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**The Tensions Between  
News Content Providers And Distribution Platforms?**

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**The Tensions Between  
News Content Providers And Distribution Platforms?**

**by**

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## **Dedication**

To Dr. Yuan-Hwang Chen

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1. Because of you, this is my destiny.
2. If this dissertation has made any contribution to this world, all the credit goes to my committee members: Dr. George Sylvie (chair), Dr. Alan Albarran, Dr. Iris Chyi, Dr. Maxwell McCombs, and Dr. Thomas Johnson. If there are any flaws or mistakes in this dissertation, I take all of the responsibility.

# **The Tensions Between News Content Providers And Distribution Platforms?**

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2017

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With the rise of social media as a major news sources for many readers, news publishers are now extensively using social media platforms in the hope of reaching more readers and creating much needed revenue. However, readers' online engagement is dropping and the digital revenue are mainly received by big technological companies like Facebook. Therefore, the dissertation attempts to answer the following questions: First, to what degree does the social network of Facebook influence news engagement? Second, what factors engage readers, in terms of news perceived attributes and social networks? Third, to what extent does engagement enhance brand awareness and further readers' brand loyalty, the credibility of newspapers, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news?

Combining the idea of business model and uses and gratifications theory, the dissertation proposed a theoretical framework to examine how news perceived attributes and social networks affect news engagement through social media and hence influence brand awareness, loyalty, the credibility of newspapers, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news based on this framework.

An online panel survey was conducted. The sample of this study included adults who reside in the United States and are older than 18. The sample size of this study is 588. The results showed that news engagement, where news that attracts and holds readers' attention, on Facebook, increases the brand loyalty of newspapers and Facebook. Brand wise both Facebook and newspapers benefit when news is distributed through Facebook. The study challenges popular beliefs about the influence of Facebook on the business of journalism and shows that Facebook and newspapers are mutually beneficial in helping build the brand loyalty of both. It also shows that tie strength and not homophily encourages the sharing of news on Facebook. While these results may seem optimistic, the study further suggests that leveraging Facebook as a news distribution platform to engage audiences should be treated more cautiously.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

News publishers are not making profits online, but they are experimenting on and adopting emerging platforms to distribute news content (Ju, Jeong, & Chyi, 2014). With the rise of social media as a major news source for many readers, news publishers are now extensively using social media platforms in the hope of reaching more readers and creating much needed revenue. However, readers' online engagement is dropping and much of the digital revenue goes to big technological companies such as Facebook and Google (Mitchell et al., 2014). In addition, by giving away their content on social networking sites (SNSs), news publishers are losing their role as gatekeepers, and readership tracking ability because SNSs use algorithms to decide who gets to see what content. SNSs are like meta gatekeepers who control the news that users see and users' data (Riedmann, 2015). Because of this, social media journalism business model, this dissertation will examine via a survey, the effects of adopting SNS as distribution platforms on readers' engagement, brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived satisfaction and media trust. Given the concern that whether adopting social media as news distribution platform helps newspapers reach more readers or lose control of their content and audiences is ambiguous (Chen, 2016). Ultimately, this dissertation will analyze whether relying on SNSs heavily is helpful or a threat to news publishers.

## **ENGAGEMENT CRISIS**

With the exponential growth of news platforms today, news engagement – an experience where news draws in readers, and attracts and holds readers’ attention (Chapman, 1997; Higgins, 2006) – is dropping (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). News publishers have struggled with news engagement crises, especially on the internet and have tried hard to seek solutions to improve news engagement (Lichterman, 2014; McKerlich, Ives, & McGreal, 2013). News websites do not keep visitors for long. Even branded newspaper sites, such as The New York Times or The Washington Post, gain more visitors but do not keep them for long as well. On average, direct visitors to newspaper websites spend 4 minutes and 36 seconds per visit. This is three times as long as visitors referred from Facebook (1 minute and 41 seconds) and from search engines (1 minute and 42 seconds) (Mitchell et al., 2014). Facebook does not keep news readers long because its users incidentally get news on Facebook. In other words, the main goal of Facebook users using Facebook is not for news. Facebook users happen to see news when they use Facebook. Similarly, news readers allocate far less time on online news media than on traditional news media. For example, 38 percent of Americans get news online while about 60 percent of Americans get news on TV (Mitchell, Gottfried, Barthel, & Shearer, 2016). A survey conducted by Pew Research Center showed that 56 percent of the respondents read news exclusively from print newspapers whereas only 6 percent of the respondents read news only on a computer and 5 percent only on a mobile device. The other 33 percent of readers read from print/desktop (11 percent), print/desktop/mobile (11 percent), desktop/mobile (7 percent), and print/mobile (5



percent) (Pew, 2015). Likewise, survey data from Pew show that nearly half of readers of local daily newspapers in metropolitan cities who read newspapers do not access the paper online (Barthel, 2016). In sum, news publishers are encountering an engagement shortage on their news sites and on SNSs, but they still use SNSs to distribute news content.

### **THE FACEBOOK DILEMMA**

While news publishers suffer from an online engagement shortage, social media have become a major news source for a majority of Americans (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016). In other words, the influence of social media on news consumption and the news industry is hard to ignore. In a global survey, more than half the respondents reported that they use social media as a news source, and nearly one-third of young people reported that social media are their main news source (Newman Nic, Fletcher, Levy, & Noelsen, 2016). Similarly, a majority of Americans (62 percent) now get news from social media (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016). Facebook is now the largest social networking site for news (reaching 67 percent of U.S. adults), whereas Twitter has a smaller portion, reaching 16 percent of U.S. adults (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016; Newman et al., 2016). Two-thirds of Facebook users get news from Facebook, which equals 44 percent of the general population in the U.S. Therefore while many news publishers are losing readers, Facebook is becoming a major news source for many people. In other words, many people get their news on Facebook rather than from news publishers' websites.

In addition, Facebook receives a large amount of digital advertising revenue: In 2015 in the U.S., Facebook alone accounts for 30 percent of digital display advertising –

a graphical, visual or audio advertising displayed on websites (Ghosh, McAfee, Papineni, & Vassilvitskii, 2009; Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011) – whereas news websites, other social media and web properties shared 41 percent of digital display advertising revenue (Pew Research Center, 2016). Likewise, Facebook takes in the most mobile display ad revenue, about 40 percent (Pew Research Center, 2016).

In other words, Facebook, as a distribution channel of news, has the majority of digital revenue, both mobile and desktop, while news publishers who produce news content “have not been the primary beneficiary” (Pew Research Center, 2016). The problem is that news publishers create news content but do not receive as much digital revenues as hoped, whereas Facebook – uses news content provided by news publishers – gains the majority of digital revenue.

Facebook has a significant number of users and digital revenue, for which news publishers long, prompting almost all major news publishers to create Facebook pages (Ju et al., 2014) and share links to news articles on Facebook to reach more users, for two reasons. First, news referrals make users aware of the existence of the news sites and make them think that the site is the first place to find news (Mitchell et al., 2014). The other reason involves the fact that readers are directed back to news publishers’ websites when readers click the link provided by news publishers on Facebook, so as a result news publishers’ websites gained traffic (Martinez, 2014). Although news publishers seeing decline in reach on Facebook now (Moses, 2017), and turning users into loyal readers remains a challenge (Ju et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2014), news publishers still remain enthusiastic about partnering with Facebook. However, whether adopting SNSs to

distribute news content has a positive influence on news publishers' business remains vague. Therefore, this dissertation examines the antecedents and the effects of social media news engagement via the use of business model frameworks and uses and gratifications theory. On one hand, a business model reveals operations, from content creation, distribution, and news engagement, to trust and branding (Brown, 2013; Kunz & Werning, 2013; Vukanovic, 2013). As for the antecedents of news engagement, the dissertation examines the influence of news content and social networks. Afterward, this dissertation examines the effects of news engagement on brand awareness, brand loyalty and media trust. Although this dissertation is not a uses and gratifications study because this dissertation will not examine social media news motivations, uses and gratifications theory provides some constructs with which to build the concept of social media news engagement. Instead, this dissertation will employ notions of audience activity, active audience, and gratification obtained to examine why and how readers engage with news. For example, the concept of audience activity is helpful to understand news engagement because engagement is seen as a sub-concept of audience activity – involvement (Levy & Windahl, 1984).

### **NEWS CONTENT**

News publishers, as news content providers, produce news. News content is a capital expenditure that attracts and generates revenue on social networks (Zlatanov, 2013). Olmstead et al (2011), suggested the importance of news content on social media in the business of journalism:

“What users do with news content could significantly influence the economics of the news industry. Understanding not only what content users will want to consume but also what content they are likely to pass along may be a key to how stories are put together and even what stories get covered in the first place.” (Olmstead, Mitchell, & Rosenstiel, 2011).

