Comprehensive Creative Technologies Project: Manipulating a Narrative: Leveraging Cinematography for Effective Digital Marketing

**Luke Hammond**

[Luke2.hammond@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Luke2.hammond@live.uwe.ac.uk)

Supervisor: Richard Wakeling-Gentle

Department of Computing and Creative Technology

University of the West of England  
Coldharbour Lane  
Bristol BS16 1QY

*Screenshot/ image of the work (600 pixels high x 800 pixels wide .jpg)  
This image may be used for the degree show booklet. For white backgrounds please use 1/2pt black border.*

**Abstract**

Verdana, 9pt. This is a top line description of your project, not an introduction (that comes later). Please summarise your project, giving a bird’s eye view of your application/ software/ animation/ etc.   
What is the project? What is its aim? How was this realized in practice? Any key results/ insights that might benefit other professionals in the field? Don’t try to write anything new here, just repeat the main points achieved in your project succinctly. Short summaries like this are for people who just want to get to the core of your work without having to read the whole report.   
Note: the abstract is not included in the word count.

**Keywords**: term, term, term

**How to access the project** (not included in word count)

Verdana, 9pt. Provide any **project URLs** and/or details of where/how to access your project, and the ***URL of your final video***. If we need access to servers / administration interfaces please provide credentials and URLs. What we cannot access we cannot mark. You can change passwords after you receive your mark.

We also want to be able to see source code (if applicable), and the best way is to download it from your site or a Git server. Please clearly comment code to show us which sections are your own, and which sections stem from demos, examples, frameworks, libraries, OSS, online stores, tutorials or elsewhere.

If there is a particular method for providing access to your project you will need to provide instructions here. Also if there is anything we need to know about the work that will not be self-explanatory, then also provide brief instructions here.

**Introduction**

The project explores how cinematography can work in collaboration with marketing skills and tactics to produce an effective piece of media to either demonstrate an ideology or perhaps sell a product. The significance of researching into various aspects of cinematography allows the ability to represent which aspect can draw the most emotional response from a customer. Emotion is a key part of user experience (UX) and marketing which can allow for the best and most accessible product. This is imperative as the project is looking to draw an emotional connection with the users/customers in an attempt to manipulate their thought process in favour of one particular product.

A lot of digital marketing is in the form of blogs, word of mouth or graphic pieces such as posters. However, with the rise in video and its more accessible nature it is coming to the forefront more and more but is still outshone by older forms of marketing. Therefore, the ultimate result of the project is whether cinematic elements can be used to engage support or whether the more traditional marketing tactics will remain supreme in the marketing field.

Additionally, the project is geared towards being very UX central with heavy reliance on engaging with participants for primary research to continue the process of the project’s timeline. The primary research collected will work alongside pre-existing secondary research to either further reinforce the content or perhaps sprout a new thought process and discovery with in the broader field of cinematography as well as digital marketing.

**Deliverables**

* Documentation of user testing and secondary research
* Unity scenes
* Videos to demonstrate secondary research
* Project blog
* Final advertisement
* Poster

**Project Objectives**

* Showcase how media can be manipulated to display one point of view
* Collect and record data from user testing
* Create a scene developed from a storyboard
* Drawing conclusions from primary research
  + Create visual representations of data
* Implement ideas from the field of marketing

**Research Questions**

All research questions work towards the final objective of creating an advertisement piece that leverages elements of cinematography and digital marketing. These questions ground the project as well as provide objectives to work towards during the production of the final artifact.

* How to create a narrative story using both primary and secondary research into the impact of cinematography, specifically: camera angles, colour, lighting, aspect ratio, editing and sound. Additionally, how do they portray and manipulate emotions?
* How significant is the use of post-production in encompassing these elements in the creation of a final product?
* What is the most beneficial method of user testing to produce qualitive and quantitative results which can be analysed and represented in a variety of forms? What is the most accessible formatting of research which can allow collaboration with existing secondary research?
* What are the existing forms of digital marketing and how does cinematography rank? How can cinematography be seamlessly implemented to create a piece that works as a successful alternative to existing marketing formatting?
* What is the difference between traditional marketing compared to digital marketing and which approach is most fitting towards cinematography and its implementation?
* Can cinematography and marketing of all forms work simultaneously to produce a successful product/artifact?

**Literature review**

The research conducted for this project covers some of the main principles of cinematography and their role in creating a cinematic piece. Additionally, investigation into marketing tactics was equally studied as well as previous examples of it in the form of propaganda.

