

# The Results of Audience Research and the Consequences for Production and Storytelling

Workshop

**Docmedia - Exploring docmedia production  
through the lens of  
web-based and virtual reality technology**

Challenges, boundaries and possibilities

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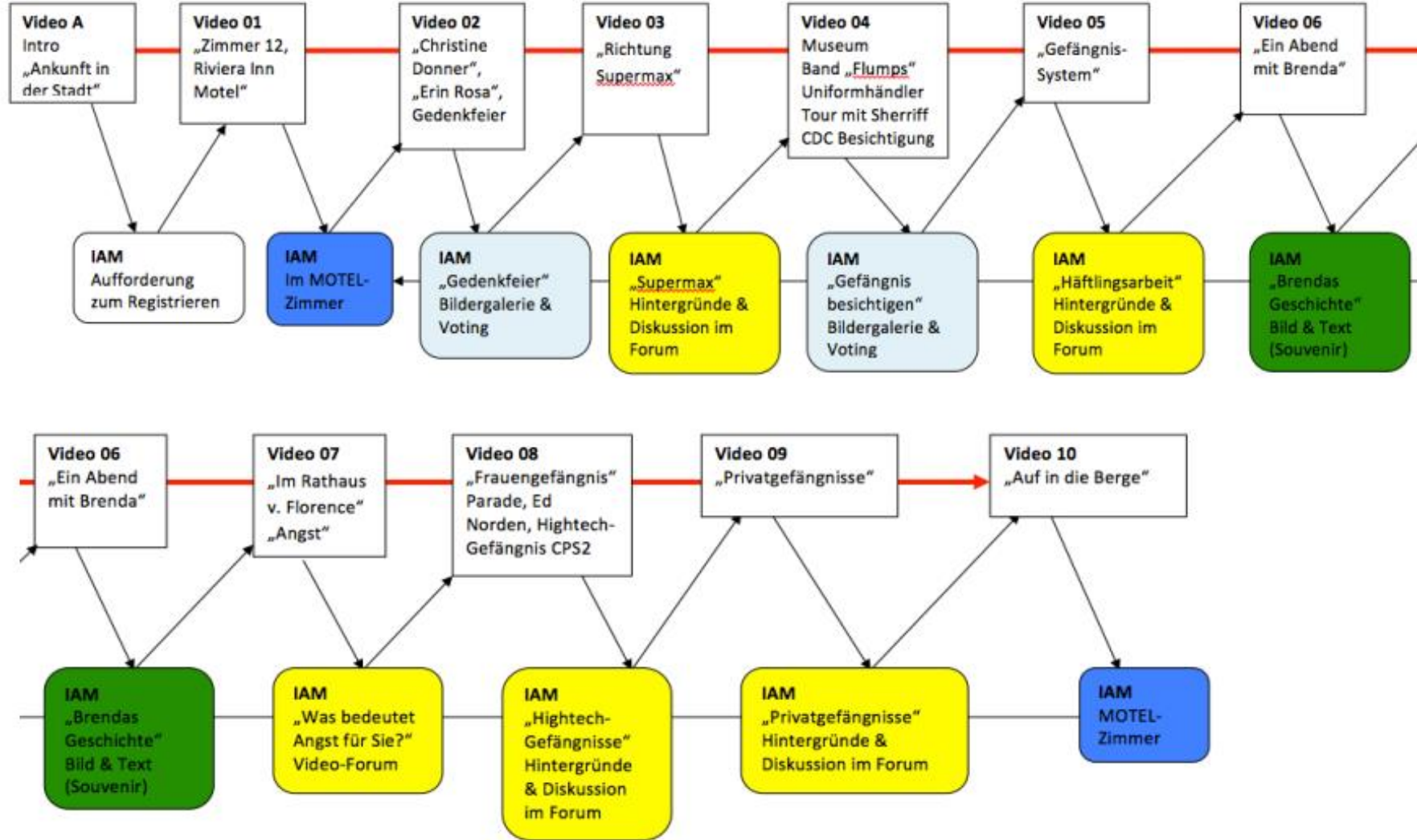
# Overview