In addition, content is an important factor in users’ engagement in online news interaction and should be incorporated into the engagement frameworks because content maintains users’ involvement, attention and interest when users interact with news websites (O’Brien, 2011).

Prior research has shown that novel, relevant and useful information engages readers. (Bobkowski, 2015; O’Brien, 2011). Similarly, the credibility of news content affects readers’ selective exposure to news; such information is seen as credible because it supports audience’s political views. Readers tend to spend more time reading news they consider credible than what they consider non credible (Ma, Lee, & Goh, 2014).

## **SOCIAL NETWORKS**

Sharing information is an indication of engagement (Lim, Hwang, Kim, & Biocca, 2015; Napoli, 2008). Engagement encompasses behavioral responses, including online participation, clicking and content creation (Napoli, 2008). Online participation involves news sharing. Hence, we cannot examine social media engagement without considering sharing activity on social media.

Sharing information is an important activity in social media. Half of social networking site users have shared news stories on SNSs, 46 percent of users have discussed a new issue, and 26 percent of users have posted videos and photos they took of news events (Anderson & Caumont, 2014). One in four internet users shares news via social media during an average week (Newman Nic et al., 2016). Heavy news users tend to share news often and the news that is widely shared may affect peoples' exposure to the news (Newman Nic et al., 2016). For example, users are exposed to the news referred by their friends, so the one who shares news often dominates his or her friends' news exposure on social media. In other words, social networks play roles in determining audience access to news. Because news sharing is a way to distribute news, influencing people's exposure and involvement in news, the ability to share news activity may be the most important development in the age of social media (Olmstead et al., 2011).

News sharing has several benefits for news publishers. First, news sharing serves as a mode of news distribution (Choi & Lee, 2015). The more widely the news is shared, the more readers news publishers reach; i.e., news and news organizations obtain exposure through news sharing. Second, sharing behavior increases readers' involvement and interest in news. Oeldorf-Hirsch & Sundar (2015) discovered that acting as a source boosts users' involvement – the mental process of attention, recognition, and elaboration (Perse, 1990, p. 559) – in content and in the sense of influence. Based on the benefits brought by news sharing, then the news content that readers on Facebook like to share, and the impact of social networks on the distribution of that news content, are worthy examining.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Facebook is changing the business of journalism in terms of news content and news distribution. Relying on Facebook to reach readers and gain revenue brings several concerns. First, news publishers are giving away content on Facebook: Money is being made on Facebook, but not by news publishers (Lafrance, 2015). Given the fact that online engagement is dropping, news publishers need to know what kind of news content is valued and can engage readers on Facebook because such news content is an asset. Second, given online engagement is dropping, to what degree can news publishers distribute news content on Facebook to engage readers? Third, when Facebook became a major news source by using newspapers' content, readers read news on Facebook without recognizing which content was from which news publishers. In other words, the awareness of the publishers' brand name is decreasing (Athey & Mobius, 2012; Charness, Gneezy, & Kuhn, 2012; Garrahan & Kuchler, 2015). In addition, whether Facebook erodes people's trust in media is a concern, given that people now turn to Facebook for news (Lafrance, 2015).

The promise of the news business on Facebook is fuzzy. Online engagement is low on news publishers' websites, yet Facebook seems to be a Promised Land because of the large number of users and profits made on Facebook. Therefore, news publishers flock to Facebook in hopes of getting a share of users and revenue. However, adopting Facebook as a distribution platform poses concerns on news publishers' content, readers' engagement, and brand. Therefore, this dissertation will examine the effectiveness of the strategy of newspapers using Facebook as a platform. In other words, what are the

antecedents and the effects of readers' engagement? First, this dissertation will examine the effects of news content and of social networks on news engagement. Second, this dissertation will examine how news engagement influences brand awareness/loyalty and perceived satisfaction. Based on the research design, this study attempts to answer three questions. First, to what degree does the social network of Facebook influence news engagement? Second, what factors engage readers, in terms of news perceived attributes and social networks? Third, to what extent does engagement enhance brand awareness and further readers' brand loyalty, the credibility of newspapers, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news?

This dissertation attempts to apply part of the social media journalism business model as a framework to answer these questions because business models provide a framework to see the value chain of news content on distribution platforms. The business model aims at value creation through a value chain encompassing several concepts: content creation, content aggregation, distribution, news engagement, and trust and branding (Brown, 2013; Kunz & Werning, 2013; Vukanovic, 2013). Specifically, this dissertation examines how news content affects news engagement through distribution platforms and, hence, influence brand awareness, loyalty, the credibility of newspapers, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news based on this framework.

An online panel survey is conducted because it is the most efficient way to reach online news users, compared to other survey methods. The sample for this study includes adults who reside in the United States and are older than 18. Considering a 5 percent

sampling error and a 95 percent confidence level is acceptable, the sample size of this study is 588.

This dissertation also offers several theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this dissertation examines social media use through by applying the concepts from business models to see the effects of news content and social networks on social media news engagement. First, this dissertation incorporates technological features (e.g. sharing, commenting, clicking the news on social media) to examine news engagement in response to the criticism that uses and gratifications theory is lacking technological considerations to examine media use (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Second, given the criticism that uses and gratifications is insensitive about news content (Swanson, 1979), this dissertation enriches uses and gratifications theory by incorporating the influence of news content on news engagement. Third, this dissertation extends the scope of uses and gratifications theory to marketing effects including branding and perceived quality of news, to examine the marketing effects of media use.

The dissertation offers two practical contributions. First, by identifying the strength and the weakness of adopting social media as platforms to distribute news, this dissertation explores to what degree does the adoption of social media contributes to readers' brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction. Second, the results of this study will provide news professionals with the knowledge of how to begin to leverage digital technology to increase the sustainability of news media by gaining readers' engagement from social media while retaining the autonomy of the business.



## **OVERVIEW**

This dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter 1 delineates the dilemma that newspaper organizations face today; Chapter 2 reviews uses and gratification theory, and the online journalism business model, proposes a theoretical model to examine social media news engagement, and then raises hypothesis and research questions; Chapter 3 describes the online panel survey conducted for this dissertation, the survey instrument and statistics for data analysis; Chapter 4 reports the results about the concepts of social media news engagement from factor analysis and the results about the relationships between independent variables and dependent variables; Chapter 5 explains whether the data support the hypothesis and answers research questions derived from the research model. The implications of the findings are also discussed; Chapter 6 reviews the mission, the theoretical frameworks, the method, the results and the implications of this dissertation. The theoretical contributions, practical contributions and limitation of this study are also discussed. Specifically, each chapter contains the following information.

Chapter 1 first describes the Facebook dilemma that newspaper organizations face in terms of news engagement. Then, this dissertation investigates the concept of news engagement and the effects of news content and social networks on news engagement. In doing so, this dissertation endeavors to contribute to an understanding of the factors and the effects of social media news engagement. Specifically, the dissertation discusses what kind of news content newspapers should produce to engage online readers and the effects of adopting Facebook to disseminate the news.

Chapter 2 attempts to lay the theoretical foundation of this dissertation. It first reviews the idea of uses and gratification theory, including active audience, audience activity, gratification sought and gratification obtained. Next, this chapter discusses the concepts of online journalism business models and value chains. Thirdly, the chapter combines the concepts from uses and gratification theory and the concepts of business model to propose a theoretical model to examine the antecedents and the effects of social media news engagement. Finally, this chapter raises hypotheses and research questions based on the theoretical model to examine the effect of news perceived attributes and social networks on social media news engagement, and to then explore the influence of social media news engagement on brand awareness, brand loyalty, the credibility of newspapers, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction.

Chapter 3 describes the reasons for using an online panel survey to answer the research questions. This chapter first introduces the procedure of data collection and the sample used for this survey. Next, this section details the survey instrument asking respondents about their news consumption, social networks, news engagement, and their perception of brand awareness, brand loyalty, news credibility of newspapers they get on social media, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction on social media.

Chapter 4 presents statistical results from data analysis, including descriptive analysis of the sample profile, the concepts of social media news engagement extracted from factor analysis, the relationships between the variables using hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, and analyzes the competitive or complementary

relationship between brand loyalty towards newspapers and that towards Facebook, by conducting partial correlation analysis.

Chapter 5 discusses the research findings and the implications, focusing on: 1) the competitive or complementary relationship between social media and newspapers, 2) the effects of social media news engagement on brand awareness, brand loyalty, and the credibility of newspapers, and 3) the effects of news perceived attributes and social networks on social media news engagement.

This dissertation concludes in Chapter 6 and a recap of the mission of this dissertation and the summary of the findings. The chapter also addresses theoretical and practical contributions toward the dilemma newspapers face with Facebook and offers suggestion for news publishers on how to cooperate with Facebook. Finally, some limitations that may lead to future studies are addressed.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This dissertation examines the causes and effects of social media news engagement through the lens of two devices: uses and gratifications theory and the social media journalism business model. No single applicable theory considers news consumption and business models simultaneously. This dissertation will examine what readers say engages them (uses and gratifications) and the effects of reader engagement on branding and revenue (business model).