**Camera Angles & Framing**

Framing is one of the basics for cinematography but is a significant element in creating an innovative and creative piece. “Framing is used to isolate what we are looking at,” allowing for tension but also drawing focus from the audience. However, framing isn’t solely geared towards cinematography but can also be found in art. “Edward Hopper’s… paintings often shrink the subject to occupy only a small portion of the framing allowing their surroundings to engulf them.” This allows cinematography to equally take inspiration from art pieces as well as similar videos in the medium.

“If shot size and framing are used to isolate what we are looking at, camera angles are all about how we are meant to perceive them. That adds yet another layer of meaning to every camera shot.” Camera angles come in a variety of forms allowing the subject to be interpreted from a wide range of emotions based on how the camera is positioned for example, “close-ups provide a level of connection” as the audience is able to immerse themselves within the tension felt when facing off against the character on screen.

**Colour**

“Colour can affect us emotionally, psychologically and even physically, often without us becoming aware,” inherently humans are drawn to colours and through media as well as our natural environment have come to perceive specific colours to symbolise/represent certain emotional responses. “If you set up your scene with overall cooler tones… then you’re going to have a scene that looks and feels a lot colder and more clinical” whereas “Warmer tones… make us feel calmer and more relaxed.”

This knowledge is then used and translated into cinematography, “classic screen theory holds that colour can energize and amplify the emotional impact of scene.” Utilising the main aspects of colour; hue, brightness, saturation and contrast, a cinematic piece can convey numerous emotions even from the same scene. “Colour can be manipulated to reflect the mood of a scene and personality of its occupants,” for instance a dark drabby scene may be occupied by our protagonist decorated in a bright pink showcasing that even in such a dark world they are the last shining ray of hope.

The use of such a powerful tool allows the director to skip exposition and can allow the audience to read between the lines of the emotional thoughts and feelings of an area or subject without being explicitly told what they are. When working in unison with camera angles it enhances a scene for the audience, after all, “a picture is worth a thousand words.”

**Lighting**

Lighting, like colour can be broken down into various forms. The focus for this project is ambient lighting, practical lighting and motivated lighting. Ambient lighting is found naturally a scene such as streetlamps or sunlight. “Practical lighting refers to any light source that can be seen in the frame… motivated lighting means there is a logical or reasonable justification for the light in a scene.” Lighting is often used to produce or enhance colours on a scene, therefore colour and lighting work collaboratively to “help determine the mood of a scene.”

Cinematographers measure colour temperature, “which is measured in thermodynamic units called Kelvins.” These units work along a spectrum which at certain intervals can produce a variety of colours to help intensify a scene.

Utilising this knowledge, the lighting team must find the balance between light and shadow, also known as the contrast ratio. “High-key lighting is a term that expresses a low contrast ratio… Low-key lighting on the other hand uses a high contrast ratio.” Therefore, high-key lighting is used for brighter and happier scenes while low-key lighting is used for more sinister and dramatic scenes. The significance of such methodology is the ability to create emphasis and a focal point for the audience to engage with, “this technique can transform a complex scene with many details into one that is easy to read and understand.”

**Aspect Ratio**

Screen adaptation has evolved in such a short time that many ‘classic’ movies are created for a different aspect ratio outside of the universal, “16:9” aspect ratio we have accommodated in modern times. However, even in cinema there is a different aspect ratio not meant for casual viewing on TV. One director who is infamous for such concept is Christopher Nolan, shooting the latest Oppenheimer movie in “2:20:1” and “1:43:1”. Such aspect ratios were designed for an IMAX experience and while being able to watch on home viewing, will lose the ‘movie magic’ of the intended screenplay.

However, aspect ratios are not confined to how a video must be shot, it can be morphed and changed inside of the scene. “Aspect ratios could make someone feel very claustrophobic and tight… or it can make you feel massive and its overwhelming… there’s many different ways to convey a message with it.” A famous example is in the Hunger Games when Katniss who the audience has been viewing in close-ups with a tight black border first arises into the games. During her ascent the borders proceed to open and convey the vastness of the area and the magnitude of the task ahead, while also implying the insignificance of her existence in such an area. “To use it very subtly, so that you don’t really see it, but your brain can see that something is happening, and you start to feel a certain way.” In this case the border opening emphasises the uncomfortable feeling in the audience but also implies they are just another onlooker alongside the many others in the world of the Hunger Games.

**Editing**

Editing or post-production is where the narrative comes to fruition, “the editor takes source footage and turns up the art.” However, editing follows its own rules and many editors have their own style, for Murch, “emotion, [is] at the top of the list, [it] is the thing that you should try to preserve at all costs.” This is similar to the approach of the project due to the goal of having users connect with the final piece and draw emotional connections with it. Murch goes on to say, “if you have to give up something, don’t ever give up emotion before story.,” clearly demonstrating the significance of an emotional connection with the audience.

