Welcome to Instagram: A fun photo sharing app but not for everyone.

A historiography on how Instagram's policy changes reflect on the 'open and inclusive' media-utopic image Instagram maintains

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Table of contents

Summary

This research aims to provide a perspective on the constant struggle Instagram experiences in maintaining its 'open and inclusive' image while moderating content (and sometimes taking this too far). Through a self-fashioned methodology, grounded in the historiography approach by Helmond and van der Vlist (2019), I analyzed three time periods in Instagram's history. In the analysis I looked at how Instagram's policy changes reflect the tension between the platform portraying its 'open and inclusive' image, while also enforcing its rules and guidelines. The objective of this thesis is to make the discussion of the policies of- and governance on Instagram more tangible with this investigation into the past. Through not only looking at the textual changes, but also at the contextual changes of the corpus, I was able to filter subtle changes in the interface which have an impact on the way Instagram portrays itself. As appears from the discursive interface analysis (Stanfill 2015), Instagram has grown a lot since the start of the platform. Not only in the number of users and exposure, but I distill a process of "growing up". Instagram started with an innocent idea to help people connect throughout the world through their digital Polaroids, but as we also see in the analysis, these notions of openness are not always reality. The focus of Instagram on their grandness, openness and the accompanying media-utopian narrative, exists next to Instagram further expanding their rules and guidelines. And at the same time making these pages also less the center of attention of the platform. So, this thesis shows the added value of not only looking at policy documents but looking at these documents in their discursive context.

Keywords: historiography, Instagram, media-utopianism, moderation, policy, social media, discursive interface analysis, Wayback Machine

1|The promises of Instagram

> When we were kids we loved playing around with cameras -- we loved how all the old Polaroid cameras marketed themselves as "instant" (something we take for granted today). We also felt that the snapshots people were taking were kind of like telegrams in that they got sent over the wire to others -- so we figured why not combine the two? Instagram came from that inspiration—could we make sharing your life as instant and magic as those first Polaroid pictures must have felt? Our first product is Instagram for iPhone, and we're just getting started. If you're interested, why not join our team (Instagram 2011)*?*

When Instagram first started out in 2010, the intention seemed to create a free, open environment for everyone to connect around the world, through technology. On Instagram's first About Us page in 2011 there was a single paragraph on why they made Instagram and who its team consisted of. Namely just two people: Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger (Instagram 2011). But they could not have possibly fathomed what their platform would turn into today. On the first day after publication, Instagram generated 25.000 users, in the first week a 100.000 and by mid-December 2010 the app racked up more than a million users (Blystone 2020). Nowadays, Instagram has more than 1 billion monthly active users (Statista 2020).

As media scholar Tarleton Gillespie argues, social media platforms were created in the chaos of the internet (2017). Their founders had inspiring thoughts and hopes to capitalize on promised freedoms, but also wanted to provide a space for the web's most social aspects (Gillespie 2017, 254). Fisher and Wright (2001, 6) argue that this type of thinking is an important strand in the technological utopian discourse surrounding the internet. They state that this type of thinking "suggests that the Internet will facilitate civic engagement by increasing the ease of communication among citizens by transcending geographic and social boundaries" (2001, 6). Fisher and Wright furthermore argue that utopians posit that the internet will create a more open and inclusive place that facilitates a sense of democratic participation and community (2001, 6).

Tying this back to Instagram in specific, the image of being a platform for everyone and a space of openness (Instagram 2020), stems from their beginning. As Gillespie shows, this is because they have characterized themselves as open to all when they first started, suggesting that they would merely facilitate public discussion and expression and that they would let users do so freely (2017, 256-275). But, according to Gillespie, this has backfired.

He states that even though the benefits of these platforms seem obvious and he agrees, somewhat utopian even, "the perils are also painfully apparent" (2017, 254). As Gillespie argues, platforms have increasingly taken on more responsibility in curating the content of their users and also monitoring their activity in order to enforce their guidelines (2017, 255).

More and more we see stories of Instagram banning hashtags (Obar and Wildman 2015; The Guardian 2020; Jacobs 2019), expanding their guidelines, and also now with the COVID-19 pandemic; adding functions to the platform in an attempt to mark fake news or to refer to credible organizations in posts containing COVID-19 information (Chen 2020). Or the terms of service controversy from 2012 in which Instagram updated its terms of service and by this granting Instagram the right to sell users' photos to third parties without notification (Blystone 2020). This was refuted by privacy advocates and users and it resulted in users deleting their accounts. A more current example of Instagram taking matters into their own hands is the ban of former American President Donald Trump from Instagram (Denham 2021).

According to Gillespie "though users seem to be recognizing that platforms intervene in myriad ways and are growing increasingly concerned about it, platforms continue to perform their impartiality" (2017, 257). This is odd because everything on Instagram is orchestrated (2017, 257). Van Dijck, Poell, and De Waal state in agreement that it is difficult to define a platform's dedication to creating public value by "solely looking at its promises" (2018). They constantly claim to aim to serve the common good, but it is important to investigate these claims (2018).

Like those mentioned above, other scholars (Napoli 2014; DeNardis and Hackl 2015; Henry 2020) have been stipulating the increasing impact of platforms on society for some years now. Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal (2018) even go as far as saying that the need for a critical discussion on this matter is long overdue. Even though a lot of research on Instagram has already been undertaken (amongst others Highfield and Leaver 2014; Hu et al. 2014; Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020), according to Witt, Suzor and Higgins (2019) there is still little known about Instagram's past. So this thesis contributes to the existing discourse by looking at Instagram's policies in their past form, while not only taking the text itself into account but also the interface and the discursivity of the text. This specific discursive historic perspective is important for the debate on platform governance and moderation because, as media scholars Huhtamo and Parikka state: looking at history "provides a richer horizon for understanding 'new media' in their complex and often contradictory roles in contemporary society and culture" (2011).

This leads to the following research question: **How do Instagram policy changes, since its launch, reflect the tension between the platform portraying its 'open and inclusive' image, while also enforcing its rules and guidelines?**

This research question will be accompanied by a series of sub-questions. However, in order to give more context as to why the sub-questions are relevant, I will briefly reflect on the methodology applied in this research. Because of the historical component of this research, this thesis will situate itself in the field of platform historiography (Helmond and Van der Vlist 2019). Helmond and van der Vlist (2019, 7) argue that since social media are relatively new, they are not (yet) always considered to be of historical importance. Therefore, we must critically examine not only the end-user interface, but also their history. Through the notions of platform historiography, one can dive into the values, promises and contingencies of social media platforms and analyze their ubiquitous presence in today's society (2019, 7). With the help of the Wayback Machine, a tool created by the Internet Archive, I will access the historical data and identify any changes in the data. These changes will then be analyzed through a discursive interface analysis (Stanfill 2015) in order to gather what specifically has changed. Not only in the text, but also in its surroundings.

Nevertheless, a historical discursive interface analysis is an extensive body of work. So, for this thesis I will not look at the whole history of Instagram, but I will define moments that I apply as starting points where to start my search for significant changes in the corpus. My guideline for this is the work by Leaver, Highfield and Abidin (2020). They define three significant moments in Instagram's history. Even though the authors do not share the same lens as I have for my research, their identification of three different important changes in Instagram's history serves this thesis as a rich set of entry points.

Based on this workflow, the following sub-questions were formulated.

- **How are Instagram's policies reflected in the key moments and how have they changed?**

   For this sub question, I will go through the key moments by means of the Wayback Machine, with a focus on the policies of Instagram. So, the corpus for this will be based on the Community Guidelines and Terms of Use pages. The changes found in the corpus will be analyzed and compared to each other through a means of discursive interface analysis (Stanfill 2015). Not only will I look at textual differences, but also changes in the interface. Did buttons disappear? Are some text colors more apparent? And what does this change mean for the users?

- **How is the image Instagram portrays of itself to its users reflected in the key moments?**

  For this sub-question, I will go through the key moments utilizing the Wayback Machine, which will be further elaborated upon in the method section of this research. The changes found in the corpus through this exercise will be analyzed and compared to each other through a means of discursive interface analysis, with a focus on the image that Instagram portrays of itself. The corpus for this will consist of Instagram's About Us page, as will be explained in more detail later.

Furthermore, I will compare the results of the analysis with the theoretical perspective as analyzed in my theoretical framework. In this way I aim to lay bare how Instagram portrays an image as a means to keep their reputation 'open and inclusive'. By looking at the claims and image of Instagram in their historical form, my goal is to make the discussion more tangible and to provide a perspective on the constant struggle Instagram experiences in maintaining their 'open and inclusive' image while moderating content (and sometimes taking this too far). Especially since conversations about the policies of- and governance on Instagram have been around since the platform started, I hope to contribute to the current discourse with this investigation into not only the texts of Instagram's policies, but also at the interface that houses these texts.

2|Questioning the core values of Instagram

This thesis investigates the history of Instagram's moderating policies and in effect somewhat tries to answer the request of Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal to look at a platform's promises (2018). So, an elaboration on the discourse surrounding this subject is in order. From this theoretical framework, one can distill this thesis situates itself in the debate on the subversion of users and their values by non-neutral intermediaries like Instagram and how Instagram goes about this. The fine line between deleting too much or too little will feature an important role in this thesis. Thus, the debate on this delicate balance will be investigated. Furthermore, this theoretical framework will also highlight the importance of the historical aspect of this research and go into what is seen as 'the portrayed image' and what this means for this thesis.

2.1|The fine line between deleting too much or too little

Gillespie argues that with an increasingly powerful set of platforms, like Instagram, society must revisit those difficult questions about how they structure social activity and speech (2017, 254). And what rights and responsibilities are paired with this (2017, 254). Because as he states, the policies once made for the regulation of the Internet, are not a fit for social media (2017, 255). Authors DeNardis and Hackl recommend a lens of internet governance when researching social media platforms, rather than a content lens (2015). They argue that there is a chance to not only focus on governmental regulation, but also on the way social media platforms have privatized human rights. Because they have a unique role as intermediaries that provide society with access to a digital public sphere.

Gillespie makes the same distinction between the governance *of* platforms and the governance *by* platforms. The first revolves around the laws and policies that were created by governments and other authorities. The governance *by* platforms is related to this, but not completely the same. As Gillespie argues:

> Social media platforms have increasingly taken on the responsibility of curating
> the content and policing the activity of their users: not simply to meet legal
> requirements, or to avoid having additional policies imposed, but also to avoid
> losing offended or harassed users, to placate advertisers eager to associate their
> brands with a healthy online community, to protect their corporate image, and to honor
> their own personal and institutional ethics" (2017, 255).

While Henry's (2020, 26) focus surrounds the legal and juridical side of this debate, she also argues that because platforms like Instagram are private, they can "police and censor as they

please". But the way social media portray themselves, it seems as if your freedom of speech rights should be protected (2020, 26). This type of policing governance is at stake in this thesis, because through the governance *by* Instagram, content is moderated or e.g. accounts of users are deleted.

Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal approach governance from another perspective. They argue that the ideal platform society revolves around platforms which governance is built by generic public values (2018), whereas Gillespie argues these platforms are not generic, but each of them pick and choose their moderation battles (2015, 2). The moderation practices of platforms should be understood through the lens of the commercial and regulatory environment of the ecosystem, according to van Dijck, Poell and De Waal. Instagram as a platform has a clear economic incentive to not delete too much content, because this could limit their advertising revenue (2018). However, platforms tend to respond to pressure from their users and advertisers to moderate controversial content (2018). The 'Trump ban' can be seen as an example of this, where the criteria of filtering content and blocking users is driven by changing societal concerns. So according to them, this balance can be placed in some type of gray area, unlike it is black and white like Gillespie (2017), DeNardis and Hackl (2015) and Henry (2020) argue. And this balance is exactly what is at stake in this thesis.

Furthermore, Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal give an indication as to what is then to be researched when it comes to this balance. When one tries to understand a platform, one must conduct a thorough analysis of the ecosystem's mechanisms. These mechanisms constantly evolve techno-commercial and socio-cultural practices (2018). According to Helmond and van der Vlist, the influence of social media platforms on creating new socio-technical infrastructures which in turn have created a larger ecosystem of connective media, remains mostly hidden (2019, 7).

One of the mechanisms underlying this influence on society is that of selection, argue van Dijck, Poell and De Waal. This is the way through which platforms steer user interaction through the selection of relevant topics, terms, services, etc. (2018). Under this mechanism falls the function of moderation. As Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal state, moderation is heavily contested because a platform either moderates too much or too little (2018). In these instances, the platform is usually the one to take the fall for censorship and power abuse (2018). Or, the platform is blamed for failing to remove content that has been deemed a threat to public safety or values. Gillespie however also takes the platform's perspective like Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal do, but states that the public debate solely revolves around extremes (2018). "Those looking to criticize platforms for intervening too much or for the wrong reasons point to arguably legitimate material that was nevertheless removed: the mildest of racy content, material that is frank or explicit but socially valuable, or material simply removed in

error" (2018, 11). Gillespie furthermore states that platforms must moderate, in one form or another. Even though they are reluctant to, they have to protect users from another but also present a perfect image to their investors and partners (2018, 5). As Gillespie puts it: "having in many ways taken custody of the web, they now find themselves its custodians" (2018, 5). And as we gradually move more and more of our public discourse to online, these 'digital intermediaries' continue to grow in power. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the moderation choices that they make and how they portray themselves next to these choices (2018, 6).

According to Caplan, the moderation model of platforms like Instagram and Facebook can be termed as 'the industrial approach' (2018, 23). When a platform reaches the size of Facebook, they experience more difficulty in decision making because this is often done at the expense of being contextual or localized. This can become problematic when content is deleted that was intended for a specific cultural or political climate (2018, 25). "Perhaps because of this, platforms of this size tend to collapse contexts in favor of establishing global rules that make little sense when applied to content across vastly different cultural and political contexts around the world", according to Caplan (2018, 25).