### **USES AND GRATIFICATIONS**

Uses and gratifications (U&G) will be used to help examine what leads to news engagement. Several concepts from U&G are useful for examining news engagement on social media. The following section will first denote the basic idea of U&G. Then, this dissertation will describe the concept of audience activity and how to adopt the idea of audience activity to examine news engagement. Third, this dissertation will explore the concepts of gratification sought, gratification obtained, and how gratification sought and gratification obtained lead to the examination of news satisfaction. Finally, this dissertation will address criticisms of U&G and build on this criticism to develop a research model to examine social media news engagement.

U&G theory indicates that users' needs and expectations of media lead to different patterns of media engagement (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). It asks "why" and "how" the audience uses media. In other words, U&G theory focuses on the audience's role in selecting and using media. The propositions of U&G are as follows: 1. Audiences are active media consumers. Audiences are not passive receivers of media

information; rather, they deliberately choose content to satisfy their needs. 2. Media users are goal-oriented (e.g., to satisfy a certain need) (Katz, Haas, & Gurevitch, 1973). 3. Media uses are driven by specific reasons, or motivations, within a wide range of gratifications that vary across individuals and communication processes. 4. Aside from individual factors (e.g., motivations), social (e.g., social groups or relationships) and structural determinants (e.g., channel or media availability) also play a part in mediating communication behavior and effects (Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rosengren, 1985; Perse & Dunn, 1998; Rubin, 2009).

Based on these propositions, this dissertation makes the following assumptions related to news engagement on social media. First, news users on social media are an active audience. They actively click, comment, share and react to the news they see on social media. They are goal-oriented. They are not necessarily using social media specifically for news, but they use social media to satisfy certain needs. Second, news content is a factor influencing readers' consumption of news on social media. Third, social network groups determine readers' news consumption on social media to some extent.

### **AUDIENCE ACTIVITY**

Audience activity is the variable relating media use in the U&G paradigm (Rubin & Perse, 1987). Audience activity refers to “voluntary” and “selective” activities meaning that the audience's selection is motivated by goals (Levy, 1983). Levy and Windahl (1984) proposed a typology of audience activity. Audience activity is constructed from two dimensions, which are audience orientation and temporal

dimension. Three audience activities are identified (see Figure 2.1).

Audience orientation	Communication sequence		
	Before exposure	During exposure	After exposure
Selective	Selective exposure seeking		
Involved		Decoding and interpreting	
Using			Social utilities

Figure 2.1: A Typology of Audience Activity (Levy & Windahl, 1984, p. 54)

First, selective exposure seeking is the audience activity before exposure begins. The audience is intentional (e.g. purposive and goal-directed.) and selective before using a medium. Selectivity indicates the linkage between need and communication choices (E Katz, 1974). Before media exposure, the audience has many choices, and they clearly know what their needs are, therefore, they select media to fulfill their needs.

The second audience activity refers to the process of decoding and interpreting during exposure, including mental or psychological information processing. The audience engages with the media content, and receives meaning from the messages received from the media (Levy & Windahl, 1984). This type of audience activity relates to the degree of involvement. Audience involvement is a critical precondition for many mass media effects (Levy & Windahl, 1984). Involvement refers to personal relevance and engaging with media content. Involvement requires “attention” to comprehend the media message.

The third type of audience activity is “using” after the exposure to media. Using

indicates any active behavior that the audience will have after consuming media, such as an attempt to reflect on, discuss or integrate information they consumed on media. For example, sometimes the audience will engage in or small talk about what they just watched on TV (Levy & Windahl, 1984). Content sharing is a prominent behavior among consumers of digital media. Chua, Goh, and Lee (2011) examined the gratifications of content sharing on mobile phones, including contributing and retrieving content, and found that these are driven by perceived gratification. Gratifications for content retrieval include the quality and credibility of information. The quality and credibility of content have positive effects on content retrieval. Gratifications for content contribution include passing time and entertainment. That is, users contribute to content for fun when they have leisure time (Chua, Goh, & Lee, 2012).

These three types of audience activities can be adopted by this dissertation to examine news engagement on social media, which includes attention during media exposure and the behaviors after media exposure. First, before exposure (receiving posts from Facebook friends), Facebook users might intentionally select their sources of information, such as news organizations, their friends, and fan pages from other organizations, etc. The posts Facebook users see are like a customized newspaper in which users have purposively chosen the content they want to see. Second, engagement is a broad concept involving mental engagement and behavioral engagement (Napoli, 2008). The second type of audience activity during exposure is related to “mental engagement,” which requires “involvement” in and “attention” to media content. Finally, the third type of activity is related to behavioral engagement, including clicking,

commenting, sharing, and reacting to the news on social media. These behaviors are the results of mentally engaging with the content on social media.

In sum, the concepts of “selectivity”, “involvement”, and “using” media explain why the audience does or does not use the media repeatedly. Levy and Windahl found empirical correlations between selectivity, involvement, and using media. As a result, the concepts of audience activity provide a framework for examining the three stages of news engagement on Facebook.

#### **GRATIFICATION SOUGHT, GRATIFICATION OBTAINED AND MEDIA SATISFACTION**

The three types of audience activities are connected through gratifications sought and gratification obtained (Levy & Windahl, 1984) (see figure 2.2). Gratification sought drives the audience to use media. The audience expects gratifications from media exposure, therefore, gratification-seeking is an antecedent to media use. After media exposure, the audience obtains gratification and hence, uses media again.



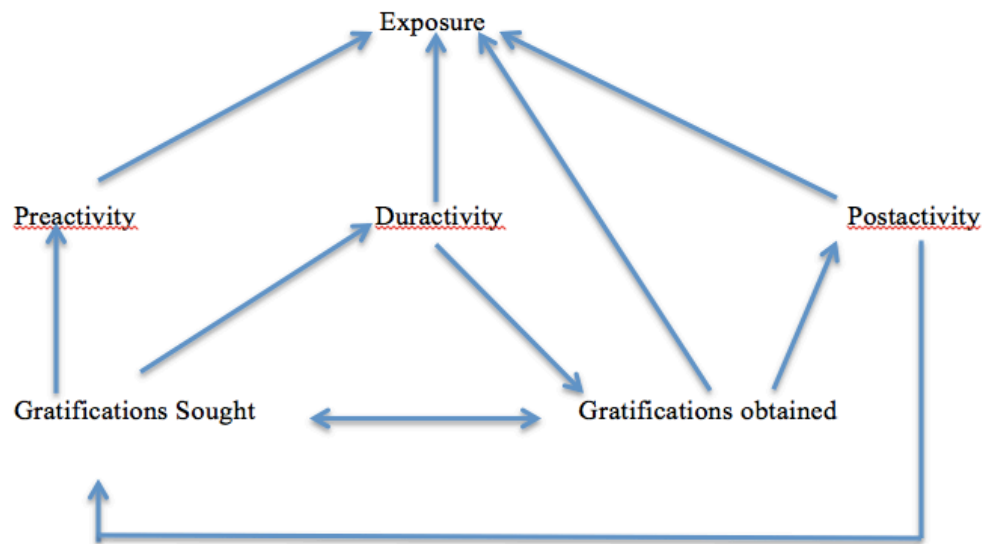


Figure 2.2: A Model of Audience Activity, Gratifications, and Exposure (Levy and Windahl, 1984, p. 59)

According to Levy and Windahl’s model (1984), gratification obtained is associated with three variables. First, gratification obtained is reciprocally associated with gratification sought. Gratification obtained drives the audience to seek gratifications again. Second, gratification obtained is associated with media exposure. That is, the discrepancy between gratification sought and gratification obtained affects the level of media exposure. Third, activities after media exposure (Postactivity) result in gratification obtained. The more enjoyable the Postactivity is, the higher the level of gratification obtained, and the more likely the audience is to use the media again (Levy & Windahl, 1984).

In uses and gratifications theory, media satisfaction is an important variable that drives media use. Scholars have pointed out that gratification obtained is equated with

media satisfaction (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). Media satisfaction can be viewed as the sum of gratifications. As Palmgreen and Rayburn (1985) found, the discrepancy between gratification sought and gratification obtained determines the level of media satisfaction. Besides, media satisfaction is more strongly related to gratification obtained than gratification sought (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). For example, the audience feels satisfied when they obtain gratifications from media exposure. This dissertation will examine media satisfaction derived from the news readers see on social media.

### **CRITICISM**

While uses and gratifications theory is a widely used theory, there are some criticisms of it. The first criticism is that this theory focuses too much on psychological aspects. By focusing on audience consumption, U&G is often too individualistic (Elliott, 1974). The emphasis of traditional U&G research is on individual differences and active audience members (Haridakis, 2002), suggesting that gratifications obtained from media are largely based on a given user's pre-existing needs, rather than on specific technological features of media (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). As Elliot (1974) argued, U&G cannot predict anything useful past an elaborate construction of media use based on individual differences. But, perhaps more importantly, some critics have claimed that the theory hinders the concept of gratifications by surrogating it to needs (Sundar & Limperos, 2013).