1. Results of research project “Analysis of Interactive Documentaries”
2. Consequences for Production and Storytelling

**1. Results of research project**  
**“User Interaction in Web Documentaries”**  
**(Gaza/Sderot, 2009, Upian,**  
**Prison Valley, 2010, Upian,**  
**Planet Galata, 2010, Florian Thalhofer)**

**University of Leipzig, Institute for Communication and Media Studies 2015-2016**

## Overall structure of the site „Prison Valley“



IAM: Possibility of interaction

# Protocol of itineraries, offers and possible detours

Proband:

Datum:

Uhrzeit:

IAM Nr.	Interaktionsmöglichkeiten (IAM)	Entscheidung	TC	Besonderheiten
	Intro-Video: Ankunft in der Stadt 1. Zu Ende gesehen 2. unterbrochen			
1	Einchecken im Motel/Registrieren 1. Registrieren (mail/FB/Twitter) 2. Als Gast besuchen 3. Spiel fortsetzen (wenn schon registriert)			
	Video Nr. 1: Zimmer 12 Riviera Inn Motel 1. Zu Ende gesehen 2. unterbrochen			
2	Im Motelzimmer 1. Im Zimmer umsehen 2. Film wieder aufnehmen			
2.1	Im Motelzimmer 1. Aus dem Fenster sehen 2. ans Telefon gehen 3. Fernseher einschalten 4. Zimmer durch Tür verlassen 5. <b>Hinweise auf dem Bett</b> ansehen a. Mouse-Over b. Mit Klick (auf welche) 6. Kino erkunden a. Popcorn b. Kinosaal c. Vorführkabine 7. <b>Notizbuch ansehen</b> a. Namensübersicht b. Klick auf Person c. Person kontaktiert (Name) 8. <b>Laptop ansehen</b> a. Live-Chat mit anderen eingeloggten Besuchern b. Kontakt mit Personen des Films aufnehmen i. Infos zu Charaktere lesen ii. Charakter kontaktieren c. Foren betreten i. Kommentar hinterlassen ii. kein Kommentar d. Blog ansehen 9. Film wieder aufnehmen	1. <u>Besuch</u>  2. <u>Besuch</u>  3. <u>Besuch</u>  4. <u>Besuch</u>  5. <u>Besuch</u>		

# Second step of analysis: examination of user interaction

- **Empirical research on various itineraries through the application**, two groups of 10 people: 2 hours time for free exploration; observation; interview (regular web users, age 20-60, all genders, with no former experience with *PV*)
- also individual protocols about types of interaction and possible points of exit
  - **Level of engagement** (low, mid, high): selection of content (low); game play (mid); content upload (high)
  - **Kinds of interaction**: user-to-document (selection), user-to-provider (feedback), user-to-user (social media)