So, Gillespie argues that we need to recognize that social media platforms shape social dynamics and public discourse (2015, 2). "(...) social media platforms pick and choose, based on explicit and implicit norms, cultural presumptions about taste and etiquette, at the behest of offended users or concerned lawmakers, and in ways that best suit their economic aims" (2015, 2). Circling back to Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal: when questioning platform selection mechanisms, "we inevitably need to question the *core values* that guide these mechanisms" (2018). And with this thesis, I aim to aid this call.

2.2|The portrayed image

As mentioned in the introduction, Instagram tries to portray an image of being open and inclusive. Gillespie has coined this as 'the myth of the impartial platform' (2017, 256). He argues that social media have framed themselves as "open, impartial and non-interventionist" since their beginning (2017, 257). This is partly due to the fact that the founders believe their platform is all these things, but also to avoid regulation and liability issues. Even though users recognize how a platform can intervene, which also causes growing concerns, platforms continuously uphold their impartiality image (2017, 257). Just like Fisher and Wright also argued back in 2001, utopian views entail the opinion that the internet creates a more open and inclusive place for everyone. Fisher and Wright furthermore argue that utopians posit that the internet will create a more open and inclusive place that facilitates a sense of democratic participation and community (2001, 6). Gillespie agrees with this. He states that - when platforms acknowledge they moderate - they generally tend to emphasize "their wide-open

fields of content, and then their impartial handling of it (2018, 7). Social media platforms also present themselves as universal services, suited to everyone (2018, 8). In addition, according to Gillespie, the notion of a truly open platform resonates with deep, utopian notions of democracy and community. But it is just a fantasy, says the author (2017, 5). Hutten, who has an academic background in block chain and cyber currency research, also mentions what utopian promises entail, namely "inclusion, democratization and participation" (2019, 330). His arguments on the utopian promises of block chain technology bear some resemblance to Instagram. He argues that, even though techno-activists are proud of themselves for creating technological fixes for societal problems, these solutions come with a political vision. "Claims about the profound future impact of block chains and subsequent social advancement must be scrutinized to unearth the foreseeable and unforeseeable consequences and downsides that the block chain and its utopianism might introduce" (2019, 332). I argue that the same can be said for Instagram. Even though they portray a utopian image, the hard reality of how it works on the platform must be investigated.

Taking a closer look at this utopian strand within social media platforms, scholars Dickel and Schrape investigated the notion of the techno-utopian narrative. The authors argue that new media technologies will continue to be linked to hopes of "decentralization, democratization, and emancipation" (2017, 6). Through this lens, the current utopias of new media can also be seen as 'typical forms of utopian communication' (2017, 6). These visions are thus rather an expression of societal discourse that repeats structures for modern utopianism regarding new media technology, instead of a plan ready for realization (2017, 6). Dickel and Schrape characterize these structures in three different ways.

Firstly, the factual dimension. By this, the authors mean that utopias consider something in the light of other alternatives (2017, 6). The reality is in this way first subjected to critique (implicit or explicit) and after depicted as modifiable and contingent (2017, 6). This means that "each respective reality is compared to an envisioned alternative viewed as being an improvement on the status quo", according to Dickel and Schrape (2017, 6). E.g. Instagram was one of the first platforms that debuted the option to not only search but also follow hashtags in January 2017 (Popper 2017). Through this, a user can follow a hashtag and get image content in their feed which uses that specific hashtag. This was based on the notion of Twitter that first introduced hashtags. However, Instagram envisioned an alternative as an improvement on the status quo and also framed this as such (Popper 2017).

Secondly, the authors distil the temporal dimension (2017, 7). Future visions are cut loose from past experiences and previous media utopias are simply forgotten or related to their difficulties which have been overcome. In the example of Instagram, one could take the Polaroid camera. In the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, Polaroid dominated the camera market with two-thirds of the market shares (Digital Public Library of America, n.d.).

Nowadays, the Instagram principle still revolves around sharing 'Polaroid-like' pictures online with your friends. The pictures are forever, in this way going beyond the physical limits of the Polaroid.

Lastly, Dickel and Schrape (2017, 7) mention the social dimension. Utopias carry visionary proponents who claim to possess valuable insights for the future. By this, society has become divided in those who lead the utopian visions, and those who follow and function at the status quo (2017, 7). Media utopias assume that new media technologies are instruments for bringing about political or behavioral transformation. These ideas are also highly marketable, and thus very attractive to portray for the involved corporations (2017, 7).

So, with the above-mentioned perspectives in hand, we can investigate the history of Instagram. The aim of this research is to look into the constant struggle of Instagram keeping up their 'open and inclusive' image, while also keeping their users in check. According to Helmond and Van Der Vlist, social networks have evolved into closed ecosystems. "Meanwhile, their explosive growth has led to the prevalence of new kinds of socio-technical systems and infrastructures that now underpin the provision of social networking services and the larger ecosystem of 'connective' media, but which remain hidden" (2019, 7). Because of these developments, critical historical inquiries into these platforms are needed (2019, 7). So, in the next chapter I will go into the methodology of this thesis, which is based on this premise.

3|The lens for looking at the 'open platform fantasy'

> The fantasy of a truly "open" platform is powerful, resonating with deep, utopian notions of community and democracy— but it is just that, a fantasy. There is no platform that does not impose rules, to some degree. Not to do so would simply be untenable. - Tarleton Gillespie (2017, 5).

This quote is quite strongly phrased, calling the notion of a truly open platform a fantasy. Is this the case with Instagram? In this methodology section, I will explain how this research will be conducted. As mentioned before, Helmond and van der Vlist (2019, 7) argue that we must critically investigate the history of social media platforms, not only their present. Therefore, the authors pose the methodological outlook on platform historiography in order to increase the prominence of this type of research into web history (2019, 6). While relating this research in this field of web historical research, I will explain how I will crawl - within several key moments in Instagram's history - from the platform's About Us, Community Guidelines and Terms of Use pages. These pages will then be compared and contrasted through a means of discursive interface analysis, where not only text, but also interface affordances will be researched. Furthermore, the analysis will be a critical reading on how Instagram portrays itself compared to the changes in de policies.

Helmond and van der Vlist argue that we need to inquire into the hidden aspects of social media, to complement already existing cultural and social histories of the visible aspects of social media. According to the authors, these critical histories can "contextualize – denaturalize and reveal the contingencies of – the explosive growth of social media platforms and their present dominance and infrastructural presence in all corners of society" (2019, 7). As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, they provide a methodological outlook on web historical research, called platform historiography. They state that this is a form of a historical account that looks at the characteristics of platforms in order to research how social media have emerged and operate (2019, 11). The authors then go on explaining how a historiography should contain multiple layers and a specific focus regarding technological developments of a platform is needed. So, even though their theoretical focus on the need of looking into histories of platforms is necessary for this thesis as a way to establish the relevance of this research, their proposed methodological steps make less sense to take abord in this venture. I do, however, take their idea that a historical research can start with the Wayback Machine as a way for gathering the historical material. Furthermore, Helmond and van der Vlist themselves also argue that a researcher should create their own method for

historical analysis. This is because, according to the authors, each platform is different and thus needs its own approach for analysis (2019, 9). The authors also argue it is of great importance in historiography to foreground how the platform services multiple user groups and how they operate on several levels. Through investigating these different dimensions, we can reconstruct the histories of platforms. "Not only as social networks, but also as technical artifacts, business organizations, and more" (2019, 23-24). Through this, we can derive a platform's hidden purposes (2019, 11). Which is exactly the aim of this thesis.

3.1|Discursive interface analysis

Furthermore, Helmond and Van Der Vlist argue that one must draw on existing concepts and frameworks to research the multiple layers of a digital platform (2019, 24). This includes the platform's interface (2019, 24). This is where media scholar Mel Stanfill comes in with her method for researching interfaces. She states that new media can be seen as a form of productive power, through which web interfaces can be regarded as both reinforcing and reflecting on social logics (2015, 1059). So, she describes a method that can be used to analyze digital platforms named discursive interface analysis (Stanfill 2015, 1059). The aim of this type of analysis coined by Stanfill (2015) is to look into the norms defined by certain affordances in the interface of a website. One can then interpret these affordances and their embedded assumptions about the website's appropriated use and purpose, states Stanfill (2015, 1062). Even though the core of my analysis is looking at texts, the way these texts are positioned, highlighted and framed are of equal importance.

Image 1: Source: Instagram: About Us. 2011. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on April 3, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20110213221728/http://instagram.com/about/

An example of this can be seen in image 1. At the beginning of this thesis, I quote a part of the text of Instagram's About Us page of 2011. But this is just a text. Where the text is

placed, how the page looks, where the text can be found, and other questions are also important to ask. Because one should examine "functionalities, menu options, and page layouts for the structures at work within them", according to Stanfill (2015, 1059). So, through discursive interface analysis, I aim to examine the (historical) pages of the corpus in order to investigate the cultural common-sense present, how they reflect on norms and on what users do and should do according to Instagram.

Stanfill describes three types of affordances, namely, sensory, cognitive and functional affordances (2015, 1064). The first one, sensory, relates to what the user can sense, feel, see, or hear when interacting with the interface (Stanfill 2015, 1064). An example would be a big red button to click on or ads that start to play immediately when visiting the site with sound. The cognitive affordance is defined by Stanfill as "how Users know what a site can do" (2015, 1064). This affordance relates to the process of meaning-making by the user, via texts or images for example. It is how the user processes the present information (2015, 1064). The functional affordance revolves around "what functionality does a website have or what can you do with it", according to Stanfill (2015, 1065). An example of this with regards to Instagram is the follow button, which in itself states you cannot become friends (like on Facebook) but can see what another user posts; you follow him or her.
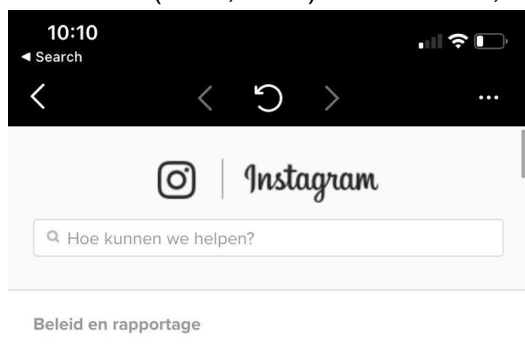
What is also important to note is that image 1 has a strange, vertical shape. This is because some of the images accessed through the Wayback Machine are 'mobile-optimized'. Instagram's platform of course revolves around an app and not a website. But Instagram does refer its users to their website when it comes to their Terms of Use, Community Guidelines or About Us pages, from the app. At first the app used to open the browser installed on the phone to link the user to the right page - this is thus also why the page is vertical in image 1. But currently, Instagram just opens the pages 'in-app' as it's called. An example of this can be seen in image 2. Instagram even sends emails to notify their users

Image 2: Source: Instagram. 2020. Terms of Use (App, Dutch). Accessed on June 3, 2020.

of a change in the Terms of Use, and then links the user to their website. Therefore, even though Instagram mostly revolves around the app, this research will focus on the website because that is where the corpus can be found. The results from this discursive interface analysis will then lead me to defining how Instagram makes certain promises and how these narratives are conveyed. Not only textual, but also through other, subliminal messages.

3.2|Wayback Machine and screencast timelapse

Another important step into conducting a historiography, is for the researcher to 'fashion' his own documentary method for recovering the historical data. Helmond and van der Vlist mention several archives, of which the Internet's Archive Wayback Machine is the most complete one (2019, 13). This free tool is operated by the nonprofit Internet Archive and it offers the ability to search historical website content. It was launched in 2001 and it was reported in 2014 that it contained more than 435 billion web pages (Arora et al. 2015, 1904). So, I will access the corpus through this tool. Arora et al (2015, 1904) also propose a method for crawling with the Wayback Machine, but this method has a quantitative focus whereas I focus on a more qualitative approach. However, some elements of their method can serve this thesis when it comes to delineating the corpus. It is important to identify the pages of interest before one starts the scrape (2015, 1904). The aim of this research is to create a timeline of changes in Instagram policy. But what documents or pages are underlying to that policy? According to Jiang et al. (2020, 287) who conducted a content analysis study on platform guidelines, the Community Guidelines or similar site wide policies remain an authoritative source for how social media platforms like Instagram, moderate content.

The starting point for looking at the older versions of these pages, will be based on the work of Leaver, Highfield and Abidin (2020), which will be further elaborated on in the analysis. I will start my crawls around these periods of time and go from there. So that means I will crawl in the specific years 2011, 2012 and 2018. Within these years I will look at a screenshot per month of that year, and also per page type of the corpus. This will create a basis of historical Instagram data which will then be analyzed for drastic changes. These changes will then be researched through a means of discursive interface analysis, as has been explained above. Furthermore, I will create a screencast timelapse video of each time period to show the reader the changes in a user-friendly format. Data scholar Richard Rogers argues that a video like this is an approach to study a website's history but also a way to provide the researcher with an excellent way of showcasing the research (2017, 161). He argues that the Wayback Machine lends itself perfectly for this type of output (2017, 161). The videos will feature a simple montage of the different screenshots that were analyzed, put together chronologically to show the reader a time lapse of the changes. They can be found in appendices 3, 4 and 5.

The web pages that will form the corpus for this research are:

- **The Terms of Use**

Gillespie argues that usually platforms present users with the rules through two main documents, of which the first is the Terms of Use section (2017, 46). This page contains some legal jargon, but also proves the user with a type of contract through which they can use Instagram (2017, 46). The same idea applies here: This page is essential to investigate the changes Instagram has done and in what ways the platform has created more or fewer guidelines in order to anticipate user actions (2017, 46).

- **The Community Guidelines**

The Community Guidelines are a kind of partner document of the Terms of Use, and this document is most likely to be read by users (Gillespie 2017, 47). "In deliberately plain-spoken language, this document lays out the platform's expectations of what is appropriate and what is not. It also announces the platform's principles, and lists prohibitions, with varying degrees of explanation and justification" (2017, 47). So, this page is essential to investigate the changes Instagram has done and in what ways the platform has created more or fewer guidelines in order to anticipate user actions.