A second criticism refers to the lack of technological impact on the audience's needs. Many studies have examined new gratifications emerging along with the plethora of new media. For example, Dhir, Chen and Chen (2015) identified 9 gratifications of

photo tagging on Facebook (Dhir, Chen, & Chen, 2015); Lin, Hsu, Chen and Fang (2016) discovered new gratifications, including social benefits, social enhancement, economic incentives and message, for disseminating social word of mouth on SNSs (Lin, Hsu, Chen, & Fang, 2016). Ifinedo (2016) found that self-discovery, entertainment values and the need to maintain interpersonal connectivity contribute to university students' adoption of social networking sites (Ifinedo, 2016). Ledbetter, Taylor and Mazer (2016) revealed that the level of enjoyment predicts the frequency of use of interpersonal communication technology (e.g. instant messages, video chat and SNSs) (Ledbetter, Taylor, & Mazer, 2016). Regardless of such recently discovered new gratifications, scholars still have concerns that what we learned from these results is not enough to comprehensively understand the new gratifications derived from new media (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). For example, the characteristics of new technology determine “content gratifications” by influencing the nature of content accessed, discussed, and created when users interact with such media (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). The technology itself could be responsible for creating new gratifications (e.g. information-sharing, creating conten.) (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). If U&G researchers continue to view media gratifications as solely governed by innate human states or psychology (e.g., cognitive, motivational, or emotional factors), rather than focusing on technology per se, then our descriptions of the uses and gratifications of emerging communication technologies will be very similar to what we already know about the gratifications experienced when using traditional media. This will not only limit our understanding of the appeal of new media, but also curtail our efforts to connect media uses and gratifications to specific behavioral and cognitive

effects.

Third, the “insensitivity of media content” is another criticism of U&G studies. In fact, content is a pivotal factor that affects media use. Palmgreen and Rayburn pointed out that gratifications from news content are related to the levels of media exposure (Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1982). Lee found out that different news content fulfilled different gratifications (Lee, 2013). While a few studies have looked into the influence of news content on media use, yet these influences have not been explored at great length. Scholars have suggested a need for deeper analysis of different kinds of news content that influence media use. For example, news genres should be examined as “hard” versus “soft” news, instead of being treated as a whole (Swanson, 1979).

This dissertation takes up these calls by examining the role and functions of news content that affects readers’ news engagement on social media. In addition, this dissertation incorporates the technological features of social media into U&G theory to predict level of news engagement on social media.

The next step is to understand the effect of news engagement on brand and perceived satisfaction, which falls within the scope of the business model. Porter Donthu, MacElroy and Wydra (2011) incorporate users’ needs and examine how a firm sustains and increases engagement. A firm tries to fulfill customers’ different needs in order to amplify users’ engagement and create values (Porter, Donthu, MacElroy, & Wydra, 2011; Weezel & Benavides, 2013). Customers’ engagement enhances brand trust and brand loyalty. In sum, uses and gratifications theory helps us to understand the role of users’ needs and wants in a value chain. The following section will discuss the

framework of business models.

## **BUSINESS MODELS**

This section establishes a framework to analyze business models regarding news publishers' adoption of Facebook as a distribution platform. This dissertation will first revisit online journalism business models. Then, this dissertation will discuss the component of online journalism business models to be used in the dissertation.

### **Revisiting Online Journalism Business Models**

Journalism business models are changing because of the proliferation of digital technology, especially SNSs. Social networking sites are changing the role of readers in online journalism business models. In the traditional business model, news organizations have the power to control their readers through commissionable media (Qualman, 2010), whereas in online social media, users can participate in each step of the traditional business model: content production (e.g. commenting and discussing news content on social media), marketing and distribution (sharing new content) (Vukanovic, 2013). In other words, users are not only involved in the new business model, but they “co-create” the value in the process (Kunz & Werning, 2013). Users serve as distribution channels when they share news content. Besides, readers' social networks represent a niche market that news organizations can target via their readers (Brown, 2013). The way to respond to these changes in business models is to adopt SNSs (Vukanovic, 2013). Scholars have highlighted several business values that SNSs provide: gaining market share, reducing distribution and marketing costs, generating business reputation and brand awareness,

increasing customer loyalty and trust, enticing consumer engagement, and bringing more traffic and subscribers to corporate sites (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003; Utz, 2009; Vukanovic, 2013).

### **The Components Of A Social Media Journalism Business Model**

Business models aim at value creation (Vukanovic, 2013; Wirtz, 2011). The concept of value chain, as developed by Porter (1985), is imbedded in a set of activities that create and deliver value. The notion of value chain encompasses several phases: product creation, distribution, retail, and consumers. Among these phases, two levels of activities were identified. First, primary organizational activities include inbound and outbound logistics, marketing and sales and service are involved in the physical product creation, its sale and after sale assistance (Porter, 1985, p. 38). Second, secondary organizational activities include procurement, technology development, human resource management and infrastructure (Faustino, 2013). The function of the value chain emphasizes the coordination of these activities to ensure efficiency (Porter, 1985).

Using Michael Porter's work (1985) on the value chain in creating organizations' competitive advantages, media have focused either on content or distribution (Brown, 2013). Moving from offline to online, the emerging news business model not only relies on news content but also on the organization's competence at distributing materials and providing new types of services and revenue streams (Picard, 2006). Using previous studies related to the social media business models (Brown, 2013; Kunz & Werning, 2013; Vukanovic, 2013), the social media news business model consists of five components: content creation, content aggregation, distribution, news engagement, and

trust and branding (see Figure 2.3).

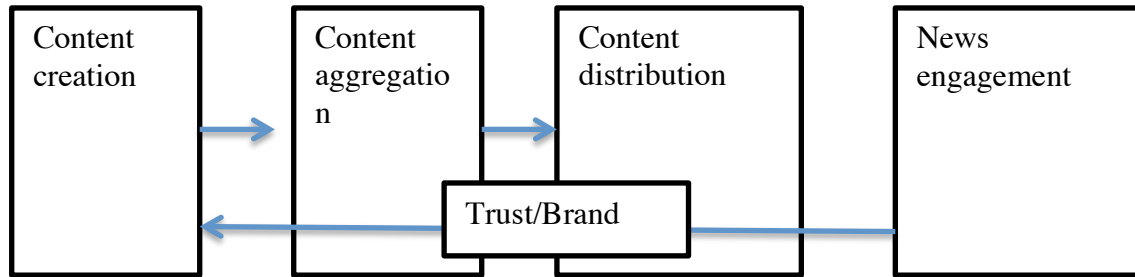


Figure 2.3 Social Media News Business Model. Adopted from (Brown, 2013, p. 230)

Content creation refers to the provision of media content, such as video and audio news articles. Regarding content-based online business models, media content is the key to value creation (Kunz & Werning, 2013). The value of news content for readers depends on whether the extent to which the content is worthy of their time or money (Picard, 2006). Valuable news content for readers lies in “accurate descriptions of events and credible commentaries and analysis (Picard, 2006, p. 88).” Picard (2006) said that in the age of digital media, the value of quality and credibility of content is increasing because of the availability of too much inaccurate information online and the difficulty of distinguishing this false information from credible news. The value of news content for news media lies in the fact that news media use different contents to bring in customers who are willing to pay and thus attract advertising. In the content-creation process, news consumers, as “prosumers” (news consumers who also produce content), generate value by generating content (Kunz & Werning, 2013). In sum, the value of news content for readers and media are interconnected. Readers’ spend attention and time consuming the content based on the need to be informed. Readers attention and time are the value that

news content brings for media organizations because advertising companies pay for readers' attention to news media. However, while news contents have instrumental value as they inform readers, news contents do not necessarily have exchange value, because exchange value is determined by the benefits that readers receive and the ability of readers to receive that value in other ways (Picard, 2006). In other words, the exchange value of news content is exceedingly low because news content is everywhere online.

“Content aggregator” refers to the third party that aggregates the information, serving as an information hub (Brown, 2013). Aggregation is connected to the processes of promotion, engagement, signposting and filtering (Brown, 2013). Specifically, aggregation deals with how information is assembled, distributed and consumed. Nowadays, news aggregators are websites that use algorithms, human judgments, or both to curate other news organizations' content (Isbell, 2010; Lee & Chyi, 2015). Therefore, broadly speaking, Google News, Yahoo News and Facebook are considered news aggregators (Brown, 2013).

