a platform for real-time audience reactions.

13.2 Content Type

One of the key findings of this study is the dominant role of performances and award-winning moments in generating the highest volume of positive comments. These content types, which are emotionally charged and resonate strongly with audiences, evoke enthusiastic reactions. The emotional engagement within the comments reflects the entertainment, excitement, and social connection viewers experience during these high-stakes moments, which directly aligns with UGT (Ruggiero, 2000). Additionally, comments expressing admiration and excitement were surprisingly associated with performances and award winning moments,

signaling the emotional investment and social needs of the audience. Content such as red carpet arrivals and behind-the-scenes footage generated fewer positive comments, largely because these types of posts serve informational or curiosity-driven needs rather than eliciting deep emotional responses. While these posts did engage viewers, they did not generate comments at the same level of emotional intensity as performances or award winning moments did.

13.3 Post Timing

The study also reveals that post timing plays a valuable role in determining the volume of positive comments. Posts made after 8:00PM EST consistently received more positive comments than those posted before 8:00PM EST, ultimately signifying the influence of timing when it comes to maximizing engagement. The Grammy Awards being a live event, naturally builds emotional momentum as the evening progresses, with key moments such as performances and award winning moments occurring later in the event. As the audience becomes more emotionally involved in these moments, their engagement on Instagram increases, particularly in the form of positive comments. This finding directly supports MDT, which suggests that individuals become more dependent on media to fulfill their emotional and informational needs as they become more engaged with an event (Kim, 2020).

13.4 Winning with Positivity

Ultimately, the findings from this study underscore the important role of emotionally engaging content and strategic post timing in driving positive engagement and shaping the overall success of high-profile events like The Grammy Awards. The findings reveal that content designed to evoke strong emotional reactions, when paired with strategically timed posts, leads to higher levels of positive comments, which are key to maximizing audience interaction and public perception. For both communications professionals and PR specialists, these insights offer

practical guidance on how to optimize content strategies for future events on social media platforms. By focusing on content that resonates emotionally with the audience, this MRP suggests that organizers can enhance audience engagement and foster positive comments and relationships amongst viewers online. These findings point to the importance of tailoring social media strategies to align with the audience's emotional and social needs, as described in both UGT and MDT, ensuring that content is shared when followers are most likely to engage positively (Kim, 2020).

By focusing on positive comments, event organizers can build a supportive online community, which amplifies the event's visibility and ultimately contributes to its overall success. Positive engagement is a powerful force that not only reflects the event's success, but also shapes its cultural significance and PR impact (Ma et al., 2023). This research provides an initial foundation for understanding how emotionally engaging content and timely posts contribute to positive audience interactions, offering actionable insights for optimizing social media strategies in future live events. The findings also serve as a basis for future research into how social media strategies can be optimized across different types of events and social media platforms, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of audience sentiment and engagement.

This MRP highlights the broader importance of prioritizing strategically timed and emotionally engaging content to foster positive audience interaction, ultimately establishing a foundation for event success grounded within **winning with positivity**.

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