- **The About Us page**

This page portrays Instagram's view of the company, the platform and their ideas. This page will most likely only feature content that will put Instagram in a positive light. This information is important because it shows the image Instagram wants its users to see and might contain contradictory information to the two types of pages listed below.

Concluding, I will analyze the corpus with a self-made approach, as Helmond and van der Vlist recommend (2019, 9). Creating a historiography, by accessing the corpus through the Wayback Machine and then analyzing the material through a discursive interface analysis (Stanfill 2015). This method lends itself excellently to my research, because "discursive interface analysis takes a critical perspective attentive to unequal power between industry and site visitors", as Stanfill argues (2015, 1062). From the analysis we will then find out more about the presence of the 'fantasy' Gillespie refers to in the beginning of this chapter (2017, 5), and how Instagram portrays itself to its users.

4|Analysis

In this chapter, the results of the research will be discussed. There are some things the reader should consider when reading this analysis. What follows below is my interpretation of the findings of my discursive interface analysis on the crawled pages through the Wayback Machine. In the analysis, I also give a critical reading of elements that show how Instagram portrays itself in a media-utopic manner.

The complete discursive interface analysis of the corpus can be found in appendix 1. Here you will find a table per page of the corpus, per key moment. These tables feature six columns. The first column features the data source, or the crawl. In the second column, I shortly wrote down what changes as a whole could be seen on the page. In the next three columns, I wrote down everything I could find on the page that was a sensory, cognitive or functional affordance. Extra comments and thoughts, which are not an affordance, are located in the last column of the table. And in appendix 2, you will find an overview of all the links and sources that were researched for further reference. As an extra reference, the screencast timelapses can be found in appendices 3, 4 and 5. The video's feature the three different key moments per type of page, so the reader can really see the differences in the pages. These will also be referenced throughout the analysis where fitting so the reader can also 'see' what I mean in the analysis.

The analysis chapter has been divided in three sections, based on the three different time periods as defined by Leaver, Highfield and Abidin. Because, as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, I will not look at the whole history of Instagram, but I will define moments that I apply as starting points where to start my search for significant changes in the corpus

4.1|The beginning (2011)

The first section of data up for analysis is the period in which Instagram had just started with its two developers: Systrom and Krieger (Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020, 39). Even though the two developers at first set out to create a 'location-based check-in' app for best bourbon locations, they ended up settling for the name Instagram and its accompanying features (2020, 39). In this period, Instagram only had iPhone users, had no advertisers and almost no revenue (2020, 39). The platform was in its infancy and did not look like what it does today. This offered an interesting opportunity to look at the corpus from this moment in time, because it might be a lot different from what it looks like today.

Let's start with the policy changes the year 2011. In August 2011, a Community Guidelines topic was introduced on the support page of Instagram. There was not a page like this present before, as I note in my analysis.[1] In image 3, you see the only version of the page that was crawled by the Wayback Machine in the year 2011.
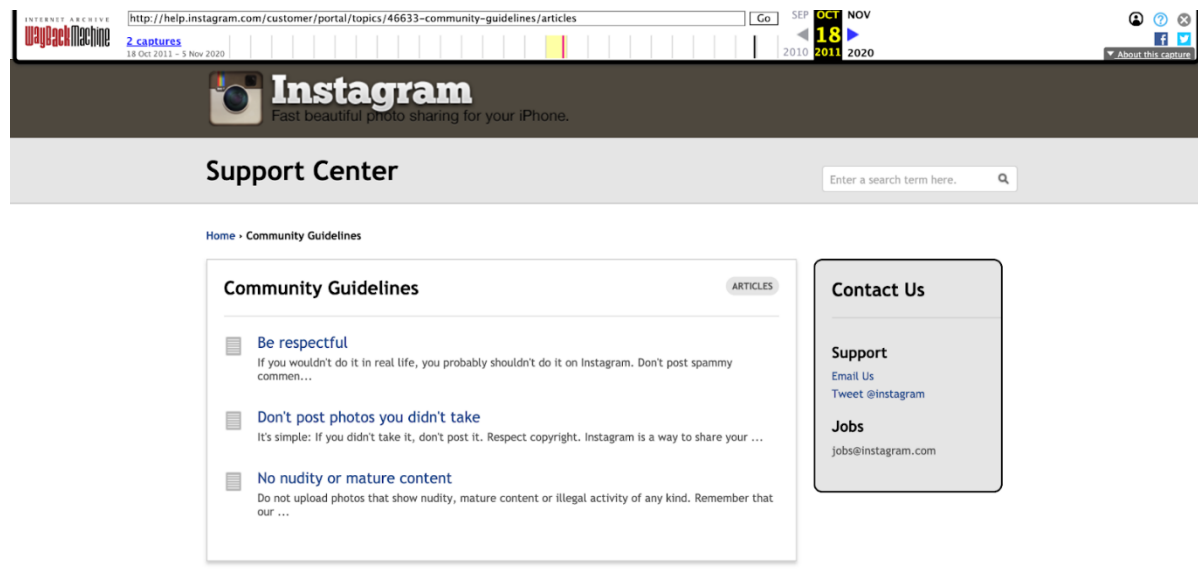
Image 3: Image 3. Source: Instagram: Community Guidelines. 2011. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 7, 2021. Retrieved from http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/topics/46633-community-guidelines/articles

So, this page constitutes a very small part of the 2011 corpus, as appears from my analysis.[2] What can be said about the page, is that it is very limited and small. It is an article within the larger help or support page of Instagram. It features three different texts about three different topics with regards to guidelines of the community; 'Be respectful', 'Don't post photos you didn't take', and 'No nudity or mature content'. This last page is of interest, because this is the only mention of possible sanction when a user does not comply with this guideline and at this point at time, there was not yet a Terms of Use page present as we see in my analysis.[3] As Gillespie argues, these platforms pick and choose what can be done on their platform and what not (2015, 2). At this point in time, this choice however does not seem to be for economic aims, as Gillespie states is often the case, but more to prevent offended users.

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[1] Also see appendix 1, table 2
[2] Also see appendix 1, table 2.
[3] Also see appendix 1, table 3

In 2011, I found in my analysis that Instagram did not dispose of a Terms of Use page until December 2011.[4] However, the frequently asked questions page did cover a small section of information these pages usually entailed. This page can be seen in image 4. The page is a list of questions with answers from Instagram. It says on the top of the page FAQ in red, symbolizing for the user which page they have landed on. The page is still the same gray and brown color as the About Us page is. With the same Instagram logo and caption, signaling the uniformity of the platform through these sensory affordances. There are 18 questions present, varying from privacy questions to whether Instagram will provide the same service for Android and Blackberry. One of the important changes of this time period and of this page in terms of policy changes, is the functional affordance of a developer's page that was added. At the beginning of 2011,

Image 4: Source: Instagram: FAQ. 2011. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 1, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20110213004945/http://instagram.com/about/faq

Instagram said on this FAQ that "We do not currently have a public API. We're certainly interested in helping developers build on top of our platform and believe we'll build the right tools for folks to build fun and interesting apps on top of Instagram in the future". However, in June 2011, they all of a sudden mentioned a developer's page on the FAQ. This page entails an API and an explanation of how to use it, with what rules and regulations. This is the first time Instagram has developed something that is not specifically for their users, but for another stakeholder: businesses. Even though Instagram maintains on this FAQ that they are still looking into different models for making the 'users' experience more useful, they now also cater to businesses. This is an important step, because as Helmond and van der Vlist argue, API's streamline a product's programmatic ad campaigns (2019, 22-23). And these types of developments provide insight into the "evolving nature of the digital marketing and data economy more generally" (2019, 23).

Furthermore, in December 2011 all of the sudden a new functional affordance in the form of a 'terms' page was added, as I noticed during my interface analysis.[5] This page is

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[4] Also see appendix 1, table 3
[5] Also see appendix 1, table 3

linked below in the footer of the website. This is where the early 'professionalization' of Instagram seems to take off. As can be seen in image 5, the page is very simple and in line

with the other pages. There is a large paragraph of text users agree to when using the application. There is also another edition to the footer, a privacy page. This is also new; the only thing Instagram first mentioned about privacy was in the FAQ. But this was a limited section, just stating a user could make a private or public account. However, now Instagram mentions among other things, the placement of cookies by third parties. "This information allows ad networks to, among other things, deliver targeted advertisements that they believe will be of most interest to you", as Instagram states on this privacy page. Something that is also interesting to note, is that Instagram on these pages still refers to itself as Burbn, the original name of Instagram. Even though the logo etcetera revolves around the name Instagram.

Image 5: Source: Instagram: Terms. 2011. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on April 30, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20111204033813/http ://instagram.com/legal/terms

We move on to the About Us page of Instagram in 2011, which can be seen in image 1 (methodology chapter) and in appendix 3. Via the texts and the descriptions of the CEO's, one can immediately distill they have landed on an About Us page. This is because the page entails a cognitive affordance: a short summary about what Instagram does and also because it is termed About Us. It is interesting to note the text resembles a kind of resume of the CEO's. Through this simple introductory text, they become more 'approachable' because you are introduced to them in a friendly manner. The CEO's also just wanted a fun app to share pictures, just like you as a 'normal' user. The rest of the texts and the page as a whole reflect the accessibility of Instagram, because they state often in different words that Instagram is "Just a fun app for sharing photos with your friends". There is also no mention of any rules, privacy measures or other 'boring' necessities, as I mention in my analysis.[6] What furthermore appears from the analysis of Wayback Machine screenshots, is that this the page remains almost the same throughout the year 2011. Something that changes a couple of times, is the sensory affordance of the real time photo feed of the CEO's. From June until September 2011, one can see four photos of each founder. The photos appear to be from their own Instagram

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[6] Also see appendix 1, table 1

accounts, again symbolizing how much the CEO's also like their own app and how this idea came from their own personal wishes for a fun photo-sharing application. A specific quote on the page shows this idea: "Instagram came from that inspiration—could we make sharing your life as instant and magic as those first Polaroid pictures must have felt?".

So, what I see in my analysis of this period, is an application just starting out.[7] Their company name is not even aligned yet with the name of the service, and at first it is all about just telling users how fun it could be to share their photos with others. The policies are still in their infancy, as we see that the Terms of Use page did not even exist for the better part of 2011 and the Community Guidelines feature three small articles about just three topics. There was not that much control yet over users on what they did on the app and only later on in 2011 we see some small steps of professionalization of Instagram, because of the API and the addition of the privacy page. Furthermore, the About Us page is mostly about how fun and magic Instagram is. More accurately, there is some kind of innocence portrayed in this page. It was 'just' an idea by the CEO's, in which you are now invited to take part. Also symbolizing the values that a media utopian strand emphasizes, as we learned from Gillespie who states that social media like Instagram portray themselves as open and for all, partly due to the fact that the founders believe their platform is all these things (2017, 257). But as I will show later on in the analysis, this 'infantile' stage changes.

4.2|Facebook taking over (2012)

In April 2012, Facebook announced they purchased Instagram for the amount of 1 billion dollars. This was followed by a large backlash from Instagram's users, who expressed their fears that the app would become another extension of Facebook or dismantled (Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020, 44). Facebook and Systrom and Krieger rushed to reassure their followers, releasing statements that they were committed to building Instagram independently and that Krieger and Systrom would maintain their roles in the development of the platform, only with contracts from Facebook (2020, 44). According to the authors, because of Instagram's quick reproach, the purchase was almost forgotten by the main public years later (2020, 44). Leaver, Highfield and Abidin even cite a research conducted by DuckDuckGo in 2018 that suggested that less than 50% of Americans knew Instagram was owned by Facebook (2020, 45). However, a change of this scale must be heavy to some effects. Therefore, this is also one of the entry points for this historiography.

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[7] For the full analysis, also see appendix 1; tables 1, 2 and 3

First of all, we immediately see the influence of the new owner on the Community Guidelines page in the form of different sensory affordances, as I show in my analysis.[8] It is not the

Instagram brown anymore, except for the header. The other colors used are white and blue, for hyperlinks. Through caps lock, fonts and italics/bolds, Instagram highlights what is important in the Guidelines and what is less important. This also new, the previous page consisted of three different articles, behind different URLs. But now, all the guidelines are on one page. The text has also become longer and more structured, compared to the previous version, as can be seen in image 6 and in appendix 4. The Guidelines have also been divided into two versions; the short and the long version. The long version consists of three paragraphs, as can be seen in image 6. The long version's paragraphs are titled 'What to do, what not to do and additional things to remember'. By this, Instagram also visually highlights what is important for the user (to do or not to do) and what is less important (additional). It is interesting to note what Guidelines the short version entails, because it is assumable that the user reads these first (because they are the first thing on the page and a short text). They are an essence of the broader set of Guidelines. So, Instagram wants you to "post your own pictures, keep your clothes on, be respectful, do not spam and lastly 'HAVE FUN'" in caps lock. Especially because this last sentence is in caps lock, it draws extra attention to it. Having fun is something Instagram wants to emphasize.

