

TECHFOCUS

The rise of ‘clip culture’

AHMED ASHFUL HAQUE

IN recent times, the huge popularity of the websites that allow people to share short video snippets is leading to the worldwide rise of an online “clip culture”.

According to Wikipedia, “Clip culture”, compared to the “lean-back” experience of seeing traditional TV, refers to an internet activity of sharing and viewing a short video, mostly less than 15 minutes. The culture began as early as the development of broadband network, but it sees the boom since 2005 when websites for uploading clips are emerging on the market, including YouTube, Google Video, MSN Video.

The video clips often shows a moments of significance, humour, oddity, prodigy performance. Sources for video clips include news, movies, music video and amateur video shot. In addition to the clip recorded by high-quality camcorders, it is getting common to produce clips with digital camera, webcam, and mobile phone.

In fact, clip culture is so popular, many internet-savvy users are abandoning the TV altogether for the excellent collection of video clips available online. Sites like ThrowAwayYourTV.com support and encourage internet-users to opt for the “mind-blowing content” available on the video sharing sites instead of the “boring and tedious” traditional TV.

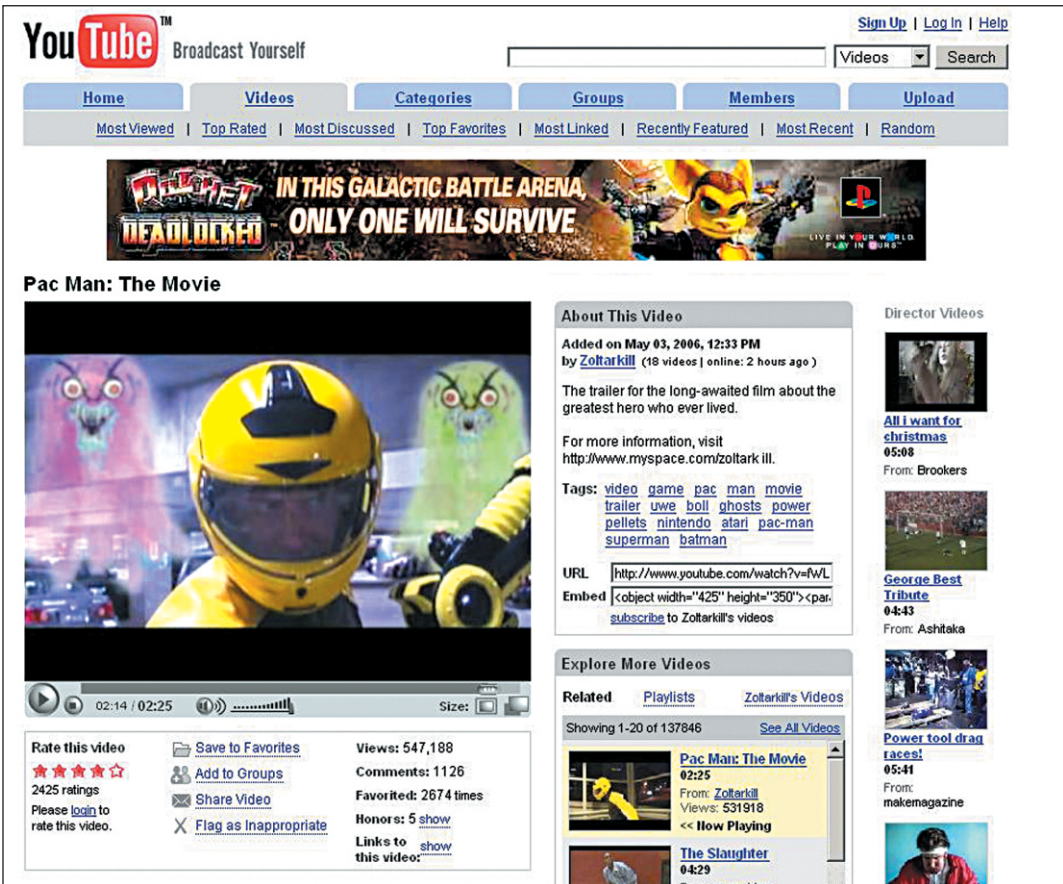
The emergence of video sharing sites is yet another seemingly instant internet success story that has caught many by surprise. Telecommunications companies and intransigent broadcasters face an even tougher choice, as their vision of an on-demand converged internet, must now compete with the clip culture.