To keep emotion at the forefront, editors must create a piece that flows seamlessly from scene to scene without ruining the concentration of the audience. Dmytryk states, “the editor should change the shot only if the change improves the scene – there must be a positive reason for the shot change.” When this concept is working in association with smooth cuts and rhythm it creates a naturally flowing piece.

This links to Pearlman’s ideas that “editors use their innate “kinesthetic empathy” or “corporeal imagination” to read the rhythm in rushes, and their own bodies to write filmic rhythm.” In other words, editors naturally empathise with an audience and create a piece that will sustain immersion from their own inherent need to have a piece that does so.

**Sound**

Sound can be broken down into two elements, diegetic or non-diegetic. Editing and sound work hand-in-hand to create a believable narrative but also emphasise elements of the narrative. An example of this is music. While it can be diegetic it is very often non-diegetic and used as a tool to heighten emotion of the scene. Therefore, Yang and Chen believe, “music cannot be composed, performed, or listened to without affection involvement.” Similar to colour, music from as far back as human history has been used to symbolise moods or evoke emotions. However, music is arguably more subjective. For Yang and Chen emotions found in music studies are often broken into “expressed emotion, perceived emotions and felt (or evoked) emotion.” In literal terms, the former is what the artist wants to express to the listener while the other two refer to how it is perceived.

While music is an influential tool in cinematography, it needs grounding with visual elements, particularly colour. “Music perception is intrinsically subjective and is under the influence of many factors such as cultural background, age, gender, personality, training, and so forth.” When working in conjunction with visual elements, music but also sound easily elevates emotional responses garnered from the visually stimulant of cinematography.

**Marketing**

The final part of the project is leveraging cinematography for effective digital marketing. The project, therefore, must have an established definition of “Marketing.” This project heavily follows Thomas’ Watertight Marketing book which reiterates marketing, and emotions work intrinsically with one another. “Having an emotional connection can be all-important in getting people over that final hurdle.” She further states, “emotion is arguably the most important because it tops and tails the process. It’s also powerful because its something that happens to you, beyond your conscious control.”

Combining this ideology alongside the cinematic elements previously discussed, emotion is the key factor to building a bridge between these two factors. Thomas, slightly lays out a narrative which can easily be accentuated by cinematography, “what you need is an interlinked series of messages that starts with emotion, move on to logic and then return to emotion.” Previous statements have been reminiscent of this quote from Thomas and shows the possibility of cinematography being effective for marketing.

However, video isn’t the only media piece for marketing, one successful example of effective marketing is the use of propaganda. Propaganda is notoriously considered negative, with bad implications. However, as Miller states, “’Propaganda’ in its proper meaning is a perfectly wholesome word, of honest parentage and with an honourable history.” Miller argues, this thinking has since changed and is now as simple as “let another group of citizens express opposing views, and they are promptly labelled with the sinister name of propaganda.”

Propaganda, defined by the oxford dictionary means, “information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view.” This definition has very strong implications to marketing due to wanting to build an “emotional connection,” as Thomas states, “positive and negative emotions… can make an excellent basis for your messaging.” While all media is biased in one way or another so is marketing due to the need of wanting to sell a product or ideology to a user, “something doesn’t need to be a lie to become propaganda, it doesn’t need to be from the government, and it doesn’t need to be about a country being the root of all evil.” Propaganda is arguably all around but is only noticed when done incorrectly, this is where marketing is used to steer it towards a “focus customer group,” and ultimately is accomplished through methods like cinematography due to the seamless intake of information from an audience. As Bernays states, “If the public becomes more intelligent in its commercial demands, commercial firms will meet the new standards.”

**4. Research methods and Ethics** ~500w

Briefly tell the reader which research methods you will use to answer the research questions. Use the correct terminology when identifying research methods and give a brief rationale of why these methods were chosen (and not others). Try to convince the reader that the choices of method were appropriate for this project, and that it looked like they could provide the necessary answers.

If qualitative or user research was conducted, or research involving human participants, introduce the purpose of this, briefly describe the participants, sample size, process applied, response rate (if applicable), data analysis method and evaluation method.

Your reader also needs to know that all research methods were applied ethically and professionally at all project stages, meaning research and practice.

What you may need to mention in this section (depending on each project) is data collection, data storage, data disposal, gaining informed participant consent, respecting privacy, not causing harm either directly or indirectly through your project work, as well as how you were working to professional guidelines and standards. Non-disclosure agreements, intellectual property rights or copyright issues also need to be dealt with here.

Write a summary of the most important findings of the research phase and explain how exactly each of these findings will influence the follow-on stages of the project.

**5. Practice** ~2500 words

Now we have arrived at the practice section, the biggest part of this report. Here you guide the reader through the practical implementation stages of your project.