But this is also the first time Instagram mentions that there will be sanctions when you do not follow the guidelines. This can be read in this quote on the page: "It is important to note that overstepping the boundaries outlined below may result in a

Image 6: Source: Instagram: Community Guidelines. 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 2, 2021 .Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20120425174714/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines

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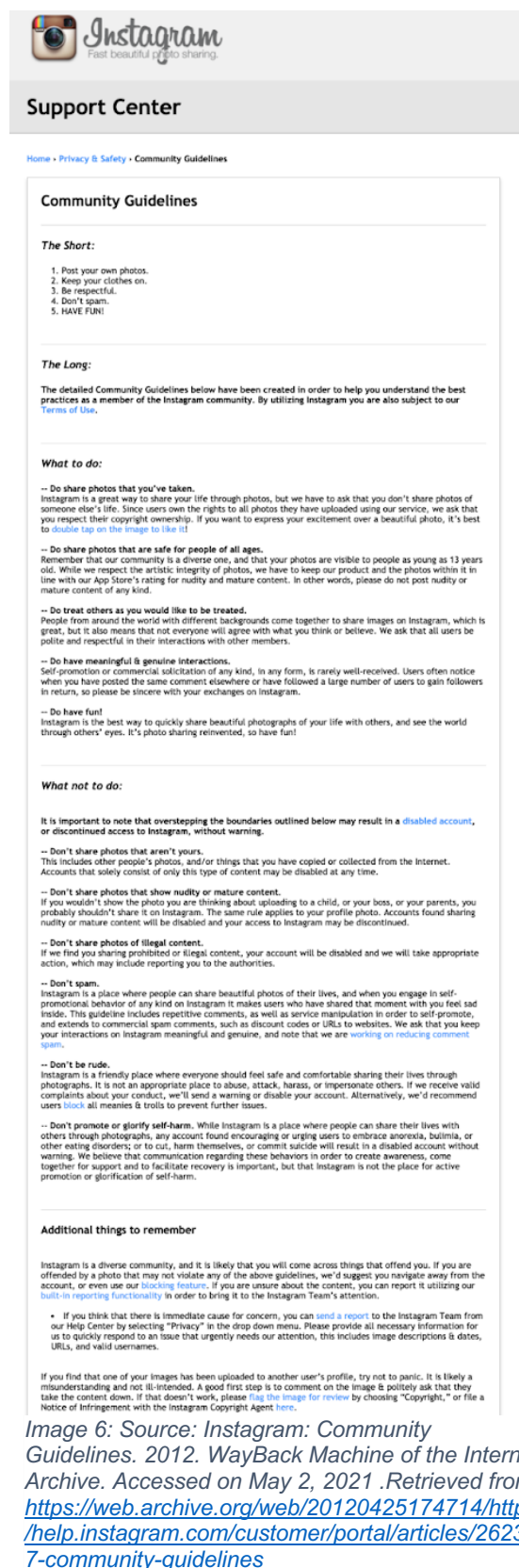
[8] Also see appendix 1, table 5

disabled account, or discontinued access to Instagram, without warning". The 2011 version did not have this addition, there were just three articles on how to behave. The page also refers to the Terms of Use. The way Instagram describes this in text, is interesting as a cognitive affordance: "The detailed Community Guidelines below have been created in order to help you understand the best practices as a member of the Instagram community. By utilizing Instagram, you are also subject to our Terms of Use", as I also quote in my analysis.[9] So, Guidelines are best practices, but Terms of Use are something you are subjected to as a user and have no choice in. But they end the guidelines text with the sentence: "We value these Guidelines, and believe that they will help keep Instagram a safe & fun place for everyone". This is the first time the contradiction that is the focus in this thesis, comes to light so clearly. Just like Dickel and Schrape argue, platforms like this can be seen as typical forms of utopian communication because they are linked to hopes of "decentralization,

Image 7: Source: Instagram: Terms of Use. 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 8, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20120628124925/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/
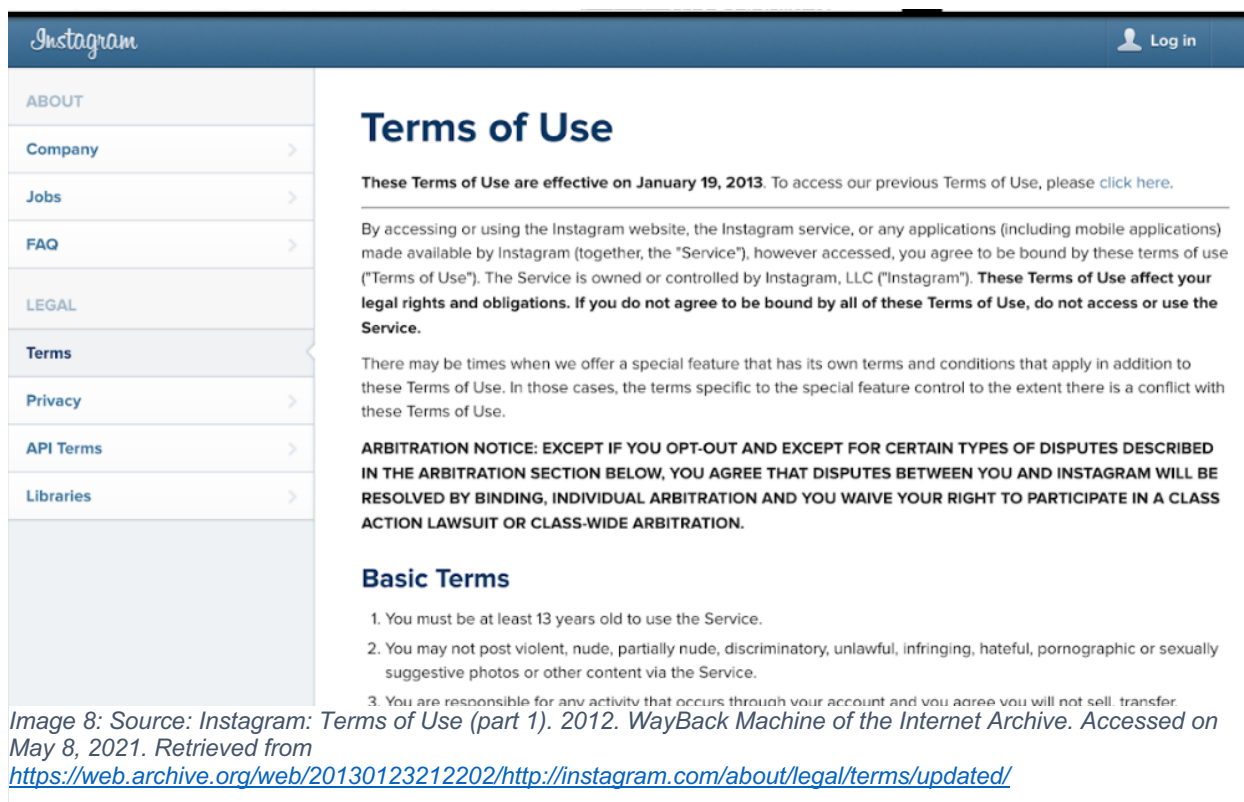
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[9] Also see appendix 1, table 6

democratization, and emancipation" (2017, 6). Because with Facebook as the new mothership, Instagram seems to become centralized to Facebook's rules instead of decentralized as a new platform. Furthermore, they state Instagram is a fun place for everyone, but it also needs to be kept safe and orderly through in the worst case, expulsion. This where the contradiction that is the focus of this thesis, really comes to light so clearly for the first time.

The first thing that stands out on the Terms of Use page, is that the terms have become more 'legal' since 2011, as can also be seen in appendix 5 and from my analysis in appendix 1.[10] By this, I mean that the terms are not just a (not formatted) list like they were in 2011, but they are now sounding more like terms with words like licensing, royalties and non-exclusivity. In image 7, we see what the page looks like after the Facebook takeover, where the same happens as with the Community Guidelines page.

But, the most interesting change on this page, partly took place in January 2013. Because in December 2012, Instagram stated that their Terms of Use will be updated from the 19th of January and this is the first time such an update was announced. Instagram has also added a link to preview the new Terms of Use so users can already take a look at what will change, an interesting functional affordance as I note in my analysis.[11] This leads to another webpage that not only shows the text of the terms, but also what the new page will

Image 8: Source: Instagram: Terms of Use (part 1). 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 8, 2021. Retrieved from
https://web.archive.org/web/20130123212202/http://instagram.com/about/legal/terms/updated/

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[10] Also see appendix 1, table 6
[11] Also see appendix 1, table 6

look like. This might be part of a tactic to smooth over the change and to already help users get used to it. As can be seen in images 8, 9 and 10 and in appendix 5, this page does indeed look a lot different than it did at the end of 2011.

Even though the Terms page was already in Facebook colors and fonts, it now also has the same menu, footer, and header as the About Us and Community Guidelines changed into in 2012. It does not become clear why this page was changed later, but I argue it might have something to do with some kind of resistance of the founders of Instagram. As we will see in paragraph 4.3, Leaver, Highfield and Abidin argue that Mark Zuckerberg tried to get a step up to Systrom and Krieger (2020, 78).

As I state in my analysis, some text has been written in bold, caps or italics, signaling the importance of that text, for example the arbitration notice.[12] It even comes across as a bit intimidating

Image 9: Source: Instagram: Terms of Use (part 2). 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 13, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20130123212202/http://instagram.com/about/legal/terms/updated/

Image 10: Source: Instagram: Terms of Use (part 3). 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 8, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20130123212202/http://instagram.com/about/legal/terms/updated/

because of the bold font and the caps lock. What also looks intimidating, is the new length of the text. There are a lot more terms present now. The terminology in the Terms page has also
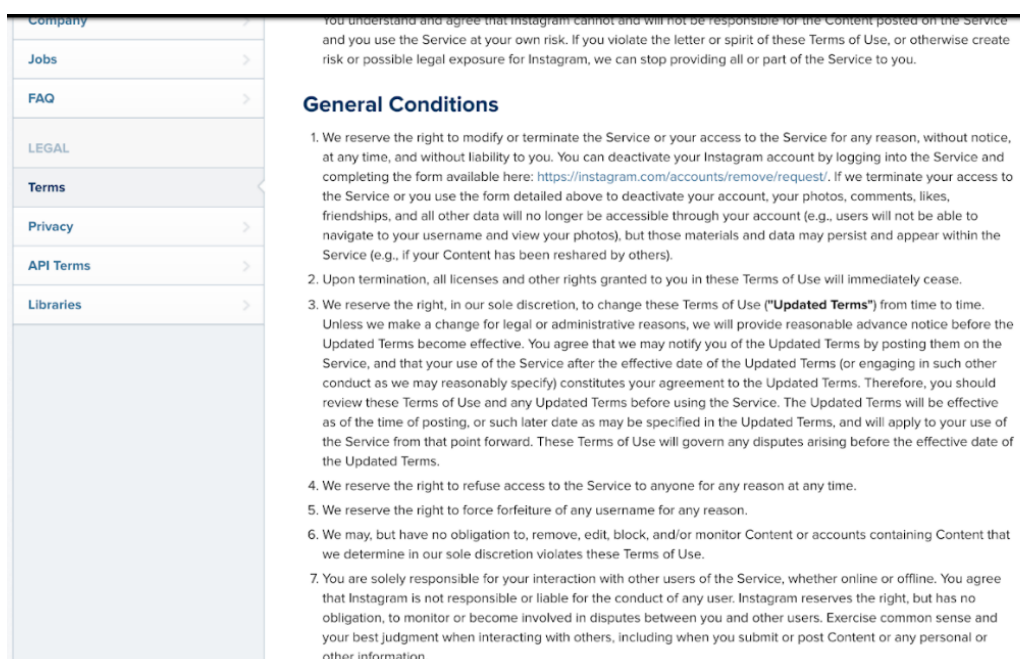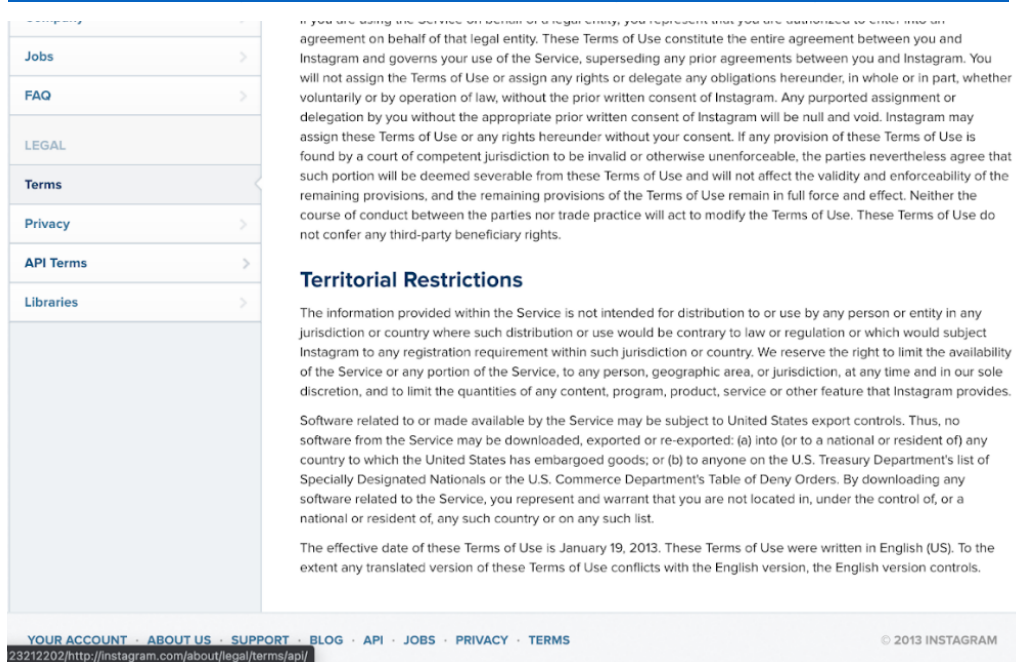
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[12] Also see appendix 1, table 6

had a large update, with regards to the 'legalese' of the text. The first paragraph consists of all kinds of notifications about how, when you use Instagram, you are not allowed to participate in a class action, conflicts will be resolved by the binding law of that region. So, the quote by Instagram we saw in the Community Guidelines about how the Guidelines help the user navigate Instagram are really needed. Because the Terms of Use have become so hard to read in many ways. It is safe to say Facebook's influence can be seen here, changing the terms into a sort of legal contract, instead of a page of some Terms.