As aggregators, traditional media not only aggregate content but audiences. Traditional media aggregate and deliver the audience to advertising opportunities. On the internet, SNSs take over the role of aggregator, integrating all kinds of information. Besides, not only do SNSs play the roles of aggregators, but so do the SNS users; sharing and recommending information on SNSs is considered a form of aggregation (Brown, 2013). Content owners are willing to work with Facebook because Facebook drives more traffic than Google does. For example, the Guardian received 30 percent of its referral traffic from Facebook (Brown, 2013; Cordrey, 2012).



Content distribution is a key component in business models (Brown, 2013; Wirtz, 2001). Content distribution refers to the method of delivering content to readers. The more distribution channels a news publisher has, the more readers the news publishers can reach. The distribution on Facebook involves algorithms and users' sharing. By users' sharing news content, users' personal networks can be seen as a distribution network.

News engagement is the end-point of the value chain. Content providers gain value from users' engagement because their advertising revenue depends on users' engagement. Besides, engagement brings trust and loyalty, both of which help organizations attract more audience. For news aggregators (e.g. Yahoo News), the value of users' engagement lies in users' repeating visits and the time that users' spend on the platform because users' attachment to a site attracts advertising revenue to the platform.

Trust is an intangible asset for media: Without trust, news organizations' ability to create value is inhibited (Brown, 2013; Picard, 2006). That is, the success of content providers and content aggregators depends on the extent to which users trust the content and the reliability of the bond between users and the brand (Brown, 2013). Media organizations not only aggregate the audience, but they also aggregate reputation and trust. In other words, media organizations earn trust and reputation from the audience by delivering the content that the audience wants and needs (Brown, 2013). Therefore, news organizations create additional value by gaining trust from loyal consumers (Picard, 2006).

Media organizations gain trust in several ways. First, via content: "Content

attracts attention which is in turn underpinned by the audience and advertisers (Brown, 2013)”. In other words, one of the values from news content lies in the trust earned from the audience. Second, engagement contributes to the audience’s trust toward the news organization; i.e., the extent to which the audience trusts the medium depends on the news organization’s ability to engage the audience (van Kranenburg & Ziggers, 2013). For example, the news networks FOX and CNN gain trust from the audience because FOX and CNN conform to what the audience values, and they are able to engage the audience successfully (van Kranenburg & Ziggers, 2013). Third, social media sites are places where trust can be gained. One study showed the positive effect of social media on consumer trust by showing that 78 percent of consumers are more likely to trust a recommendation from friends than to trust advertising, whereas only 14 percent of consumers trust advertising alone (van Kranenburg & Ziggers, 2013).

Because of this, trust is an important value for news organizations. However, more important is how this value is communicated. Trust is what makes brand so important for media, because the audience relies on the news brand to consume information, especially considering much inaccurate information available (van Kranenburg & Ziggers, 2013). The value that a news brand creates is what will attract the audience repeatedly to the information. As Picard (2016) pointed out, news organizations need to make themselves visible and recognizable by their audience, rather than being anonymous content providers, in order to create value and sustainability.

## **RESEARCH MODEL**

Based on the aforementioned social media journalism business model, a research

model is proposed (see Figure 2.4), which identifies several variables: news content, social networks, social media news engagement, brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality of news, perceived news satisfaction.

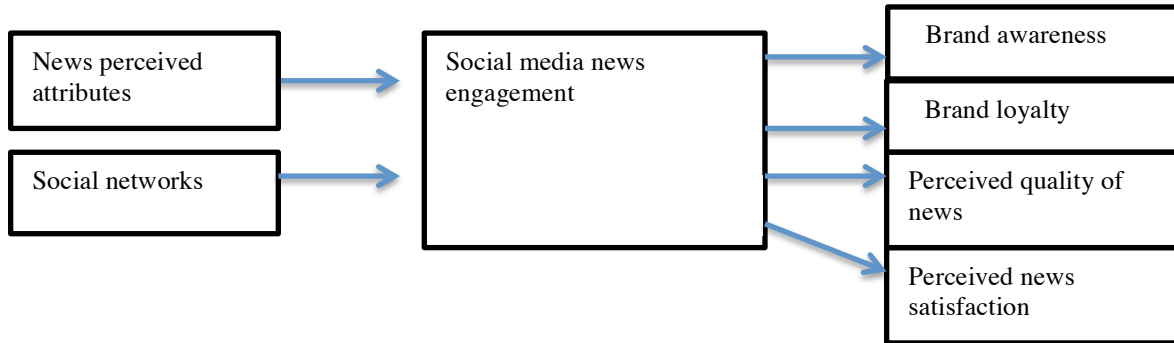


Figure 2.4: Research Model

### **Understanding Social Media News Engagement**

The term “engagement” is widely studied in communication literature, and while the concept varies in different studies (Lim et al., 2015; McKerlich et al., 2013; Mersey, Malthouse, & Calder, 2012; O’Brien, 2011) it tends to encompass some common variables: attention (exposure duration) (Napoli, 2010; O’Brien & Toms, 2008), emotions (Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Lim et al., 2015; Mersey et al., 2012; Napoli, 2010; O’Brien & Toms, 2008) and behavior, such as sharing, commenting, product purchasing and feedback (Lim et al., 2015; Napoli, 2010; O’Brien & Toms, 2008). This dissertation expands on Lim et al’s frameworks of social media engagement – including functional engagement, emotional engagement and communal engagement – by adding attention variables because attention measures how much readers are occupied by media content and because attention is a major concept of engagement (Napoli, 2010; O’Brien

& Toms, 2008). This dissertation uses attention, functional engagement, emotional engagement and communal engagement to examine the concepts of social media news engagement, which refers to the degree to which the news on Facebook engages Facebook users.

Attention is defined as “a focused mental engagement on a particular item of information” (Davenport & Beck, 2002, p. 20–21). Attention can be measured by a multi-dimensional model: visibility (audience share per market), popularity (unique audience per site), loyalty (visits per person), depth (pages per visit), and stickiness (time per page) (Zheng, Chyi, & Kaufhold, 2012). In addition, time spent per exposure has been used to measure attention (Napoli, 2010).

Emotional attachment to a brand, a product, or an organization results in engagement (Sashi, 2012). That is, readers will be emotionally in the medium when they feel they like it (Mersey et al., 2012; Napoli, 2010). Emotional responses include positive affect, appreciation, enjoyment, satisfaction, entertainment and attachments (Calder et al., 2009; Lim et al., 2015; Mersey et al., 2012; O’Brien & Toms, 2008). Emotional engagement also allows the audience to have an attachment toward a media brand, and thus influences the audience’s behavior (Park, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010).

Behavior is the next step in emotional engagement (Napoli, 2010). When the audience emotionally engages with the medium, they will share its content and interact with others and will get others involved (Lim et al., 2015). In addition, clicking on an ad, content creation, online participation and product purchasing are behaviors of being engaged with the media (Lim et al., 2015; Napoli, 2010).

Functional engagement and communal engagement also consist of users' behavior. Functional engagement was defined as "a social media user's interactions with other users in the process of co-creating, conversing and sharing the content" (Lim, et al. 2015, p. 159) and functional engagement evaluates the effectiveness of how an organization engages users (Neiger et al., 2012). Communal engagement evaluates how much users are involved in a brand. Since this dissertation will investigate the effectiveness of how much the adoption of social media enhances media brand perception, communal engagement is a critical variable to be examined.

### **News Perceived Attributes And Social Media News Engagement**

Mersey, Malthouse and Calder (2012) pointed out the importance of news content: "If content, however distributed, fails to attract readers/users, no business model can ultimately be successful (Mersey, Malthouse, & Calder, 2012)."

Numerous studies have found that attributes of content, such as relevance, interestingness, emotionality, credibility and utility, affect audience engagement (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Bobkowski, 2015; Christofides, Muise, & Desmarais, 2009; Knobloch, Carpentier, & Zillmann, 2003; Ma et al., 2014). Relevance is "the relationship between a reader's need and the information itself (Ma et al., 2014)". Scholars have pointed out that the relevance is associated with users' intention to share the information and with longer media exposure (Bobkowski, 2015; Ma et al., 2014; Rudat, Buder, & Hesse, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed.