Last month, two sites, MSN Video and YouTube, attracted nearly 10 million unique US visitors each. While those numbers are relatively insignificant when compared with network television viewer-ship, widespread video sharing is just getting started. YouTube, which is home to 25 million videos and streams 15 million of them each day, just launched its service last year. Most of the videos on YouTube and other video sharing services are not full-length features.

Instead, taking their cue from the movie studios (whose previews or trailers are little more than a collection of clips) and sports networks (whose popular highlight shows are nothing but clips), the overwhelming majority of videos are shorter clips running anywhere from a few seconds to a couple of minutes.

The clips themselves fall into three broad categories. Home-grown or amateur clips constitute a significant percentage of the collection, as the mushrooming of user-generated content moves from blog postings to innovative multimedia featuring audio and video.

These clips should not be underestimated. While user-generated content was previously all but unavailable to the general



public - with the forgettable exception of television shows such as America's Funniest Home Videos - the best of user-generated video today attracts large audiences and competes with anything being offered on the major networks.

Montage videos, which represent the next-generation of protest and fan sites, constitute the second category. A YouTube search for Prime Minister Tony Blair or President George Bush yields hundreds of videos, many of which bring together multiple clips to make powerful political statements.

Telecommunications companies and intransigent broadcasters face an even tougher choice, as their vision of an on-demand converged internet, must now compete with the clip culture. This presents new challenges, since users are increasingly not satisfied with merely consuming content, but rather demand the ability to share and re-create it.

With the submarine cable at our doorsteps, we can finally take part with some of the ongoing internet trends. We looked at several of these video-sharing sites. If you want to post, watch, share, or edit video online, read along.

YouTube.com
YouTube is the video-sharing site everyone's already heard of, and it's arguably the best of the bunch. It has got the biggest collection of video clips, the best community and lots and lots of users. And the features are pretty impressive too; including tabbed pages, ratings, user-favourites, flagging, tagging, and commenting. Users can easily create playlists, subscribe to other's uploads, subscribe to tags. The video quality is decent and it's very easy to use.

If you want to step up to more community features and get widespread viewership of your video clip, YouTube gets the job done.

Google Video
video.google.com
Google Video is a free Google service that allows anyone to upload video clips to Google's web servers as well as make their own media available free of charge or commercially through the Google Video Store. Besides amateur media, internet videos, viral ads, and movie trailers, the service also aims to distribute commercial professional media, such as televised content and movies.

The main appeal of Google

Video is the simple fact that it's from Google. Reflecting the company's reputation of producing impressive services one after another, Google Video became very popular with the masses.

Google Video sports the typical clean and sparse Google layout. Uploading requires you download the Google Video Uploader. The service allows you to add plenty of metadata, including a transcript so that users can easily search and play videos directly from Google Video, as well as download video files and remotely embed them on their sites. Users can also monetise their content by assigning a sale price to each clip.

Jumpcut.com
If you want to alter your video online in any way, now that the fibre optic is finally at the doorstep, through editing, remixing, or combining your clips with those from other users, then head on over to Jumpcut and don't look back. Jumpcut really offers the first leap forward in online video sharing, and is worth a look even if you have no use for editing features. Playing with Jumpcut's features, you immediately understand that the future of online video is here. Very, very slick, but

Minsk family of computers

Minsk family of mainframe computers was developed and produced in the Byelorussian SSR from 1959 to 1975. Its further progress was stopped by a political decision of switching to IBM System/360 clone family known as ES EVM during the brief period of détente. The most advanced model was Minsk-32, developed in 1968. It supported COBOL, FORTRAN and ALGAMS (a version of Algol). This and earlier versions also used a machine-oriented language called AKI (AvtoKod Ingenera, i.e., "engineer's autocode"). It stood somewhere between the native assembly language SSK (Sistema Simvolicheskogo Kodirovaniya, or "System of symbolic coding") and higher-level languages, like FORTRAN.