# Results: user interaction with site

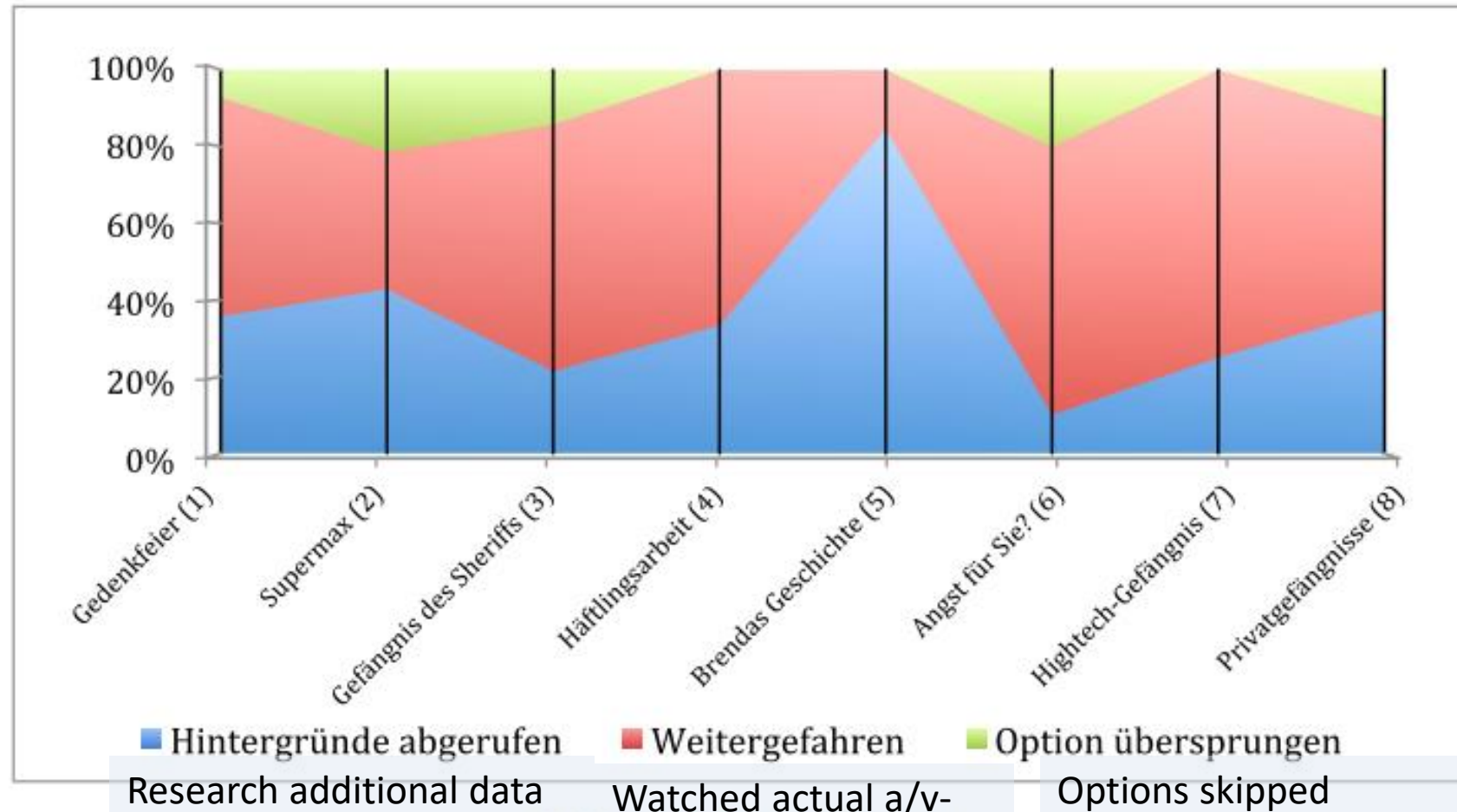
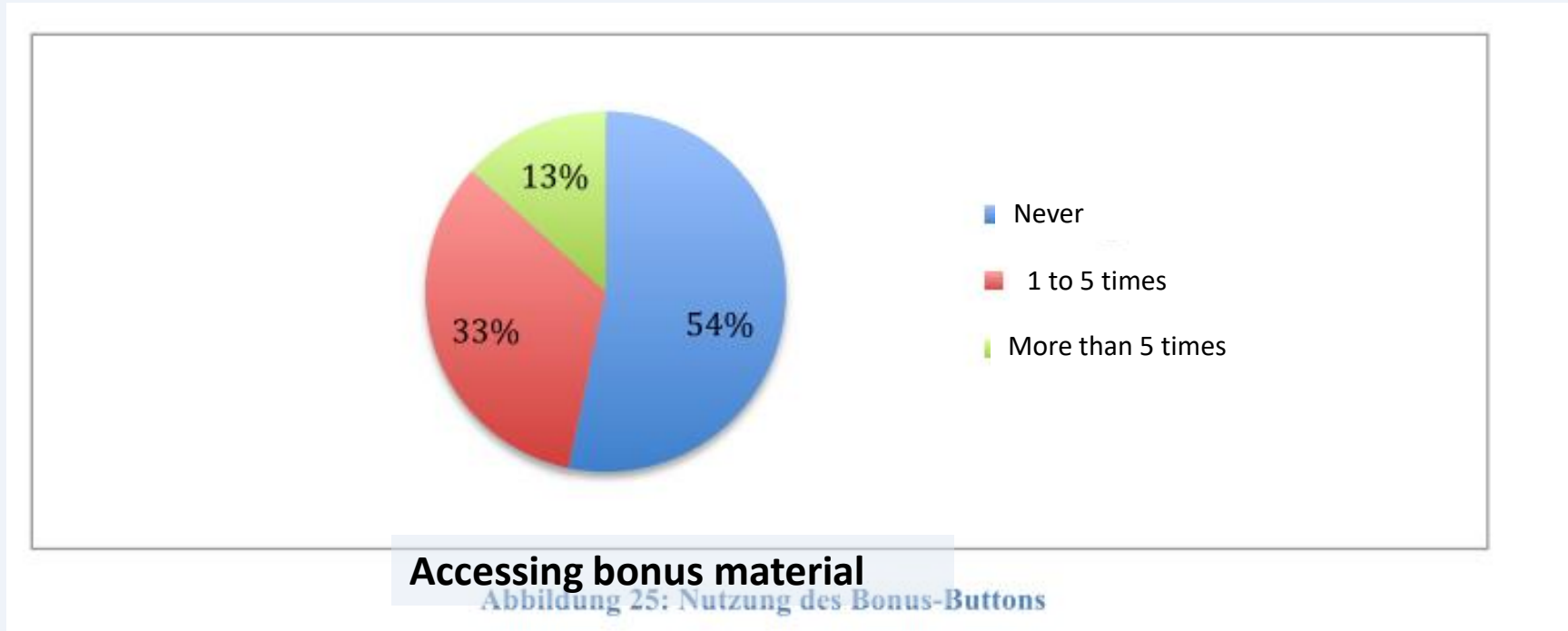