Do not describe every detail. Instead, try to put together an insightful and focused discussion by selecting the project-critical topics or stages. Tell the reader what these are and why they were so critical. Then lead the reader through. Make it clear to your reader when one topic / stage is done and the next one starts so they don’t get lost.

Demonstrate project management skills, for example: iterative development is often key when it comes to practice. How was this considered in the planning of the practice stages? How did the project deal with unforeseen user/ peer/ tutor feedback?

Demonstrate problem-solving skills: what problems did you encounter. How were they addressed or how was every method exhausted to arrive at the best possible solution? Use a few specific examples. Problems worthy of discussion could be conceptual, technical, practical, even legal (think copyright) or ethical (think user studies).

To help you make your points in this section convincingly, please insert quotes, graphs, screenshots, diagrams, tables (see Table 1), short code snippets etc. if useful and important.

| **Table example** | **1** | **2** | **3** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| User 0 | 22.52 | 12.16 | 10.75 |
| User 1 | 22.72 | 12.26 | 10.60 |
| User 2 | 0.009 | 0.008 | 0.014 |

**Table 1:** Captionbelow the table, Verdana 8pt.

<p>   
For short code examples please use Courier Regular, 9pt. <br /> Put larger code examples into an appendix. Highlight code sections in colour if necessary.

</p>

Please note, all materials (figures, tables, etc.) need to be discussed in the main text, like this example picture of a hen (see Fig 1).

**Fig 1:** Captionbelow the image in Verdana 8pt. For white background images use a 1/2pt border in black.



**6. Discussion of outcomes** ~1500

Now that the reader knows about key practice points, outcomes or results. Take a step back and reflect: what significance does this completed project have for its wider context? What could others draw from it? What problem does it improve on? (you may need some references here to situate the project convincingly within the context of previous work or artifacts). Critically analyse what has been achieved and if necessary, suggest alternative approaches.

Look back and close the loop: how and to what extent does the project respond to the research questions? In hindsight, were the methods and processes you chose the right ones? You want to underline the achievements of the project, but at the same time not hide any obvious omissions or shortcomings. Honesty about obvious flaws demonstrates awareness and insight.

Is there anything that would make this project *original* in a professional sense; e.g. have you discovered a new method as you went along? Or a new conceptual model that might help others understand a process better? Perhaps you’ve developed a more efficient workflow for research or practice? Streamlined some processes? Combined some tools or methods or contexts in new and efficient ways? Perhaps you have arrived at an artistic or expressive practice outcome? Improved on a service design by removing an obstacle in the experience flow?

**7. Conclusion and recommendations** ~400

This section should draw conclusions from completed research and practical work.

Make some recommendations here for next steps or further work. Imagine another student or professional picks up the project from where you left it. What would you recommend them to do?

Also think about the impact that could be achieved in the wider field. What could be the longer-term future of this project beyond UWE? A conference? An academic journal? An audiovisual festival? A creative competition?

How might this project benefit other users, professionals, society? Does the project have any commercial potential for example? Could it become a sellable product? Or should the code become a creative commons resource?

Find a useful sentence to end this report with. It is always beneficial to end on a positive.

**8. References** (=not included in word count – these are the sources you are actually quoting in this report; in alphabetical order)

Allan A, Schneider B and Miller C 2015 *Journal Name* **37** 074203

Bertrand J and Banes C 2009 *Journal Name* **23** 544

**9. Bibliography** (=not included in word count – these are any further items you have read around this topic; in alphabetical order)  
Author, A. (2009) *A Book About Student Projects*. Location Publisher.

Author, B (2008) ‘Journal Article’, *Digital Media Journal*, Vol 1/13, pp 13-23

University of the West of England (2009) *UWE Library Services:Study skills - The Harvard System* [Online] Available from <https://www1.uwe.ac.uk/students/studysupport/studyskills/referencing/uwebristolharvard.aspx>

[last access: 23 September 2009]

**Appendix A: Project Log** (not included in word count)

**Appendix B: Project Timeline** (not included in word count)

**Appendix C: Assets used in the Project** (not included in word count)

This is a list of project assets: all source materials used in the project. Clearly state which were produced by yourself and which were not. If not produced by yourself, include their reference, and status with regard to copyright/ creative commons licensing.

**Further Appendixes D, E … if applicable**\*(not included in word count)  
What could go here?

* Ethics: participant info sheets, consent form, interview questions, anonymized matrices, other anonymized summaries or analyses
* Any important design documents too large to insert in the main text
* Any important code sections not already on GitHub
* Any impotant large tables or diagrams
* Other relevant materials

\*only insert meaningful materials here, please don’t just bulk this report up. Your main text should be able to stand on its own, without relying on information contained in appendixes. Check with your supervisor beforehand.