TECHVIEWS

The outstanding Opera Mini



Snapshots of different websites in the browser, and the Opera Mini server between your phone and the internet

PROBABLY by now you have tried browsing the internet with your EDGE/GPRS enabled mobile. The internet sites that are compatible in mobile phones are known as WAP sites (WML/WAP 1.0/WAP 2.0). There are Mobile phones with XHTML browser (Nokia 6230, 3230, 6680, N70, N90, SE K700i, K750i, P910i etc.) but it's not good enough for browsing the internet or I should say not even close for smooth browsing. So, WAP sites are the only hope for Internet browsing in mobile phones.

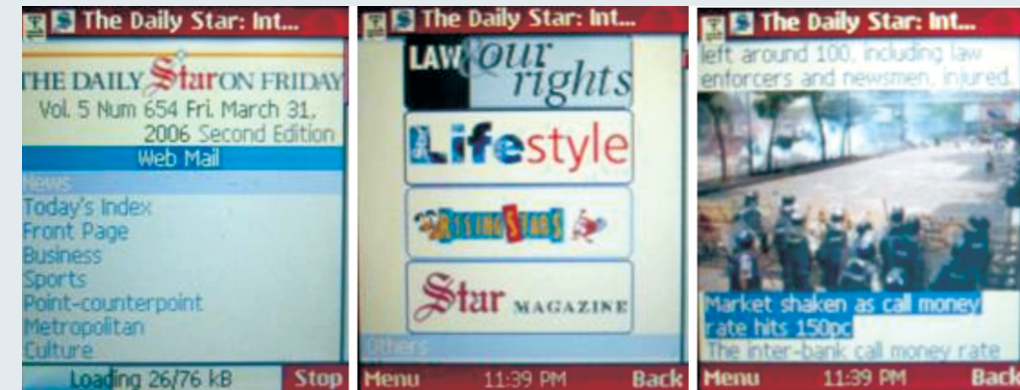
But the problem is that there aren't enough WAP sites to meet the Mobile internet browsing demand and also we are accustomed to browse websites not WAP sites. Wouldn't it be great if we could browse full blown web pages smoothly in our tiny mobile phones? You would be thinking that I am bluffing... cnn.com, gmail.com, yahoo.com in my scrappy mobile phone! Believe it or not you can go to any websites from your mobile phone, smooth and fast.

By installing Opera Mini in your EDGE/GPRS

have to accept the queries (depending on your mobile phone model). Here, I will give you the example of Nokia 6681 where you have to click Yes, OK, Yes and choose phone memory for smooth operation of J2ME Application (phone memory is suitable for all phones, do not choose memory card). Wait a few seconds for downloading and installing Opera Mini. Now exit from your phone browser. Generally Opera Mini will be stored in Application or File Manager (depending on mobile phone model).

Go to Menu, File Manager or, Application, Collection and open Opera Mini. Now close the opening page, select Menu, Tools, Settings and check higher image quality and save the settings for better image in the WEB page. You can change to full screen Opera Mini display by pressing asterisk (*) key.

Now try to load a WEB page on your mobile phone, allow opera to access network, choose



The Daily Star online edition snapshots with Opera Mini

and Java enabled mobile phone, you can access any websites. Opera is not a new name, it's already acknowledged for its Opera PC browser. Opera Mini is a J2ME application and the good news is that you don't necessarily need high-end mobile phones to install it.

Currently, most of the phones, about 750 million phones world-wide are Java enabled. I tried it in my Nokia 6230 and 6020 and also on my friends' Nokia 3220, 3230, 6230i, 6600, 6680, 6681, 7260, 7270, N70, SonyEricsson K500i, K700i, K750i, P910i, W550, W800, Motorola V3 RAZR and Opera Mini works brilliantly. But obviously the experience of browsing with Opera Mini in big screen mobile phones is awesome.

Opera Mini uses a fascinating SSR (Small Screen Rendering) Technology which compresses the WEB page according to the phone's display which is suitable for vertical browsing that is only up and down scrolling and it eradicates the problem of horizontal browsing or left-right scrolling. There is an Opera Mini Server between your mobile phone and the internet which stores Java enabled mobile phones information.