Abbildung 33: Verlaufsdiagramm



**Results: Interaction concerning level of engagement**



## Results: Role of the user

Have users felt to be part of the research team and active producers of the discourse?

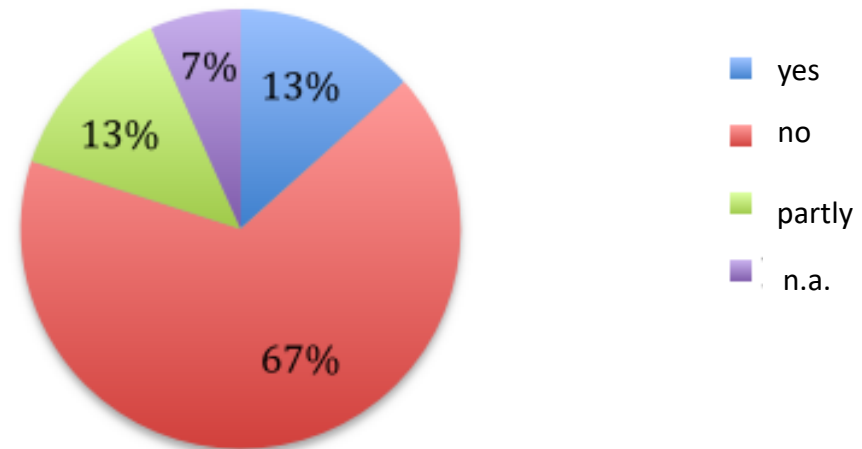


Abbildung 33: Rolle des Nutzers

# Results

- The project is mostly **used (watched/listened) in a traditional, linear way** (following the given path through the project as a guideline); question of media literacy
- Users tend to **interact on low and mid levels of engagement**; background information is more likely to be accessed **when personal information is involved** (backstory about the characters, like “Brenda’s story” – **emotional activation**); **factual information/data rarely accessed**
- A **more open navigation is preferred** when the contents are **already familiar to users** and when they see a **necessity for discussion and participation**