Lastly, we take a look at the About Us page in 2012. The About Us texts in itself have remained the same, with the explanation where Instagram came from and a short explanation of the CEO's. An addition however is the @username of the CEO's so users can easily follow them on Instagram. This can be seen in image 12. This helps in 'normalizing' the CEO's, because they are not just the big bosses, but they also use Instagram for their own leisure. This is where the value of conducting this analysis through the method of Stanfill (2015) becomes apparent. Because the texts in itself do not feature a lot of change, the other affordances of the page have changed a lot.[13] First of all the big change that takes place in this page's markup, when Facebook has taken over Instagram. They purchased the photo-sharing platform on the 9th of April 2012.
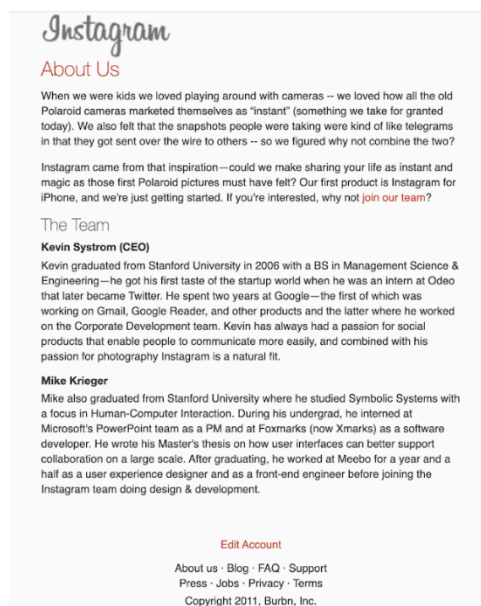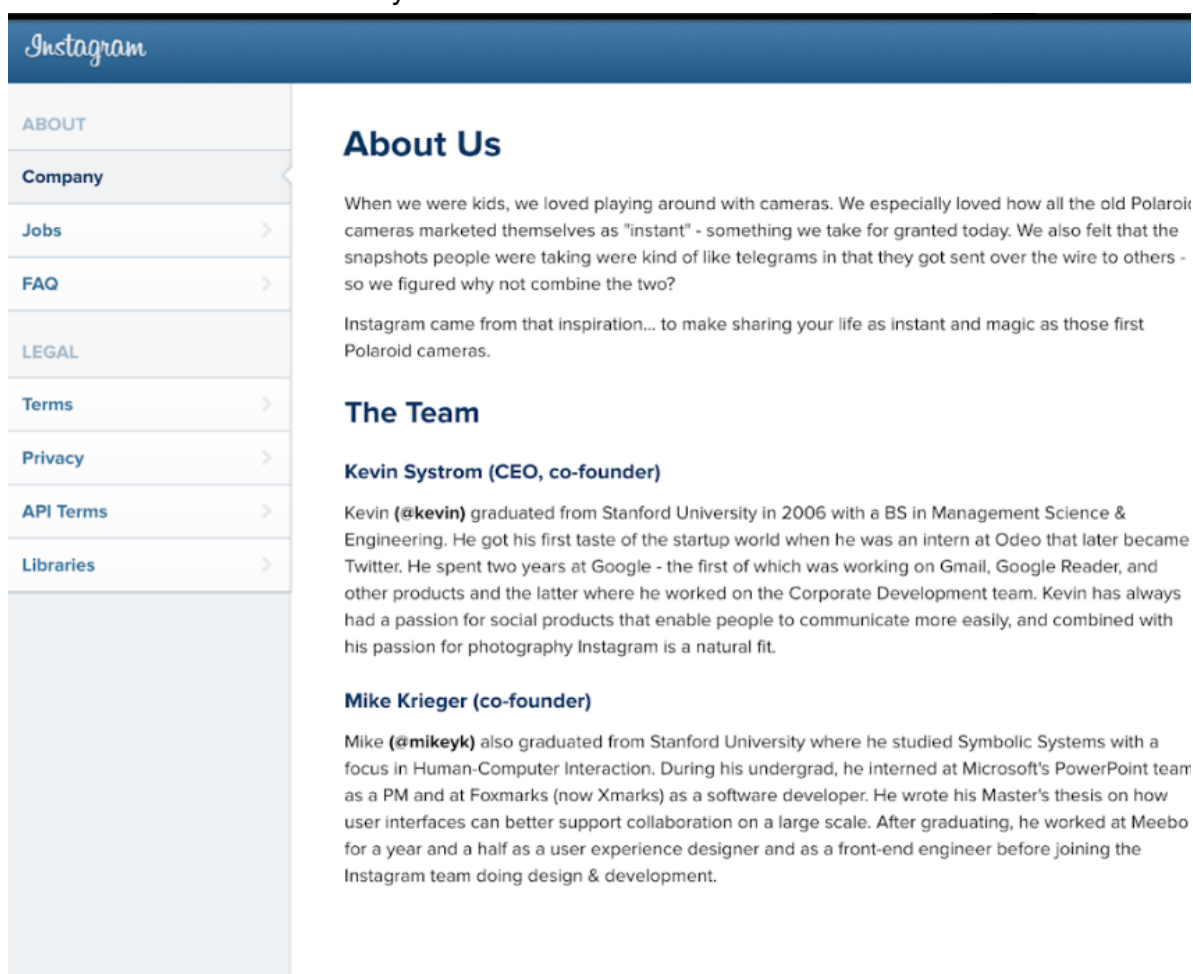

Image 11: Source: Instagram: About Us. 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on April 30, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/2012022622273 3/http://instagram.com/about/

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[13] Also see appendix 1, table 4

The screenshots until that date, all look like the one in image 11. This is the old look, like the screenshots originating from 2011. However, the screenshot captured at the end of April 2012 by the Wayback Machine looks a lot different, as can be seen in image 12 and in appendix 3 as well. One of the most apparent sensory affordance changes is the change in color. The brown has been switched with the Facebook blue. Signaling to any user that Instagram now sails under Facebook's corporate flag. The new menu and footer make the page much neat and organized. There is now a copyright of Instagram text, instead of the mentioning of Burbn. This signals to the user Instagram has now in some way become more 'together', because there is now a bit more uniformity as well in looks as in text.

Image 12: Source: Instagram: About Us. 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 2, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20120430072344/http://instagram.com/about/us/

So, it looks like the whole page has had a little professionalization, and we can clearly see the influence of Facebook on this. This development is interesting, because as we see
in the introduction of this paragraph, Instagram received criticism from its users for joining Facebook. As Dickel and Schrape argue (2017, 7), this fits in with the factual dimension of media utopia. Utopias consider something in light of other alternatives, on the first hand with

critique but after this new alternative they become depicted as modifiable and contingent. So, this new reality is seen as an improvement to what was already. We see this, not necessarily on this About Us page, but in the way the founders, Krieger and Systrom, react to the takeover in public (Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020, 44). However, while most users forgot about the takeover because of their fast reproach (2020, 45), we indeed do see Facebook's influence in this About Us page straight away.

Concluding, in this period, we see the clear influence of Facebook on the corpus. The Community Guidelines and Terms of Use have had large updates textually as well and now feature things like sanctions when someone does not comply with the terms or guidelines. Especially the Terms of Use are completely different from what they started out like. What is interesting to note however, is that even though the About Us page was updated in terms of colors and fonts, the message remained the same. The only addition is that of the Instagram usernames of the CEO's so you can go and follow them more easily. Signaling that also the CEO's like their app. It is interesting why Instagram did not give their About Us page a textual make-over like they did with the other two pages. This could be to try to maintain the image they portrayed at the beginning of Instagram to make sure users would not see the Facebook influence as much. However, we again see some media utopian references. Not necessarily on the About Us page, as much as on the Community Guidelines page where values of fun, being there for everyone and a safe community are expressed over and over again. But then in the policies, sanctions are added for those who do not fit in with Instagram's user ideal. So, in 2012 we see a lot more of the contradiction this thesis focusses on.

4.3|The original founders stepping down (2018)

In October 2018 Systrom and Krieger officially stepped down from their positions in Instagram. According to Leaver, Highfield and Abidin, this marked a huge shift for Instagram and Facebook (2020, 78). From different interviews, it appeared as though the founders stepped down because Mark Zuckerberg, the CEO of Facebook, tried to wrestle them out of their powerful roles and their intentions to keep Instagram as separate as possible from Facebook (2020, 78). It also became apparent that Zuckerberg tried to lead away users from Instagram when he found out they were 'leaking' away from Facebook and onto Instagram (2020, 78). Facebook promoted a new CEO, Adam Mosseri, who was previously employed by Facebook as Head of Newsfeed. This confirmed that Facebook was planning on becoming more closely tied in with Instagram (2020, 78). After this, some rocky months followed, because among other things, there were revelations about Instagram's involvement with the 2016 US elections. This makes this period in Instagram's history the third point of focus in the analysis.

From the 2018 version of the Community Guidelines, it appears from the analysis that this page now focuses on what you have to do instead of what you can or cannot do.[14] As can also be seen in image 13 and appendix 4. It is phrased in a more pedantic way. The 'short' version of the Guidelines is not formatted in a list anymore, but in a small paragraph. The main point is that Instagram wants to "continue to be an authentic and safe space" (Instagram 2018). So, the text sounds different than it did in 2012. I also notice a quote that shows this


Image 13: Source: Instagram: Community Guidelines. 2018. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 23, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20180130224812/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/

change in my analysis.[15] "Thank you for helping us create one of the best communities in the world" (Instagram 2018). As Gillespie argues, social media platforms not only curate content to meet legal requirements, but also to protect their corporate image and associate themselves with a healthy online community (2017, 255). This is clearly happening on this page, more than it did in 2011 or 2012.

It is also interesting to note that this page has also become a bit more hidden compared to 2012, and the same is the case with the Terms of Use. They are now both included on the Help Center page, and then under another sub header called 'Privacy and Safety Center'. The URL of the page also changed to a longer, numbered URL instead of the name of the page,

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[14] Also see appendix 1, table 8
[15] Also see appendix 1, table 8

like it used to be. Obviously, we do not know the actual motive of Instagram for doing this, but it looks like the policy pages are only available when you specifically look for them, instead of more in sight for the user as they were in 2011 and 2012.

The starting paragraph of the 2018 version of the Terms of Use version is a lot different from the previous one, as can be seen from my analysis, in image 14 and in appendix 5.[16] There is now a message welcoming you to Instagram, instead of starting with a lot of legal sentences about how you enter a contract with Instagram if you use their service. This is also the first time it says you enter an agreement with Facebook as a company, instead of with Instagram. The text has also become a lot shorter and something one notices as well is that the text has become less infused with legal jargon. It has been written in a way of a story, taking the user by hand in the terms. There is also not a list structure present anymore, but much more written text and paragraphs. The terms themselves are the same, but the introduction and choice of words are very different. I argue that this is because Instagram might want to make them less threatening.
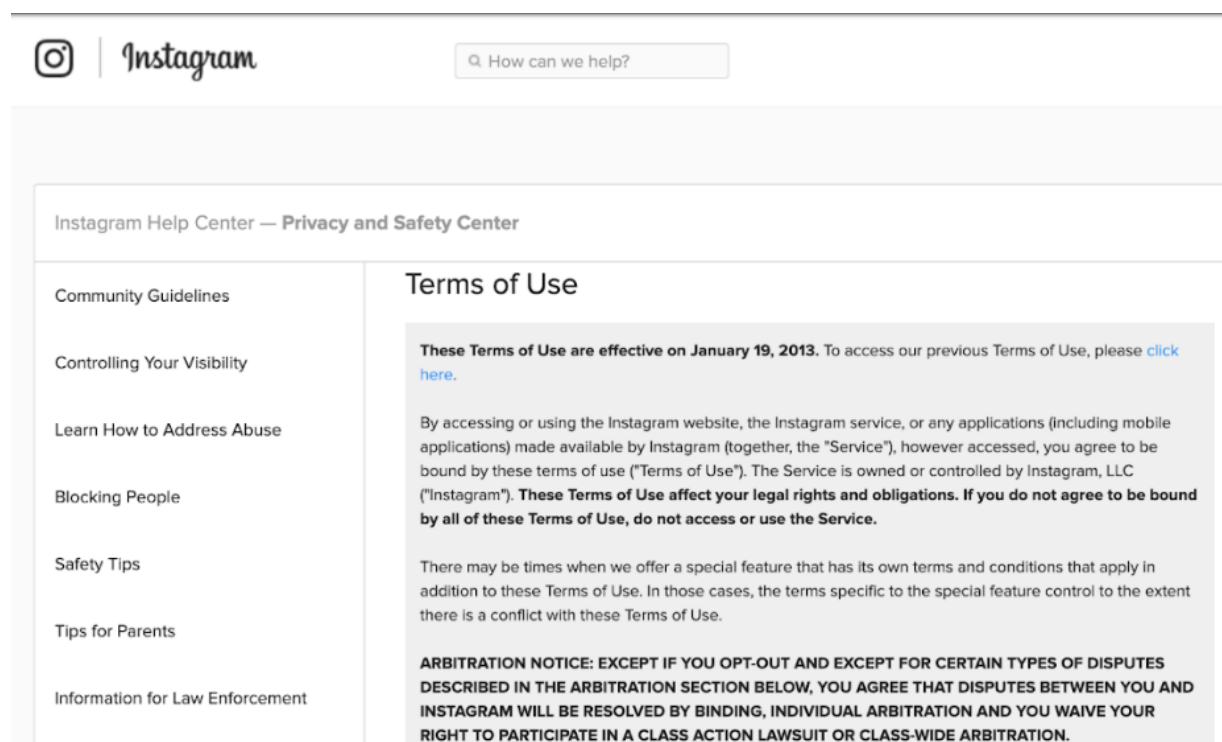
Image 14: . Source: Instagram: Terms of Use. 2012. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 24, 2021. Retrieved from
https://web.archive.org/web/20180130152352/https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511

For example, with this sentence: "We agree to provide you with the Instagram Service. The Service includes all of the Instagram products, features, applications, services, technologies,

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[16] Also see appendix 1, table 9

and software that we provide to advance Instagram's mission: To bring you closer to the people and things you love." As mentioned in the methodology chapter, Gillespie argues that usually the Community Guidelines are deliberately in plainspoken language (Gillespie 2017, 47). But this also seems to be the case in 2018 with the Terms of Use. The above-mentioned quote could also be interpreted as a 'media utopic' reference. You come closer to people and things you love, and the software advances Instagram's mission. These specific terms resonate with the social dimension Dickel and Schrape defined. This is about assuming that new media technologies are instruments for behavioral transformation. This type of information is thus very attractive to portray for the involved corporations (2017, 7).