This intermediate server renders and compresses the web pages dramatically for your mobile phone and even then it's amazingly fast! I am using it for quite sometime now and trust me it will leave you amazed!

To install Opera Mini in your mobile phone, go to <http://wap.gpsurf.net/gp> from your phone browser, go down and click on Opera Mini.

It will detect your phone's ability to run Opera Mini and according to your phone's memory it will suggest an Opera Mini version (max. size 100 KB).

Now click on Download Opera Mini. Then you

preferred APN (again depends on mobile phone model), my advice for APN is "GPINTERNET", accept the End User License Agreement (EULA), wait few seconds for the page to load and enjoy! Useful shortcuts could be found in Menu->Tools -> Help -> Shortcuts. Just to add with it, up and down button works as line by line scrolling and left and right button works as page by page.

Note that your phone must be properly configured with GrameenPhone EDGE settings for Opera Mini to work.

Like PC Browser you can enter WEB address, bookmark WEB pages, page back and forward. For phone memory limitations, you can clear history as well.

But there are some limitations like flash, java scripts etc. will not work properly in Opera Mini as it is in your mobile phone not in your PC, it can't have all the plug-ins as in PC. Also as the available mobile phones do not support Bangla language, Bangla web pages will not work as well in Opera Mini. But hey, don't forget that you were browsing only WAP sites previously, now you have full throttle WEB pages!

Opera Mini requirements:
1. EDGE/GPRS & Java enabled Mobile Phone
2. EDGE Connection
3. EDGE/GPRS Settings in the Phone
4. Preferred APN for Opera Mini: gpinternet
5. Download Opera Mini from <http://wap.gpsurf.net/gp>

Source: GrameenPhone Limited.

TECHNEWS

Microsoft unveils VS 2005 in local market

STARTECH DESK

MICROSOFT Bangladesh customers, partners and specially the developer community gathered on May 24 to show their support for the launch of Microsoft Visual Studio 2005 in Bangladesh, says a press release. Microsoft Bangladesh Country Manager, Feroz Mahmud formally inaugurated the event.

With the launch of Visual Studio 2005, which ranges from Standard to Team System, Microsoft introduces features and technologies to support application development through all phases of the software life cycle, from development to deployment. Visual Studio 2005 and the .NET Framework 2.0 enable developers and development teams to build high-performance, security-enhanced and reliable solutions using an enterprise-ready development platform. Visual Studio 2005 features an expanded set of tools including Visual Studio Team System, an extensible life-cycle tools platform that enables collaboration among software development teams to deliver modern service-oriented solutions.

Edmund Quek, regional developer evangelist and Matthew Thomas Hardman jointly presented

the key note at the event attended by about 400 invitees.

Microsoft Bangladesh also concluded a .NET curriculum workshop for university teachers on May 25 at the premises of Institute of Information Technology, University of Dhaka. This is the second educational workshop by Microsoft for university teachers in this country.

The workshop was conducted by Edmund Quek and Matthew Hardman of Microsoft Asia Pacific. The workshop was coordinated by ASM Rahmatul Hamid, developer evangelist of Microsoft Bangladesh.

"The objective of the curriculum workshop is to inform interested faculty members from computer science, computer engineering and IT-related departments about .NET, which is Microsoft's technology for developing applications for the Windows platform. These may be Windows desktop applications, ASP.NET web applications, web services or smart device based programs such as for SmartPhones or PocketPCs," said Mr. Edmund Quek.

The workshop was attended by over fifty participants from all the leading universities of Bangladesh, both from public and private sector.



A Lenovo promoter dressed in a nurse outfit, right, shows off the latest IBM computer designed for medical use, while another, a remote-controlled miniature robot, top, at a hi-tech fair in Beijing on May 23. China's largest computer maker Lenovo which acquired IBM personal computer unit in a 1.75 billion US dollar acquisition, had recently posted a 12 percent year-on-year growth in third quarter net profit to 47 million US dollars.

PHOTO: AFP