## **2. Consequences for Production and Storytelling**

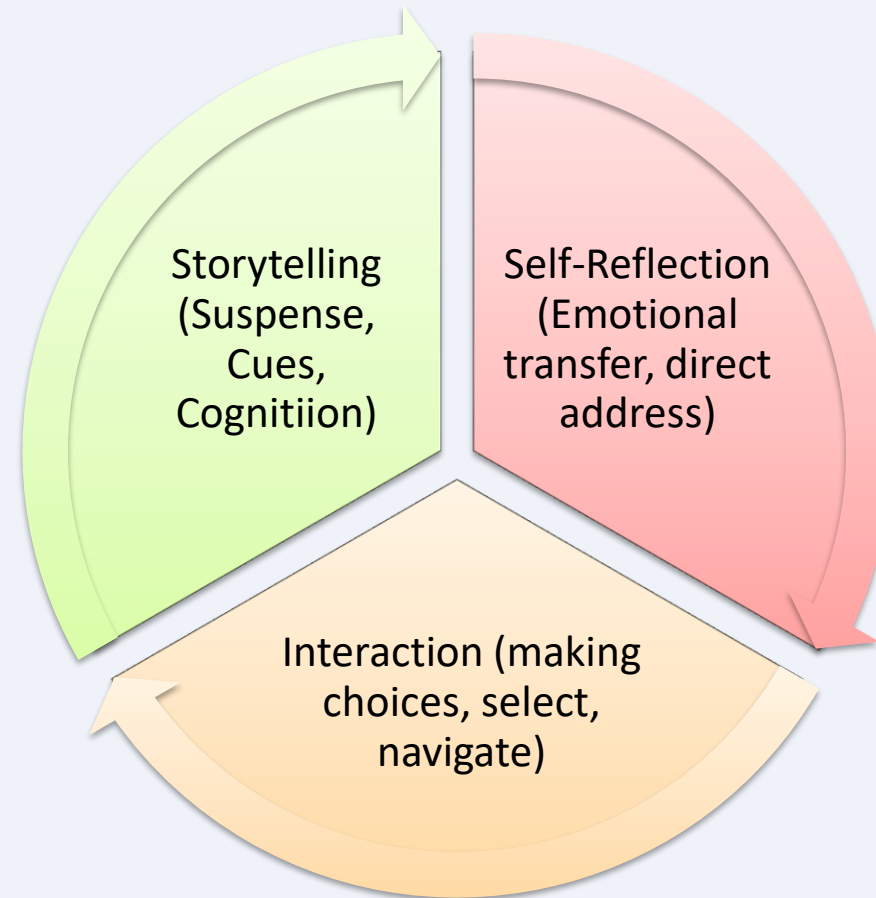
# ***Consequences for Immersion and Reality Reference***

- Immersion is more likely to be gained with **emotional activation of participants**, either through **characters** or with the help of **comprehensible situations**
- **Direct address of the participant** (as in recent AR projects like Dani Levy's *Jerusalem Stories*, 2018) helps to overcome the burden of the **need to pull information** from the project
- Reality Reference (as in documentary films) often work with the **establishing of a common shared reality** (creating of personal 'access points' for audiences)

# *Consequences for Storytelling*

- the **abandonment of linear storytelling** can be liberating, but often needs a substitute/or **guide through the project**, possibly through
  - The structure of space (rooms to enter with a virtual map given) with **reasonable and limited number of possibilities**
  - The **possibility of collection of stories of personal interest**
  - an **adjusted use of classical storytelling aspects** (conflict, momentum, beat, point of action, reversal, cliffhanger, backstory development) that is absent from early Webdoc projects (when analysing *Prison Valley* with Seger and McKee none of the crucial points really could be identified)
  - A combination of **stimulation of emotional interest and narrative arousal** on the one hand (passive stimulus), and of **interaction and selection** on the other (active stimulus)

# *The three sides of user involvement in interactive documentary*



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