**H1: Perceived relevance of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement.**

Scholars also have found news content that arouse emotion on sharing information on social media. To be specific, news content that evokes anger, anxiety and amusement has driven information sharing (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). In addition, news content which arouses emotions was shared more than neutral news content (Khuntia, Sun, & Yim, 2016; Oeldorf-Hirsch & Sundar, 2015; Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). For example, Berger and Milkman (2012) analyzed the content of *New York Times*' articles that went viral and discovered that content that evokes emotion is likely to go viral. To be specific, content that elicits high-arousal emotion (i.e., awe, anger, anxiety, surprise) goes more viral than content that elicits low-arousal emotions (i.e., sadness) or than deactivating content (Berger & Milkman, 2012). Similarly, Peters, Kashima, & Clark's study (2009) showed that social media users are more likely to share news content that arouses interest, surprise, and happiness. Likewise, users tend to share interesting information which gives them positive feelings (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Bobkowski, 2015; Ma et al., 2014). Based on these findings, the following research question is set forth:

**RQ1: What news perceived attributes in terms of emotionality are related to social media news engagement?**

News credibility denotes the believability, trustworthiness, accuracy, completeness of information, fairness and impartiality of the news (Bucy, 2003; Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Yuan, 2011). Studies of the relationship between news credibility and the intention of information-sharing have yielded conflicting findings. One stream of research showed that news users are more likely to

share information from trustworthy sources, such as close friends (Chiu, Hsieh, Kao, & Lee, 2007). Furthermore, Rosentiel et al (2017) discovered that audiences are more likely to trust the news shared by their friends than news shared by a news organization. The experimental study suggests that a news organization's credibility is affected by the credibility of those sharing the news. Sharers act as unofficial ambassadors for news organizations, affecting their friends' evaluation of the credibility of news articles (Rosentiel et al., 2017). Knobloch, Sundar, & Hastall (2005) found that credibility also influences exposure to news. However, another stream of research did not find a relationship between perceived credibility of news content and news-sharing intention on social media (Ma et al., 2014). These conflicting results leave us with an incomplete understanding of the relationship between news credibility and intention in news sharing.

On the other hand, multiple studies on perceived media credibility have found that attention, media use, and the interactivity features of a news platform have an association with perceived media credibility. Concerning attention, Gaziano (1988) pointed out that credible media are more likely than non-credible media to attract the audience's attention. Media without credibility lose public trust, and hence, are not able to perform their democratic function (Gaziano, 1988).

Next, previous studies found evidence of the relationship between media use and perceived media credibility (Bucy, 2003; Kioussis, 2001; Yuan, 2011). Individual choice of media is associated with perceptions of media credibility (Yuan, 2011). For example, Johnson and Kaye (1998) indicated that people are more likely to perceive the media they rely on as more credible than those they use less often. Likewise, multiple studies

demonstrated a positive association between media exposure and the level of perceived credibility across different media, such as newspapers, online news and television news. Newspaper readership connected to newspaper credibility (Kioussis, 2001). Online news exposure leads to evaluation of online news credibility (Bucy, 2003) whereas skepticism toward online news results in less exposure (Tsfati, 2010). Television news exposure contributes to a high assessment of TV news credibility. Johnson and Kaye (2014) examined the credibility of SNS with respect to political information among those interested in political news online. Their study showed that online users reliance on SNS was a the strongest predictor of the credibility of SNS ( Johnson & Kaye, 2014) Besides, the reliance on other online sources is positively associated with perception of high credibility of SNS because they are experienced and familiar with finding credible information and sources (Johnson & Kaye, 2014). Taken together, media use is associated with perceived media credibility.

Finally, the interactive features of news aggregators increase their news credibility. Chung, Nam, and Stefanon (2012) found out that readers perceived the news from news aggregators to be credible because of hyperlinks allowing readers to access a variety of information, which enabled readers to consider the news more credible.

Collectively, media use and interactive functions, including clicking and sharing, are related to audiences' perceived news credibility. This dissertation is concerned about the influence of Facebook as a news platform on newspaper credibility. Facebook provides several interactive functions with which readers' are able to click, share, comment and react to the news which is referred by their friends. Therefore, the



following research question is proposed:

**RQ2: What is the relationship between perceived credibility of news on Facebook and social media news engagement?**

Information utility refers to helpful, informative, useful and valuable information (Bobkowski, 2015). Information utility – the usefulness that information possesses – has positive effects on news sharing (Bobkowski, 2015; Chiu, Hsieh, Kao, & Lee, 2007). For example, Bobkowski (2015) analyzed widely shared news content and found out that information’s practical utility is positively associated with news sharing. Likewise, Knobloch et al. (2003) discovered that the utility of information causes long media exposure. Therefore, the following hypothesis is set forth:

**H2: Perceived utility of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement.**

**Social Media News Engagement And Social Networks**

Personal networks and the behavior of sharing on SNSs play major roles in news engagement because readers are getting news from, and are interested in news referred by, their family and friends on SNSs (Bobkowski, 2015; Hermida, Fletcher, Korell, & Logan, 2012; Oeldorf-Hirsch & Sundar, 2015). People trust and care more about the news referred by friends and family than that referred by news organizations. Hence, social networks are replacing institutional media in the role of telling people what news to see (Hermida et al., 2012).

Given that social networks are taking the role of gatekeepers who select which news people care about (Hermida et al., 2012), news publishers can benefit from a

“personal social network” as a distribution platform in the hope of promoting news content, reaching more readers and fostering brand loyalty (Hermida et al., 2012).

Studies have documented the effects of social networks on news sharing. Two attributes of social networks were examined to see whether they have affected news sharing. First, tie strength – the degree of closeness within a personal social network. Tie strength is defined as “the level of intensity of the social relationship, or degree of overlap between two individuals’ scopes of friendship” (Steffes and Burgee, 2009). Perceived tie strength is positively related to news-sharing intention. In the same vein, Lerman and Ghosh (2010) explored how social networks affect the distribution of information on Digg and Twitter. The study showed that news spread faster in a higher interconnected network than in a lower interconnected network (Lerman & Ghosh, 2010). The tie strength not only increased users’ intention to share, but actually caused the news to spread faster. Therefore, the following hypothesis is set forth:

**H3: Perceived tie strength in a social network is positively associated with social media news engagement.**

The second attribute of social network is homophily. Homophily is defined as “the extent to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, social status, and preferences” (Dearing & Rogers, 1996; Roger, 2003). In other words, homophily represents the homogeneity of a social network while tie strength refers to the level of closeness with a social network. Some scholars have argued that the homogeneity of the social network should have effects on social news engagement because users are inclined to care about news referred from friends,

and friends are someone to whom users are related or with whom they have similar background, beliefs and attributes, etc (Halberstam & Knight, 2016). However, other scholars discovered that homophily was not related to news sharing intention (Ma et al., 2014). This dissertation will examine the effects of social networks on social news engagement so that we know what kind of personal social network helps to enhance readers' engagement and spread the news content. Therefore, the following question is asked.

**RQ3: What is the relationship between perceived homophily in a social network and social media news engagement?**

### **Social Media News Engagement And Brand Awareness**

This dissertation uses McDowell's (2006) definition brand awareness: “the simple familiarity (recall or recognition) of a brand name relative to its product category.”

A long line of research has documented the positive effect of social media on brand awareness. Specifically, social networking sites serve as prominent tools for organizations to enhance their brand awareness (Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, & Okumus, 2015; Lipsman, Mudd, Rich, & Bruich, 2012; Parganas, Anagnostopoulos, & Chadwick, 2015). Social networking sites provide benefits as they entice customers' engagement, build corporations' reputations, and hence, generate, increase and improve brand awareness (Vukanovic, 2013). For example, Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, and Füller (2013) discovered that customers who engage with a Facebook fan page have higher brand awareness toward a car manufacturer than those who do not.

Several reasons explain the positive effect of social media on brand awareness.

The first reason is related to information exposure. Social media expose consumers to repetitive and large amounts of information, which contributes to brand awareness (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013). Social media provide an opportunity for corporations to spread their brand information more efficiently, such as Fan pages and timely interaction with consumers. A large amount of information on social media serves as an effective advertising tool. As consumers are exposed to a huge amount of brand information, they develop brand awareness, which simplifies their brand choices, and they are more inclined to choose the brand to which they were repeatedly exposed (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). The second reason for the positive effect of social media on brand awareness is social networks: Information shared among peers creates word of mouth, a more convincing brand message that increases other users' brand awareness, and enhances brand recognition (Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012; Lipsman et al., 2012; Parganas et al., 2015). In addition, information shared through social networks spreads faster and gets more exposure. Barreda et al (2015) indicated that the information shared by each user on Facebook is seen by 35 percent of their social networks on average (Barreda et al., 2015). That is, building a platform which allows information exchange through social networks is an effective way to foster brand awareness (Barreda et al., 2015; Parganas et al., 2015). This dissertation examines the effect of news shared on Facebook on readers' brand awareness towards news sources. Based on previous findings that information shared through social networks is positively associated with consumers' brand awareness, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H4: Social media new engagement is positively related to newspaper brand**

**awareness.**

### **Social Media News Engagement And Brand Loyalty**

This dissertation adapts the definition of brand loyalty from Lim et al., (2015) defined as “the likelihood that readers will remain loyal to the newspapers,” and measured by the items adopted from Delgado-Ballester, Manuera-Aleman, & Yague-Guillen (2003) and Lim et al., (2015) : “I will continue to get news from this newspaper”, “I will recommend this newspaper to others”, and “I consider myself to be loyal to this brand”.