As can be seen in image 15 and in appendix 3, the 2018 version of the About Us page has
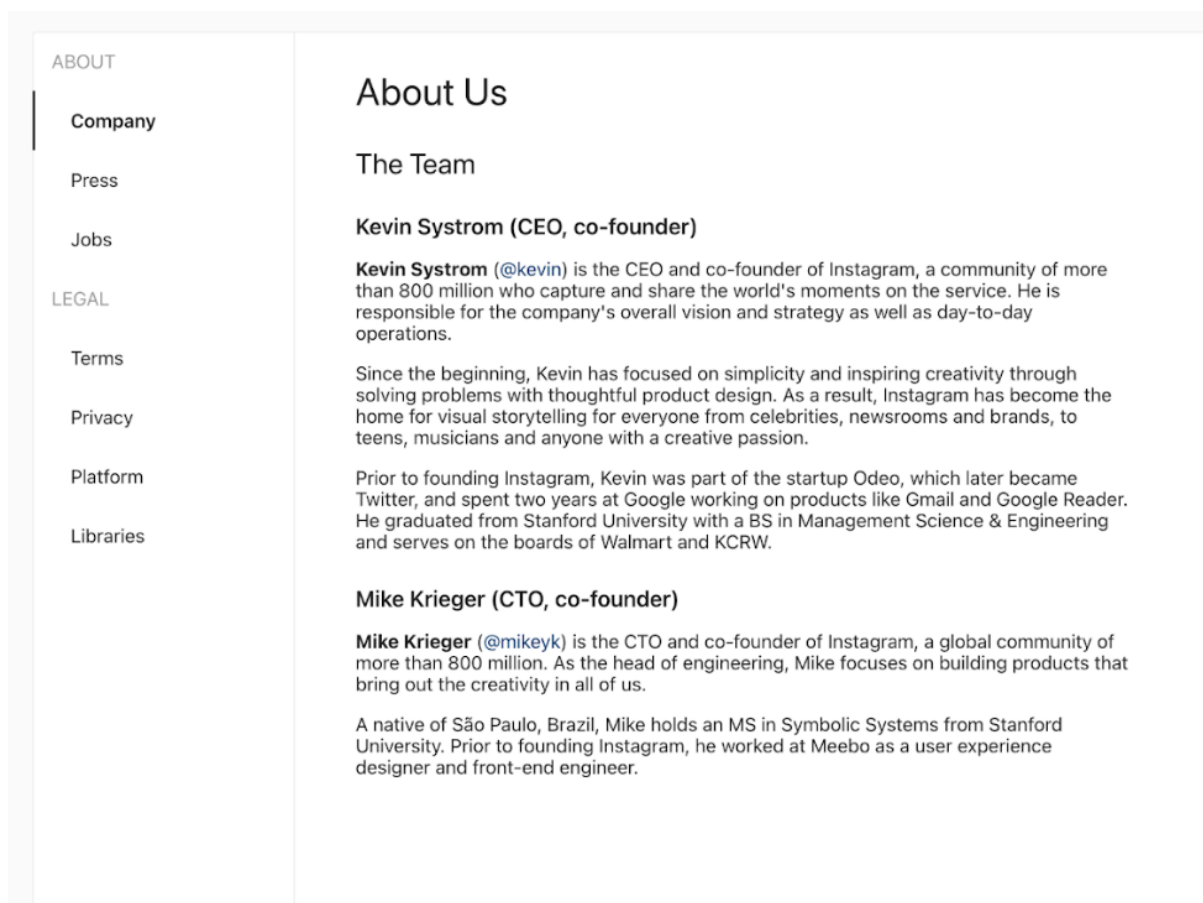
Image 15: Source: Instagram: About Us. 2018. WayBack Machine of the Internet Archive. Accessed on May 13, 2021. Retrieved from https://web.archive.org/web/20180131202302/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/

not changed as much as it did in 2012, as appears from my analysis.[17] The first thing that one notices is the change in colors. The Facebook blue has been deleted for white and gray colors. Also, the shading in the menu has been deleted. The overall look of the platform has become

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[17] Also see appendix 1, table 7

more neutral and almost clinical. What is also interesting, is that the About Us texts of the CEO's have changed in tone. They do not simply say what the experience of the founders, but especially what they have done for Instagram and what the platform thus now means to its users. This shows the greatness of Instagram, but that this is a result because of the positive and creative visions of the founders.

What also stands out, is the emphasis of the texts on the users and what Instagram does for them. For example, this quote: "(...) a community of more than 800 million who capture and share the world's moments on the service" (Instagram 2018). That sounds quite impressive, 800 million who capture the world's moments. And this is all because of Instagram. As Fisher and Wright argue, this is a typical media utopian stance: positing that the internet will create a more open and inclusive place that facilitates a sense of democratic participation and community (2001). But meanwhile, the rules on the Community Guidelines and Terms of Use pages are disappearing more and more from sight. Then when Mosseri took over, we also see this clearly on the About Us page.[18] What is interesting, is that the - now termed - founders, are moved lower on the page and also have no sentences on how Instagram is a better place because of them. Furthermore, the header 'team' has been deleted and been replaced with two new headers: "Head of Instagram and Founders". This signifies that there might be some truth to what Leaver, Highfield and Abidin argued in the beginning of this paragraph (2020, 78).

Concluding, we do not see as much impactful sensory affordance changes in 2018, but we do see a lot of functional and cognitive affordance changes. Especially the trend of 'hiding' the policy pages. I am not arguing Instagram is hiding these pages on purpose, but they also do not flaunt them about in an easily accessible way. Whereas the About Us page focusses more and more on the great and positive impact of Instagram, the rules are slipping away from sight for the users. The texts themselves of the policy pages are becoming less legal and more friendly. So, Instagram does not draw a lot of attention to what users are not allowed to do, but the pages and rules are definitely there when Instagram needs to act upon them. In 2018 we also really see how Instagram portrays itself as a grand and universal service and how this resonates with the utopian notions of democracy and community.

And, as I mention in the introduction of the analysis, this chapter is a critical interpretation of my findings from my discursive interface analysis. What we see from these key moments, is that the corpus has undergone a lot of changes. These changes were not only textual, and this shows the importance of the discursive interface analysis. It also became apparent that 'open and inclusive' narratives are indeed present, but not only as expected

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[18] Also see appendix 3

beforehand on the About Us pages, but also on the Community Guidelines and Terms of Use pages

5|Conclusion and discussion

As the overall outcome of this historiography shows, Instagram has grown a lot since the start of the platform. Not only in the number of users and exposure, but I can somewhat distill a process of "growing up". Where Systrom and Krieger started with an innocent ideal to help people connect throughout the world through their digital Polaroids, Instagram has turned into a giant corporation. And this corporation is accompanied by its own issues and tensions. This first childhood period fits in with what Gillespie states, that platforms portray themselves as open, because the founders think (and hope) their platform will also be open and inclusive (2017, 257). In 2011, Instagram even had an answer in their FAQ that stated that at that point in time Instagram did not have a financial model attached to the app. But, later on in 2011 we see the early signs of professionalization through additions of API's and a developer's page. According to Helmond and van der Vlist an important step for Instagram towards streamlining revenue from advertisers for its platform (2019, 22-23). Then Facebook takes over, and Instagram seems to enter a phase of adolescence. This is where we see Instagram increasingly taking more responsibility upon itself to curate the content of their users, but also policing them. As Gillespie puts it earlier in this thesis, so the platform can "avoid losing offended or harassed users, to placate advertisers eager to associate their brands with a healthy online community, to protect their corporate image and to honor their own personal and institutional ethics" (2017, 255). In 2018, the focus of Instagram on their grandness and openness and the accompanying media-utopian narrative, becomes a lot more apparent. And this is next to Instagram further expanding their rules and guidelines. Next to expanding them, Instagram seems to make them less and less findable. Thus, ensuring Instagram does not draw a lot of attention to what users are not allowed to do, but the pages and rules are definitely there when Instagram needs to act upon them.

Concluding, the tension seems to lie in those subtle moves of drawing less attention to the 'bad parts' that do not fit in with the 'open and inclusive' image Instagram wants to portray. The way how (policy) changes that were analyzed in this research has become essential to lay bare subtle changes that would not be noticed when one would only look at the changes in text. We see this clearly with Instagram, as the Guidelines and Terms of Use also become less spotlighted over the course of time, taking away the attention from the 'nasty' sides of the platform, towards all the positives it can bring its users. And how these changes came about, was in a very specific form. Where text remained mostly the same (and if not, it was announced), the location, looks and surroundings of the text changed gradually over the years. So, they do not as much reflect on the tension in text, as they do in context.

This is also where the added value of this research lies, the self-made approach of looking not only at text, but also at context. Because through conducting a discursive interface analysis, I did not only look at texts but was also able to uncover data like the 'hiding' of some pages by Instagram. However, one of the challenges featured in this research, is that Instagram almost completely revolves around a mobile app. But the website was the main source for the corpus of this research, because the Wayback Machine does not archive applications. This is because applications are closed environments where the algorithms of the Wayback Machine cannot freely crawl pages. However, the enclosure of these environments and the lack of availability of historical material, is exactly why it is important to research the material that is available. I hope that this research can also aid in the call to break open these environments so more researches can question the "core values that guide" the mechanisms at work in these platforms, as Van Dijck, Poell and De Waal put it (2018).

Furthermore, this research has also shown the added value of looking at social media platform's histories. Through creating the timeline of changes, we could see the 'growing up' process of Instagram and the issues that came with this. However, a more detailed investigation into more years of historical data could prove fruitful. Where this thesis has looked mostly at three periods in time, an addition could be to repeat this research in a more extensive manner. Because it can be very likely that there are other moments in Instagram's history where changes came about, which are not featured in this research right now.

Finally, I hope to have contributed to the discourse on platforms, self-portrayal and the involvement of media-utopian narratives with this thesis. While social media and its impact on society are sough- after topics within the academic debate, their history does not frequent the conversation as much. While the history of these platforms can tell us so much about how they influence society today.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Analysis of the specific affordances and changes present in the corpus

Short summary of the three different affordances according to Stanfill (2015)

Sensory: Relates to what the user can sense, feel, see or hear when interacting with the interface

Cognitive: This is how users know what a site can do, through meaning making via texts or images

Functional: Functionalities of a website, what can you do with it but also what can you not do with it?

The first screenshot has a more elaborate analysis of the present affordances, in the screenshots that follow, only the changes found will be analyzed.

Table 1: The beginning (2011)
About Us

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Fri, 11 Feb 2011 17:43:19 GMT	-	● Images of the profiles of both CEO's ● The logo of Instagram, which shows you on which site you have landed	● You see via texts like About Us in red color and the descriptions of the CEO's you	● You can navigate to other pages, like 'Blog, FAQ, Jobs and About Us'	● The FAQ seems to function as a privacy and Terms of Use page. So, this

				have landed on an 'about us page'. Through providing a resumé kind of text of the CEO's, they become more 'approachable'. The whole About Us page kind of reflects the accessibility of Instagram. Just a fun app for sharing photos with your friends.	● You cannot join or sign in through this page. There is an 'edit account' button and through this you go to a login page. But how to take this first step is not very clear	page will be taken into account for this time period as a Terms of Use page.
				● The copyright is still linked to Burbn, Instagram's previous name.	● In the first paragraph, there is a link to join Instagram's team. They also have a 'Jobs' page. This suggests in this phase of Instagram, they were trying to expand their team.	
				● In the subtitle of the page, it says: "Fast beautiful photo sharing for iPhone". Through this, they already	● There is not a link present to some sort of privacy page, Terms of Use	

			focus on a specific market because people with other phones cannot use Instagram.	page or a community Guidelines page. So, users at this point, cannot find any information about how they should interact with the platform.	
Sun, 26 Jun 2011 10:20:50 GMT	• The images of both founders have changed. It seems like there is a real-time link with what they post on their own Instagram profiles and what is shown on the About Us page. • The copyright year has changed from 2010 to 2011. • The edit account button has become smaller.	• Images of the profiles of both CEO's have changed. It seems like they present their own Instagram posts on the About Us page as an example of how your Instagram posts could look like.	-	• The edit account button still has the same color but has become smaller, and thus harder to find.	-

Sun, 17 Jul 2011 09:36:51 GMT	• The images of both founders have changed. It seems like there is a real-time link with what they post on their own Instagram profiles and what is shown on the About Us page.	• Images of the profiles of both CEO's have changed. It seems like they present their own Instagram posts on the About Us page as an example of how your Instagram posts could look like.	-	-	-
Thu, 18 Aug 2011 01:46:19 GMT	• The images of both founders have changed. It seems like there is a real-time link with what they post on their own Instagram profiles and what is shown on the About Us page. • There is now also a link to a 'support page'	• Images of the profiles of both CEO's have changed. It seems like they present their own Instagram posts on the About Us page as an example of how your Instagram posts could look like.	-	• There is now also a link to a support page. When clicking the link, one comes on a page that looks like a blog with several articles about different support topics, like community Guidelines and how to get started on Instagram. But	This is the first time a community Guidelines place was created.

				also, an article on Instagram for businesses. And a privacy and safety page	
Fri, 23 Sep 2011 19:33:12 GMT	● The logo of Instagram has changed here, from a bold type of font to the font we all know today, the 'hand-written' type. The camera icon has been deleted; it is just the logo as text. ● The image feed of the founders has been deleted. ● The email address that was available for contact, has been deleted and has changed to a	● The logo has changed to the known typography of Instagram today. ● The image feed of the founders is not present anymore. This is interesting to notice, why did they delete the feed? Because of practical reasons?	-	● The email address has been deleted and replaced with a contact form. This creates a bit more distance between the user and Instagram, an email feels faster and more personal than a contact form. However, it could have been for practical reasons to speed up the customer contact process.	-

	hyperlink with the text 'Contact us. When clicking the link, one comes onto a contact form page.				
Tue, 25 Oct 2011 10:07:02 GMT	-	-	-	-	-
Sat, 26 Nov 2011 19:18:29 GMT	-	-	-	-	-
Mon, 19 Dec 2011 03:08:06 GMT	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2: The beginning (2011)
Community Guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Tue, 18 Oct 2011 04:11:16 GMT	-	• The same Instagram fonts and brown looks have been used. By the structure of the page, you can see it's about three different articles that have something to do with community Guidelines.	• The three topics of the Guidelines articles are: Be respectful, Don't post photos you didn't take and No nudity or mature content So, the Guidelines focus around these topics, with regards to copyright and also how to behave on the platform.	• This page is a part of the larger support page of Instagram that was introduced. The community Guidelines seems to be a specific topic on this page, when clicking on it, you enter a page with three different articles. So, the page as a whole just serves as a link to several articles on subjects linking with	This is the first time a community Guidelines place was created. This was the only available screenshot in the Wayback Machine of this page in 2011.

