

Consolidated Review of

Demystifying Porn 2.0: A Look into a Major Adult Video Streaming Website

1. Strengths

This is one of the first few studies to look at videos in this particular space. I thought this was a nice paper.

Very methodical and workmanlike. The insights are in general interesting. I liked the rough comparison with the literature on more general video sites. I liked the user study to sort of confirm some of the author's intuition about what the results mean.

There are some broad conclusions about things like more even distribution of interest and less stability in popular videos. The findings are interesting and have useful implications

The measurement study is over an extensive dataset and the analysis is fairly thorough.

2. Weaknesses

The paper really could be a bunch shorter. While well written some of the points are belabored at times. And, some of the questions just don't seem to be all that important. E.g., I found the content removal section to be way too long for the insight given. I wish it had been a fleeting paragraph that noted it for interest and moved on. There were other such items that did not directly bear on the main insights found in the paper. There is definitely value in repeating prior studies, but the interesting portions of this paper could have easily been summed up in a 6 pager.

This is a very limited study in both scope (a single portal) and depth of analysis.

It is unclear the extent to which the findings about YouPorn are different from findings of prior studies of YouTube and other non-adult VoD sites. From the results of the paper, there is apparently not much that separates Youporn from Youtube or other VoD systems that have been studied before. Hence the value of the work is limited.

3. Comments

The paper is a good paper overall. The related work section covers a broad swath of papers that have touched upon this topic, though the authors are right to point out that no major study has been published identifying this behavior. The authors are right in that these adult video sites have been ignored in prior studies. However, I don't think it's necessarily because of social reasons, but more likely because they are just like other systems that have already been studied, e.g. YouTube.

One could surmise that these conclusions are internally known to such site-operators, since this approach appears to be identical among all the major pornography sites that Alexa identifies within the top-100 (i.e., relying on front page matter and category-driven content consumption). However, this reviewer is unable to easily find any industry publication that reveals this information publicly. The idea of using the interest metric to even out imbalances among categories and popularity of content is a good one, and when viewed using this metric, figures 17 - 19 shed interesting light on how such web-sites and content can be optimized.

The one failing of this paper is the lack of comparison of its findings with earlier studies of non-adult video streaming. While the authors do cite them in the related work section and mention them on and off in the rest of the paper, the significance of the findings might have been more apparent, if they were contrasted more clearly with studies of generic video content (on YouTube). For example, are the temporal dynamics (growth) of content popularity (Section 5) different from that observed in YouTube? The reason why this is important is because the premise of the paper is that adult video content might be very different from non-adult video content. So it is important that the authors establish this fact clearly. Similarly, there may be lessons here that are not specific to adult videos (e.g., categories driving views) -- it would be nice to distinguish between adult content specific findings and the more generic findings

Given the similarity of the results to prior studies, it would have been much better to focus on aspects of usage or functionality that is qualitatively different. From the results here, it doesn't look like there is much in terms of new take aways. It would also have helped if the authors studied and compared multiple such sites. As it is, there seems to be very little in the results that distinguish Youporn from YouTube or other VoD systems. The popularity curves are the same, if you adjust the curves by some constant factor. The methodology, metrics, and conclusions are all largely the same.

The only real conclusion we can take away is that because of the nature of porn, users are much less selective and willing to watch anything, or the first thing that pops up. That insight and results that compare to prior systems is really much more suitable for a short paper.

Overall, I like the study -- it makes for an interesting read. I like the extensive datasets that you gathered and the detailed analysis of the data, especially focused on explaining the popularity dynamics.

4. Summary from PC Discussion

This paper was discussed at the PC meeting after a careful consideration of all the reviews. The decision was made to accept this paper due to the well-conducted study and its representative dataset that will be made available which will shed light on the nature of adult traffic in the Internet. The downsides of the paper was that the paper is too long and belabors its point over 14 pages, while it could be made more concisely using less number of pages. The authors might also want to provide some data that shows how representative YouPorn is of the larger community of adult video websites.

5. Authors' Response

We believe there were two very important comments that arose from the reviewers' feedback. First, the reviewers considered the paper too long and, second, the reviewers would have appreciated more direct comparison between YouPorn and other more

traditional user generated content sites, e.g. YouTube. To address the first point, we have performed extensive editing on the paper. This has focused on removing parts that were more general in nature (e.g. video ratings), as well as substantially editing the remaining sections to increase their conciseness (e.g. content removals). This has shortened the paper by over 2 pages. Whereas

we have not been able to introduce direct comparative data between YouPorn and YouTube, we have added more explicit comparisons within the text to better inform the reader about the key differences. This has, for example, been achieved through re-writes of both the introduction and conclusion sections.