Previous studies have documented the relationship between engagement and brand loyalty (Bowden, 2009; Sashi, 2012). Bowden (2009) and Sashi (2012) showed that emotional engagement predicts brand loyalty and that the effect is mediated by affective commitment. Similarly, Lim, et al. (2015) found a positive relationship between engagement and channel loyalty. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H5: Social media news engagement is positively related to newspaper brand loyalty.**

### **Competing Or Complementing As Brands?**

The competitive relationship between traditional news media and online news media has received scholarly attention in the realm of empirical analysis (Dimmick, Chen, & Li, 2004; Huang, Yang, & Chyi, 2013; Jeon & Esfahani, 2012; Lee & Chyi, 2015). The competitive relationship occurs between two news outlets when both outlets provide substitutable product in the same market, For example, a newspaper not only competes with other newspapers but also with its online counterpart since the news on a

print version of a newspaper is almost the same as that on its website (Yang & Chyi, 2011).

Recently, media scholars have examined the competitive relationship between news aggregators and newspapers as two sides of an argument—whether news aggregators are stealing newspapers’ readers by displaying newspapers’ content (Kaplan, 2012) or whether news aggregators are helping newspapers gain more readers through referral traffic (Chiou & Tucker, 2015). Most studies have found that by displaying publishers’ news content, news aggregators did not steal readers (Huang et al., 2013; Lee & Chyi, 2015) but referred more readers to the news publishers (Chiou & Tucker, 2015; Lee & Chyi, 2015). For example, The Associate Press (AP) received fewer readers after their content was removed from Google News (Chiou & Tucker, 2015).

In addition, Google News increased news publishers’ home website traffic and increased local news consumption. A 5 percent increase in direct local news outlets and 13 percent increase in clicks on local news websites were found after the users adopted the localization features of Google. It was assumed that users found the local news website they like from Google News, so then on following visits, users directly visited the websites, bypassing Google News (Athey & Mobius, 2012). The findings suggest that Google News referred more users and traffic to news websites. However, newspapers might lose more profit when users access the article directly and bypass the homepage, Google News sends users directly to the article instead of to newspapers’ homepage, and the advertising rate of the homepage is the most lucrative (Athey & Mobius, 2012).

Similar concerns are raised as Facebook is emerging as a major news outlet for

over half of Americans (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016; Newman et al., 2016) and newspapers are adopting Facebook to distribute news content. One of the concerns is that newspapers' brand names will be diluted as users are provided a wide range of choices. Thus, awareness of publishing brands will decrease because readers might not pay attention to a specific newspaper brand when the news they see are provided by different news sources (Athey & Mobius, 2012; Garrahan & Kuchler, 2015).

Some are concerned that news aggregators are replacing news publishers because users have come to rely more on Google News than on news publishers to search for news (Athey & Mobius, 2012) and it is possible that the same thing will happen on Facebook. However, the opposite argument would be that newspapers use Facebook as a distribution platform to reach their readers and thus enhance newspapers' brand like other companies marketing products on social media (Hutter et al., 2013; Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013; Lipsman et al., 2012). Both sides of the argument raise the important issue of competition between brands and the question of whether newspapers' brands are more recognizable on Facebook. Specifically, are Facebook and newspapers competing or complementing each other as brands? This questions leads to RQ4:

**RQ4: What is the relationship between brand loyalty towards Facebook and that towards newspapers---competitive or complementary---controlling for demography, news interest and news motivation.**

### **Social Media News Engagement And Perceived Quality Of News**

The perceived quality of news is a factor of whether readers enjoy and value the

news. Perceived quality helps news organizations gain the attention of the audience, hence, the good quality of news leads to a commercial success (Belt & Just, 2008; Meijer, 2012). The predictors of perceived quality from the audience's perspective, therefore, have gained scholarly attention.

The audience perceives the quality of news in terms of the relevance, accuracy, comprehensibility, impartiality, authoritativeness (news from authoritative sources), and credibility of news (Belt & Just, 2008; Go, Jung, & Wu, 2014; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Urban & Schweiger, 2013). Several factors influence the perceived quality of news. First, the news shared by a close friend in a social network results in a more positive evaluation of the news than that of news shared by others. People tend to have a favorable attitude towards close friends, and this favorable attitude transfers to the information they share (Go, Jung, & Wu, 2014; Zhao & Xie, 2011). Similarly, in the era of marketing research, scholars have found the effect of celebrity endorsement. People tend to perceive the good quality of information which is endorsed by a celebrity they admire (Chio & Rifon, 2007).

Second, the bandwagon effect can predict perceived quality. This effect refers to the idea that people tend to agree with the majority opinion (Go et al., 2014). For example, a collective-supported opinion is more likely to be considered credible than an opinion without many people's support (Go et al., 2014). Likewise, an experiment asked participants to rate news articles from 4 sources: news editors, other audience members of the online news service, the computer terminal where they accessed the news articles, and individual users (experiment participants selected their own articles.) The result



demonstrated a bandwagon effect as participants rated news articles selected by multiple audience member higher than they rated those selected by news editors (Sundar & Nass, 2001). Scholars found out higher star ratings, sales volume, peer agreement and the number of viewers result in perceived quality (Sundar, 2008; Sundar, Knobloch-Westersick, & Hastall, 2007; Sundar, Xu, & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2009). As a result, we can anticipate a bandwagon effect happening on Facebook. When the number of times a news article gets shared exceed the critical mass, readers tend to perceive the news article as having good quality.

Third, readers tend to perceive news from a prestigious media brand as of good quality, especially when readers lack the knowledge needed to evaluate the quality of news (Go et al., 2014; Urban & Schweiger, 2013). Perceptions of good quality transfer from the author or the media organization to the information given (Urban & Schweiger, 2013). For example, the brand name of prestigious agencies, such as CNN, BBC, and the New York Times, have a positive influence on readers' perception of news (Go et al., 2014). Similarly, perceived quality of news writing style is related to the evaluation of media (Slater & Rouner, 1996). Readers evaluate the news site of a prestigious news organization as being more credible than a news site of a less known news organization (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000). Social networks spread news by clicking the "Like" button of news, and the "Like" generates attention to the information through the social networks (Brettel, Reich, Gavilanes, & Flatten, 2015). In addition, readers tend to have a more favorable attitude towards the information that friends endorse, except when those views are political and might influence levels of news credibility (e.g. liberal readers tend

to consider liberal media more credible than conservative media). Therefore, the following hypothesis is set forth:

**H6: Social media news engagement is positively associated with perceived quality of news.**

### **Social Media News Engagement And Perceived News Satisfaction**

News satisfaction has received much attention in the realm of communication studies because satisfaction may lead to readers spending more time on the sites, revisiting sites, enhancing loyalty and driving readership (Lim, Al-Aali, Heinrichs, & Lim, 2013; Mersey et al., 2012; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). According to Oliver (1981), satisfaction has been defined as “need fulfillment and pleasure.” Satisfaction occurs when the experience using a product meets the expectation (Lim et al., 2013). As such, perceived news satisfaction refers to fulfillment and pleasure brought by news products.

Multiple studies have documented several factors that influence media satisfaction, such as media use, attention and news site features. Concerning media use, news exposure and the frequency of visiting a news site enhances news satisfaction (Chyi, Yang, Lewis, & Zheng, 2010; Mersey et al., 2012; Palmgreen & Rayburn, 1985). However, Perse & Rubin (1988) examined the relationship between audience activity and soap opera satisfaction and found out that attention is a stronger predictor of media satisfaction than media use (Perse & Rubin, 1988). Regarding the features of news sites, Liu, Cheung and Lee (2016) found the effect of technology gratifications, including convenience, medium appeal, and whether the medium provides a human-like and

personal environment, on users' satisfaction with microblogging (Liu, Cheung, & Lee, 2016). Chyi et al (2010) discovered that a news site that offers different types of information for readers (a diversity of site features) enhances news satisfaction. In addition, studies showed a robust relationship between a site's interactivity features and perceived satisfaction (Chung & Nah, 2009; Teo, Oh, Liu, & Wei, 2003). In other words, readers feel more satisfied when they use customization features of a new site more often. Therefore, it might be assumed that because news on Facebook has interactive features including reactions buttons, sharing and commenting, newspapers' sharing news on Facebook might enhance readers' perceived satisfaction toward news.

Overall, media use, news exposure and attention are the concepts overlapping the idea of engagement. As a result, news engagement is positively related to perceived satisfaction toward news (Mersey et al., 2012). Based on the aforementioned studies, H7 is proposed:

**H7: Social media news engagement is positively associated with perceived news satisfaction.**

### **Chapter 3: Method**

To answer the research questions, an online survey was conducted because it was an efficient and cost-effective way to collect data from a large sample who resemble the general public (Schutt, 2012). Moreover, the focus in this dissertation is the digital audience, as this dissertation examine news consumption on Facebook. Therefore, internet users were the target population. Obtaining random sample of the population of internet users would be problematic because there is no central registry of all digital media users. As a result, conducting online surveys, rather than a census, was an appropriate method.