				Guidelines for the community.	

Table 3: The beginning (2011)
Terms of Use (FAQ)

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Mon, 14 Feb 2011 12:06:58 GMT	-	• The page is a list of questions with answers from Instagram. It says on the top of the page FAQ in red, symbolizing for the user which page they have landed on. • The page is still the same gray/brown color as the about us page is. With the same Instagram	• Because of the list, it becomes clear what this page entails: a Q and A on frequently asked questions.	• Below the page there are again the other pages that one can go to. And the copyright notification. • One can also click 'edit account' here, in the big, red font. • There are also other links, to the support community page, which is a forum for users to ask	• There are answers to 18 questions: What is Instagram? How did the idea come about? How much is your app? What other services are you compatible with? What kind of stuff can you do to your photos using Instagram?

| | | logo and caption. Signaling the uniformity of the platform. | | questions and to the jobs page. Instagram mentions often that they are hiring on these pages. | Can I process and share photos from my camera roll?

Where does the name come from?

Who are your investors?

How will you make money?

How does privacy work?

Who can see my photos? How can I print my photos?

When are you going to make the app for blackberry, android, etc.?

What versions of the iPhone are you compatible with?

When will you have an iPad version? |

					Is there an API or developer program? I have a technical problem or support issue I need resolved, who do I email? Are you hiring?
Sun, 26 Jun 2011 10:10:07 GMT	• In the previous version, Instagram did not have an API or other options for other developers to explore the app. But now, they do offer this option. • Support community has changed to support center		• The support community term has been changed to support center and links to another page. This signals that it is not a joint venture anymore when seeking help, but Instagram has started to professionalize their support. Also, this was the only mention of a	• Instagram has added a developer's page (linked), where external developers can access the API and its Guidelines. This links to another page.	

			'community' which has now been deleted.		
Mon, 18 Jul 2011 04:15:43 GMT	-				
Thu, 18 Aug 2011 14:22:25 GMT	• The order of the questions has changed. The total number of questions (18) has remained the same. • In the answer if Instagram is hiring, they used to ask for talented iPhone software-based engineers or designers. This specific requirement is not mentioned anymore, just 'talented'		• The order of the questions has changed. This could signal some kind of priority coming from Instagram for which question is more important. Where the first questions used to be about Instagram in general, there now seems to be an emphasis on jobs and hiring, technical support and the developers page.		

	developers.		• Questions about privacy and who can see your photos have been moved down the line.		
Sat, 24 Sep 2011 15:18:05 GMT	• The email address that was available for contact, has been deleted and has changed to a hyperlink with the text 'Contact us. When clicking the link, one comes onto a contact form page.			• The email address has been deleted and replaced with a contact form. This creates a bit more distance between the user and Instagram, an email feels faster and more personal than a contact form. However, it could have been for practical reasons to speed up the customer contact process.	
Mon, 31 Oct 2011 18:06:27	-				

GMT					
Sat, 26 Nov 2011 18:06:56 GMT	-				
Sat, 21 Dec 2011 19:34:03 GMT	● The links below the page have changed. Where there used to be 'About Us, Blog, FAQ, Support and Jobs', there is now 'About Us, Blog, FAQ, Support, Press, Jobs, Privacy and Terms. This is the first time a specific privacy and terms (of use) page are mentioned.			● This is the first time a 'terms' page/link has been added. The page is a simple page with the same layout and a large paragraph on the Terms of Use a user agrees to when using Instagram. ● The privacy page is also new. Instagram mentions a couple of things they do with your personal data and how they keep the data safe.	URL to Terms page: http://instagram.com/legal/terms/

				Furthermore, this is the first-time advertisements by third parties are mentioned by the company.	

Table 4: Facebook taking over (2012)
About Us page

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Sun, 26 Feb 2012 22:27:33 GMT	Changes present since the last screenshot in 2011: -	-	-	-	
Wed, 21 Mar 2012 19:45:53 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 26 Apr 2012 10:23:27 GMT	-	-	-	-	Facebook purchased Instagram on the 9th of April 2012.
Thu, 17 May 2012 09:55:23 GMT	• All of the sudden, this page is not available anymore. All the crawls in the month of	-	•		From here the new URL was used for the analysis: www.instagram.com/about/us.

	May 2012, are not available. You stumble upon an Instagram page with the notification "Sorry this page could not be found". ● The Wayback Machine also seems to refer to another URL, instead of www.instagram.com/about, it now refers to http://instagram.com/about/about/us. From here it appears that the About Us page was moved to a new URL, namely www.instagram				

	.com/about/us.				
Mon, 30 Apr 2012 07:23:44 GMT	Global changes since the URL change: ● The whole page has had a complete update. There is now a menu on the left-hand side, with the different links from the previous footer and more.	● One of the most apparent sensory changes is the change in color. The brown has been switched with the Facebook blue. Signaling to a user that Instagram now sails under their corporate flag. ● The whole menu and the new footer make the page much neater and more organized. Also signaling to the user Instagram has now in some way become more 'together'. ● Through adding a pictogram of a	● The menu has been divided into two categories, about us and legal. ● The about us texts in itself have remained the same, with the explanation where Instagram came from and a short explanation of the CEO's. An addition however is the @username of the CEO's, so users can easily follow them on Instagram.	● The 'edit' account button has been relocated to the right top of the screen and has now been named 'sign in'. This shows users where to sign into their account and it also has been made a more prominent feature on the website. ● The footer has changed completely. There is now a copyright of Instagram text, instead of the mentioning of Burbn.	From April 30th this new URL became available.

		person to the sign in button, this signifies it is your account/a personal account you sign into when clicking this button.			
Sun, 13 May 2012 21:56:10 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Fri, 29 Jun 2012 20:44:28 GMT	● Changes in text in the about us page	-	● The about us text has changed, the paragraph on the way Instagram was started, has been deleted. The page now consists of two descriptions of the 'team', the two co-founders. ● One of the founders now has the name CEO and the other just co-	● The 'sign into account' button has now been named 'Login'.	

			founder.		
Tue, 10 Jul 2012 07:12:36 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 30 Aug 2012 17:57:22 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 20 Sep 2012 00:57:17 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Wed, 31 Oct 2012 02:25:29 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Sat, 22 Dec 2012 20:56:08 GMT		• The menu has been expanded a little bit in the width		• A space has been added in the login button and so it has changed to 'Log in'.	

Table 5: Facebook taking over (2012)
Community Guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Wed, 25 Apr 2012 17:47:14 GMT	Changes present since the last screenshot in 2011: ● The whole lay-out of the page is changed. There are not just three articles anymore, but it is a large piece of text.	● The page is not the Instagram brown anymore, except for the header. The other colors used are white and blue, for hyperlinks. ● Through caps lock, fonts and italics/bolds, Instagram highlights what is important in the Guidelines and what is less important.	● The Guidelines have been divided into two versions, the short and the long version. The short version consists of just five rules. The long version consists of three paragraphs. ● The long version's paragraphs are 'What to do, what not to do and additional things	● This is the first time the community Guidelines page refers to the Terms of Use page through a hyperlink.	● Interesting text closing the Guidelines by Instagram: *We value these Guidelines, and believe that they will help keep Instagram a safe & fun place for everyone.* ● Facebook purchased Instagram on the 9th of April 2012.

		● Links are highlighted to show that they link to another page.	to remember'. By this, Instagram highlights what is important for the user (to do or not to do) and what is less important (additional). ● The page also refers to the Terms of Use. The way Instagram describes this in text, is interesting as a cognitive affordance: *The detailed Community Guidelines below have been created in order to help you understand the best practices as a member of the Instagram community. By*		

			utilizing Instagram, you are also subject to our Terms of Use. So, Guidelines are best practices, but Terms of Use are something you are subjected to as a user and have no choice in. ● This also the first time Instagram mentions that there will be sanction when you do not follow the guidelines. The 2011 version did not have this addition, there were just three articles on how to behave.		
Sat, 05 May 2012	● Most significant	● One of the most			

08:23:04 GMT	change is the Facebook formatting and colors have been applied. ● Text has remained the same.	apparent sensory changes is the change in color. The brown has been switched with the Facebook blue. Signaling to a user that Instagram now sails under their corporate flag.			
Fri, 24 Aug 2012 08:35:40 GMT	-	-	-	-	-
Sat, 06 Oct 2012 14:19:05 GMT	-	-	-	-	-

Table 6: Facebook taking over (2012)
Terms of Use

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Mon, 20 Feb 2012 06:29:38 GMT	-	-	• What stands out textually, is that the Terms of Use have become stricter. First of all, the first sentence has the notion that when using Instagram, you are automatically bound to their terms. Furthermore, the terms are formed with some legal jargon, with 'hereby grants',	-	-

			irrevocable, 'breach of contract' etc. • What is also interesting, is that Instagram claims do not own your photos, but then add this as well: "By displaying or publishing ("posting") any Content on or through the Instagram Services, you hereby grant to Instagram a non-exclusive, fully paid and royalty-free, worldwide, limited license to use, modify, delete from, add to, publicly perform, publicly display,		

			reproduce and translate such Content, including without limitation distributing part or all of the Site in any media formats through any media channels, except Content not shared publicly ("private") will not be distributed outside the Instagram Services". So, if your photo is public, you in some way hand over the rights of that photo to Instagram. This is the first time this construction is mentioned.		

Thu, 22 Mar 2012 19:52:16 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Fri, 20 Apr 2012 12:43:39 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Tue, 08 May 2012 06:15:30 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:49:25 GMT	● Colors and fonts changed to Facebook style.	● Where in the last version, the different sections of the Terms page were not numbered, now they are. This makes the terms a lot more comprehensible and ordered. ● Here again we see the large change in style, going from the brown Instagram style to the more modern, blue and white Facebook	-	-	● This page does not have a footer, in the Facebook style, like the other pages do (CG and AU).

		style.			
Sun, 22 Jul 2012 01:16:43 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 30 Aug 2012 01:58:47 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 20 Sep 2012 11:11:40 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Sat, 06 Oct 2012 03:12:57 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Sun, 11 Nov 2012 21:07:49 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Fri, 21 Dec 2012 15:43:35 GMT	● Announcing change of Terms	-	● Instagram states that their Terms of Use will be updated from the 19th of January, informing the user of this change.	● Instagram has also added a link to preview the new Terms of Use so users can already take a look at what will change. This leads to another webpage that not only shows the	

				text of the terms, but also what the new page will look like. This might be part of a tactic to smooth over the change and to already help users get used to it.	
[Mon, 21 Jan 2013 16:47:46 GMT](#)	● New version of Terms of Use uploaded	● Even though the Terms page was already in Facebook colors and fonts, it now also has the same menu, footer, and header as the About Us and Community Guidelines changed into in 2012. It does not become clear why this page was changed	● The terminology in the Terms page has had a large update, with regards to the 'legalese' of the text. The first paragraph consists of all kinds of notifications how, when you use Instagram, you are not allowed to participate in a class action, conflicts will be	● This is the first time the Terms of Use page refers to the Community Guidelines page through a hyperlink. With the mention that you have to follow these guidelines. ● The footer, header and menu options have been added to this page, all	Even though this screenshot dates from 2013, it is included in the analysis because it involves a large change in policy and was announced in the end of 2013.

		later, but it could have something to do with the large textual changes that had to be written beforehand. • Some text has been written in bold, caps or italics, signaling the importance of that text. Previously, there was no special formatting present. • The page has become a lot longer, with a lot more texts and new headers.	resolved by the binding law of that region • There are a lot more terms added to this new page. E.g. where the basic terms section first featured 15 terms, it now features 17 rules. • It is safe to say Facebook's influence can be seen here, changing the terms into a sort of legal contract, instead of a page of terms.	linking to their respective pages.	

Table 7: The original founders stepping down (2018)
About Us

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Wed, 31 Jan 2018 20:23:02 GMT	• Facebook blue has been replaced for white and gray colors. • Change in menu buttons • Textual changes in founder descriptions	• A first thing that one notices is the change in colors. The Facebook blue has been deleted for white and gray colors. Also, the shading in the menu has been deleted. The overall look of the platform has become more neutral and almost clinical.	• There are textual changes in the founder's descriptions. They have become longer in the case of CEO Systrom, and shorter in the case of CTO Krieger. The texts also both mention in a sentence how many users Instagram has, which was not the case in 2012.	• The menu links have changed. Under the 'about' header, there are now links to 'Company, Press and Jobs'. This used to be 'Company, Jobs and FAQ'. Then under the header 'legal' it is now 'Terms, Privacy, Platform and Libraries'. This used to be 'Terms, Privacy, API Terms and	

			- Krieger is now also not just co-founder, but also CTO (chief technology officer). - The About Us texts have changed in their tone. They do not simply say what the experience of the founders, but especially what they have done for Instagram and what the platform thus now means to its users. Because of them.	Libraries'.	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 00:22:24 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Fri, 30 Mar 2018 14:55:04 GMT	-	-	-	-	

Wed, 25 Apr 2018 16:04:18 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 31 May 2018 13:47:00 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Sat, 30 Jun 2018 01:48:42 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Tue, 31 Jul 2018 15:30:05 GMT	● Small textual change	-	● There is a small textual change in both of the texts about the founders. The mention of 800 million users has now been changed to 1 billion users.	-	
Fri, 31 Aug 2018 19:31:27 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Sun, 30 Sep 2018 03:58:10 GMT					
Wed, 31 Oct 2018 03:45:19 GMT	● The lay out of the page has	● The lay out of the page has	● There is a new paragraph of	-	On the first of October, it was announced Systrom

	changed and there are textual changes	changed. The first header used to be Team. This is now deleted and replaced with two new headers: "Head of Instagram and Founders".	text, introducing Adam Mosseri as the new CEO. ● The texts on Systrom and Krieger have been shortened and are also in the past tense and both texts also mention the founders have left Instagram in September 2018 to pursue other passions. ● There is also not a mention any more on how many users Instagram has.		and Krieger were stepping down and Adam Mosseri was stepping in as sole CEO.
Fri, 30 Nov 2018 12:15:50 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Mon, 31 Dec 2018 01:26:01 GMT	-	-	-	-	

Table 8: The original founders stepping down (2018)
Community Guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Tue, 30 Jan 2018 22:48:12 GMT	- Large changes in layout and text - More notions of moderation	● The lay-out and colors of the page have changed. There is still a long and short version of the guidelines, but the short version is not a bulleted list anymore and the long list has become longer. ● Links are highlighted to show that they link to another page.	● The last version was based on do or don't notions. But this new page focuses on what you have to do instead of what you can or cannot do. It is phrased in a more pedantic way. ● The last sentence is changed to "Thank you for helping us create one of the best	● This page has also become a bit more hidden. It is now on the Help Center page, and then under another sub header called 'Privacy and Safety Center'. ● The URL's also changed to longer, numbered URLs instead of the name of the page like it used to be.	The Guidelines are on a new URL: https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119

			communities in the world" • There is more reference to Instagram reviewing certain content, but also Instagram evoking users to be vigilant and to report content that does not fit in with these guidelines. This used to be more individually based. • It is also new how Instagram states they will work with law enforcement if need be.	• The menu has changed completely. There are no headers present anymore, just different topics. And in those topics, there are subtopics, like the Community Guidelines.	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 04:23:15 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Tue, 27 Mar 2018	-	-	-	-	

15:22:03 GMT				
Sat, 28 Apr 2018 11:48:12 GMT	-	-	-	-
Thu, 31 May 2018 15:07:57 GMT	-	-	-	-
Fri, 29 Jun 2018 08:45:27 GMT	-	-	-	-
Tue, 31 Jul 2018 10:17:57 GMT	-	-	-	-
Fri, 31 Aug 2018 07:31:19 GMT	-	-	-	-
Wed, 26 Sep 2018 18:56:23 GMT	-	-	-	-
Wed, 31 Oct 2018 05:57:29 GMT	-	-	-	-
Fri, 30 Nov 2018 20:37:55 GMT	-	-	-	-
Mon, 31 Dec 2018	-	-	-	-

17:02:56 GMT					

Table 9: The original founders stepping down (2018)
Terms of Use

Screenshot that was analyzed	Global changes that were present compared to the previous screenshot	Sensory affordances present	Cognitive affordances present	Functional affordances present	Comments
Tue, 30 Jan 2018 15:23:52 GMT	- Large changes in layout and text - More notions of moderation	● The lay-out and colors of the page have changed.	● There is still the notification above the page, like in 2012, that these Terms of Use are effective from the 13th of January of 2013. ● The text has remained the same as it was in 2013.	● This page has also become a bit more hidden. It is now on the help center page, and then under another sub header called 'Privacy and Safety Center'. ● The URL's also changed to longer, numbered URLs instead of the name of the page like it used to be. ● The menu has	

				changed completely. There are no headers present anymore, just different topics. And in those topics, there are subtopics, like the Terms of Use. ● The notification about the previous Terms of Use, still links to the previous version.	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 00:22:35 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Fri, 30 Mar 2018 14:54:58 GMT	-	-	-	-	
Thu, 26 Apr 2018 22:13:20 GMT	● Announcement of an update of the Terms of Use.		● There is a new notification that the Terms of Use are changing. It	● The notification that the Terms of Use are changing, is	From here the new Terms of Use page was analyzed. There are less screenshots in the archive

			does not say when the Terms of Use are changing.	again accompanied with a link to the new version.	of this page because it is a specific page just used for updated versions. The other Terms of Use page remains the same throughout 2018.
Tue, 15 May 2018 03:55:47 GMT	● Large change of text lay out and the fonts/bold type.	● There is not a list structure present anymore, but much more written text and paragraphs.	● The starting paragraph of this new version is a lot different from the previous one. There is now a message welcoming you to Instagram, instead of starting with a lot of legal sentences about how you enter a contract with Instagram if you use their service. ● This is also the first time it says you enter an agreement with		

			Facebook as a company, instead of with Instagram. ● The text has become a lot less legal/strict and has been written in more of a story, taking the user by hand in the terms. For example, with this sentence: We agree to provide you with the Instagram Service. The Service includes all of the Instagram products, features, applications, services, technologies, and software that we provide to		

			advance Instagram's mission: To bring you closer to the people and things you love." ● The texts have also become shorter.		

Appendix 2: Corpus overview

This corpus overview provides the reader with a table of which page could be found where in the Wayback Machine and how URL's have changed during this period.

Table 1: The beginning (2011)
About Us

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Fri, 11 Feb 2011 17:43:19 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20110211174319/instagram.com/about	This about us page is the first one Instagram created and was first crawled in 2011.
Sun, 26 Jun 2011 10:20:50 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20110626102050/instagram.com/about	
Sun, 17 Jul 2011 09:36:51 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20110717093651/instagram.com/about	
Thu, 18 Aug 2011 01:46:19 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20110818014619/instagram.com/abou	

		t	
Fri, 23 Sep 2011 19:33:12 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20110923193312/instagram.com/about	
Tue, 25 Oct 2011 10:07:02 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20111025100702/instagram.com/about	
Sat, 26 Nov 2011 19:18:29 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20111126191829/instagram.com/about	
Mon, 19 Dec 2011 03:08:06 GMT	instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20111219030806/instagram.com/about	

Table 2: The beginning (2011)
Community Guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Tue, 18 Oct 2011 04:11:16 GMT	http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/topics/46633-community-guidelines/articles	https://web.archive.org/web/20111018041116/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/topics/46633-community-guidelines/articles	This page was non-existent until August 2011. This is in the form of a support page, in which a topic is also Community Guidelines. And this is the only version of the page that was crawled by the Wayback Machine in the year 2011.

Table 3: The beginning (2011)
Terms of Use

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Mon, 14 Feb 2011 12:06:58 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20110214120658/http://instagram.com/about/faq	This page was non-existent with this specific name until December 2011. But the FAQ section covered some Community Guidelines topics. So, this link has been analyzed as well until the new link came available in December 2011.
Sun, 26 Jun 2011 10:10:07 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20110626101007/http://instagram.com/about/faq	
Mon, 18 Jul 2011 04:15:43 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20110718041543/http://instagram.com/about/faq	
Thu, 18 Aug 2011 14:22:25 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20110818142225/http://instagram.com	

		/about/faq	
Sat, 24 Sep 2011 15:18:05 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20110924151805/http://instagram.com/about/faq	
Mon, 31 Oct 2011 18:06:27 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20111031180627/http://instagram.com/about/faq	
Sat, 26 Nov 2011 18:06:56 GMT	http://instagram.com/about/faq	https://web.archive.org/web/20111126180656/http://instagram.com/about/faq	
Wed, 21 Dec 2011 01:35:18 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20111221013518/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	First time a 'terms' page was present.

Table 4: Facebook taking over (2012)
About us

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Sun, 26 Feb 2012 22:27:33 GMT	www.instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20120226222733/http://instagram.com/about/	
Wed, 21 Mar 2012 19:45:53 GMT	www.instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20120321194553/http://instagram.com/about/	
Thu, 26 Apr 2012 10:23:27 GMT	www.instagram.com/about	https://web.archive.org/web/20120426102327/http://instagram.com/about/	
Mon, 30 Apr 2012 07:23:44 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20120430072344/http://instagram.com/about/us/	About us page is moved to another URL. Instead of www.instagram.com/about, it now refers to http://instagram.com/about/about/us. From here it appears that the About us page was moved to a

			new URL, namely www.instagram.com/about/us. It also seems from the available Wayback Machine timeline that this URL has remained the same after until 2020.
Sun, 13 May 2012 21:56:10 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20120513215610/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Fri, 29 Jun 2012 20:44:28 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20120629204428/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Tue, 10 Jul 2012 07:12:36 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20120710071236/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Thu, 30 Aug 2012 17:57:22 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20120830175722/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Thu, 20 Sep 2012 00:57:17 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/2012	

		0920005717/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Wed, 31 Oct 2012 02:25:29 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20121031022529/http://instagram.com/about/us/	
Sat, 22 Dec 2012 20:56:08 GMT	www.instagram.com/about/us	https://web.archive.org/web/20121222205608/http://instagram.com/about/us/	

Table 5: Facebook taking over (2012)
Community Guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Wed, 25 Apr 2012 17:47:14 GMT	http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	https://web.archive.org/web/20120425174714/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	
Sat, 05 May 2012 08:23:04 GMT	http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	https://web.archive.org/web/20120425174714/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	
Fri, 24 Aug 2012 08:35:40 GMT	http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	https://web.archive.org/web/20120425174714/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	
Sat, 06 Oct 2012 14:19:05 GMT	http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	https://web.archive.org/web/20120505082304/http://help.instagram.com/customer/portal/articles/262387-community-guidelines	

Table 6: Facebook taking over (2012)
Terms of Use

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Mon, 20 Feb 2012 06:29:38 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20120220062938/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	
Thu, 22 Mar 2012 19:52:16 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20120322195216/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	
Fri, 20 Apr 2012 12:43:39 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20120420124339/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	
Tue, 08 May 2012 06:15:30 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20120508061530/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	
Thu, 28 Jun 2012 12:49:25 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20120628124925/http://instagram.com	

		/legal/terms/	
Sun, 22 Jul 2012 01:16:43 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 0722011643/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	
Thu, 30 Aug 2012 01:58:47 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 0830015847/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	
Thu, 20 Sep 2012 11:11:40 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 0920111140/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	
Sat, 06 Oct 2012 03:12:57 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 1006031257/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	
Sun, 11 Nov 2012 21:07:49 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 1111210749/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	
Fri, 21 Dec 2012 15:43:35 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/2012 1221154335/http://instagram.com /legal/terms/	

Mon, 21 Jan 2013 16:47:46 GMT	http://instagram.com/legal/terms	https://web.archive.org/web/20130121164746/http://instagram.com/legal/terms/	Even though this screenshot dates from 2013, it is included in the analysis because it involves a large change in policy and was announced in the end of 2013.

Table 7: The original founders stepping down (2018)
About us

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Wed, 31 Jan 2018 20:23:02 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180131202302/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 00:22:24 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180228002224/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Fri, 30 Mar 2018 14:55:04 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180330145504/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Wed, 25 Apr 2018 16:04:18 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180425160418/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Thu, 31 May 2018 13:47:00 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180531134700/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	

Sat, 30 Jun 2018 01:48:42 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180630014842/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Tue, 31 Jul 2018 15:30:05 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180731153005/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Fri, 31 Aug 2018 19:31:27 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180831193127/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Sun, 30 Sep 2018 03:58:10 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20180930035810/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	
Tue, 30 Oct 2018 03:26:50 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20181030032650/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	On the first of October, it was announced Systrom and Krieger were stepping down and Adam Mosseri was stepping in as sole CEO.
Fri, 30 Nov 2018 12:15:50 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20181130121550/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	

Mon, 31 Dec 2018 01:26:01 GMT	https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	https://web.archive.org/web/20181231012601/https://www.instagram.com/about/us/	

Table 8: The original founders stepping down (2018)
Community guidelines

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Tue, 30 Jan 2018 22:48:12 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20180130224812/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 04:23:15 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20180228042315/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	
Tue, 27 Mar 2018 15:22:03 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20180327152203/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	
Sat, 28 Apr 2018 11:48:12 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20180428114812/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	
Thu, 31 May 2018 15:07:57 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20180531150757/https://help.instagra	

		m.com/477434105621119	
Fri, 29 Jun 2018 08:45:27 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 0629084527/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	
Tue, 31 Jul 2018 10:17:57 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 0731101757/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	
Fri, 31 Aug 2018 07:31:19 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 0831073119/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	
Wed, 26 Sep 2018 18:56:23 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 0831073119/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	
Wed, 31 Oct 2018 05:57:29 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 1031055729/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	
Fri, 30 Nov 2018 20:37:55 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/47743 4105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 1130203755/https://help.instagra m.com/477434105621119	

Mon, 31 Dec 2018 17:02:56 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	https://web.archive.org/web/20181130203755/https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119	

Table 9: The original founders stepping down (2018)
Terms of Use

Screenshot that was analyzed	Instagram URL	Wayback Machine URL	Comments
Tue, 30 Jan 2018 15:23:52 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	https://web.archive.org/web/20180130152352/https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	
Wed, 28 Feb 2018 00:22:35 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	https://web.archive.org/web/20180228002235/https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	
Fri, 30 Mar 2018 14:54:58 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	
Thu, 26 Apr 2018 22:13:20 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	https://web.archive.org/web/20180426221320/https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511	From here the new Terms of Use page was analyzed. There are less screenshots in the archive of this page because it is a specific page just used for updated versions. The other Terms of Use page remains the same

			throughout 2018
Tue, 15 May 2018 03:55:47 GMT	https://help.instagram.com/58106 6165581870?helpref=page_cont ent	https://web.archive.org/web/2018 0515035547/https://help.instagra m.com/581066165581870?helpr ef=page_content	

Appendix 3: screencast timelapse About Us page

The video can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTIx-USZL3c

Appendix 4: screencast timelapse Community Guidelines page

The video can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSiGNLSt6i4

Appendix 5: screencast timelapse Terms of Use page

The video can be found here: https://youtu.be/7zrRN_QSDyY