Although, compared with other surveys online surveys are much faster, less expensive, have lower intrusiveness and a lower social-desirability effect (Fisher 2005), some potential issues needed to be carefully considered, such as: inferential issues, coverage errors and the issue of self-selection or volunteer samples.

Although some scholars were once concerned about inferential issues of online surveys given that they uses non-probability samples (Callegaro and DiSogra, 2008), the number of studies using online survey, today, are increasing because of the ability of surveys to reduce interviewer bias and social desirability effects and its efficiency (Baker, 2010). The prevalence of online surveys demonstrates that online surveys are acceptable in scholarly research, especially for the studies targeting online users.

The target population of this dissertation is online news users. It is fair not to include those who do not have access to the internet. However, not all surveys have the goal of accurately measuring the true values of survey variables in the target population.

For studies about the relationships between personal characteristics and behavior, such as “how personal characteristics might drive product preference or how various attitudes might interact to create openness to different advertising messages,” online surveys are acceptable (Fowlers, 2014). Thus, an online survey is an appropriate approach for this dissertation.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

This study used an opt-in panel of paid respondents recruited through Survey Sampling International, SSI ([www.surveysampling.com](http://www.surveysampling.com)). SSI is a survey research company with 40 years of experience. SSI also provided the sample for Pew Research Center’s political polarization survey (Pew Research Center, 2014). SSI has proprietary panels through which obtains participants, and reaches participants on devices including desktops, laptops, smartphones and tablets. Respondents clicked on a link to an online survey questionnaire. Data were collected through Qualtrics, an online research platform where researchers do online survey and collect data (<http://qualtrics.com/>).

### **SAMPLE**

The population of this study involved adults who reside in the United States, who were at least 18 years old and who have used Facebook to get news. The panel sample is a non-probability sample. Quota sampling was used to ensure the sample represented the general population by age, which helps this study break down the data on measures such as income and education. This dissertation is based on statistics showing the proportion of Facebook users by age (We Are Social, n.d.), 18.75 percent of the sample is at the age

of 18-24; 27.08 percent of the sample is at the age of 25-34; 19.79 percent of the sample is at the age of 35-44; 16.66 percent of the sample is at the age of 45-54; 7.29 percent of the sample is at the age of 55-64 and 10.41 percent of the sample is older than 65. See Table 3.1 for the comparison of Facebook users' age and survey participants' age distribution.

Age groups	% of Facebook users in the US
18-24	18.75
25-34	27.08
35-44	19.79
45-54	16.66
55-64	7.29
65+	10.41

Table 3.1: The Number of Facebook Users In The United States

Source: We Are Social, n.d.

The online survey was launched March 2, 2017 and closed March 7, 2017. Some 658 respondents submitted a questionnaire online. Respondents who had not answered a majority of questions were removed from analysis, so the sample size dropped to 588. The completion rate was 89.3 percent.

### **SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

The dissertation examined the antecedents and the effects of social media news engagement. The instrument consisted of three parts: the antecedents of social media news engagement, social media news engagement and the effects of social media news engagement.

## **The Antecedents Of Social Media News Engagement**

The antecedents include news perceived attributes and social networks. The study examined to what degree do the perceived attributes of news content, including emotionality, relevance, the credibility of newspapers, and information utility, contribute to social media news engagement.

### ***Emotionality***

**RQ1 asked: “What news perceived attributes in terms of emotionality are related to social media news engagement?”** Previous studies have shown the effect of emotionality on information sharing. Berger and Milkman (2011) examined reasons for certain content going more viral than other. The results showed that positive content goes more viral than negative content. In addition, content that evoked high-arousal positive emotion (e.g. awe) is more likely to be shared than content that evoked low-arousal negative emotion (e.g. anger or anxiety). Rudet, Buder and Hesse (2014) found out that unexpected and controversial news content was more shared but not news that contains aggression.

Drawing on previous studies (Rudat, Buder, & Hesse, 2014; Berger & Milkman, 2012), emotion in news content was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following statement on a 5-point scale, from 1(for strongly disagree) to 5 (for strongly agree): I find the news from news publishers I often see on Facebook (1) surprising, (2) interesting, (3) funny, (4) controversial, (5) makes me anxious, (6) makes me angry.

### *Relevance*

Specified in **H1: “Perceived relevance of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement.”** Adopted from Clark, Black, & Judson's study (2017) and Lee, Son, & Kim's study (2016), relevance in news content was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following statement on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for not at all) to 5 (for very much): I find the news from newspapers I often see on Facebook relevant to me.

### *The credibility of newspapers*

**RQ2 asked ” What is the relationship between perceived credibility of news on Facebook and social media news engagement.”** Based on the research model, this dissertation explored the effect of social media news engagement on the credibility of newspapers. Adopting from previous studies (Ma et al., 2014; Tsfati, 2013), the variable was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with five statements on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for not at all) to 5 (for very much): I find the news from newspapers I often see on Facebook (1) unbiased, (2) objective, (3) trustworthy, (4) accurate, (5) tell the whole stories. To compute the index, the five items were summed and averaged.

### *Information utility*

**H2 predicts “Perceived information utility of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement.”** Drawing from Bobkowski’s study (2015), the attribute utility was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the five following statements on a 5-point scale, from 1



(for strongly disagree) to 5 (for strongly agree): I find the news from newspapers I often see on Facebook (1) helpful, (2) important, (3) informative, (4) useful, (5) valuable. To compute the index, the five items were summed and averaged.

### *Social Networks*

The other antecedent of social media news engagement includes social networks, which was measured by two constructs: tie strength and homophily. **H3 predicts “Perceived tie strength in social network is positively associated with social media news engagement.”** The tie strength measurements were adapted from Ma et al., (2014)’s study. Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with three statements on a 5-point scale: (1) I have good relationships with people in my online social network, (2) I am in close contact with the people in my online social network, (3) I enjoy reading news stories shared by the people in my online social network.

**RQ3 asked: “What is the relationship between perceived homophily in social network and social media news engagement?”** Homophily was measured by asking respondents to rate the following statements: (1) Their thoughts and interests are similar to mine, (2) They express attitudes similar to mine, (3) Most people I connect with on this platform have a lot in common, (4) Their backgrounds are similar to mine.

## **Social Media News Engagement**

Drawing from previous studies (O'Brien & Toms, 2010; Lim et al, 2015), social media news engagement was measured by four constructs: attention, functional engagement, emotional engagement and communal engagement.

### ***Attention***

The attention measure is adopted from Drew and Weaver's study (Drew & Weaver, 1990). The respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they pay attention to the news when they are using Facebook on a 5-point scale from 1 (little attention) to 5 (close attention).

### ***Functional engagement***

In order to measure functional engagement, respondents were asked how often they do the following on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for never) to 5 (for all the time): (1) I click the news of the newspapers on Facebook? (2) I share the news of the newspapers on Facebook? (3) I comment the news the news of the newspapers on Facebook? (4) I like the news the news of the newspapers on Facebook.

### ***Emotional engagement***

In order to measure emotional engagement, respondents will be asked how often they do the following on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for never) to 5 (for all the time): (1) I enjoy the news reading experience via Facebook, (2) I posted my feelings about news on Facebook, (3) I quoted from the news when it was good or witty.

### *Communal engagement*

In order to measure communal engagement, respondents will be asked how often they do the following on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for never) to 5 (for all the time): (1) I have shared my opinion about the newspapers I see on Facebook with other readers. (2) I have shared the news publishers' promotion message.

## **THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT**

### **Brand awareness**

Brand awareness is the dependent variable in the Social media news engagement model, specified in **H4: "Social media new engagement is positively related to newspaper brand awareness."** Brand awareness is defined as "the simple familiarity (recall or recognition) of a brand name relative to its product category." Recognition of a brand includes remembering the brand name, distinguishing the brand name from other companies and recognizing the brand. Adopted from Yoo et al.'s study (2000) and Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt and Füller' study (2013), brand awareness was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they disagree or agree with the following statements on a five-point scale, from 1(for strongly disagree) to 5 (for strongly agree): (1) I remember the name of the newspapers I often see on Facebook (M=3.14, SD=1.26). (2) I know the news I read on Facebook is produced by newspapers, not by Facebook (M=3.55, SD=1.18). (3) I pay attention to the name of the newspaper that provides the news I get on Facebook (M=3.38, SD=1.22). (4) I click the news because I recognize the news source's brand (M=3.38, SD=1.19). These were summed and averaged into an index with acceptable reliability.

### **Brand loyalty**

The dissertation examined the effect of social media news engagement on newspaper brand loyalty. **H6 predicted “Social media news engagement is positively related to newspaper brand loyalty.”** Adapted from Lim et al., (2015), brand loyalty was defined as “the likelihood of that readers will remain loyal to the newspapers.” Adapting the measurements from Delgado-Ballester, Manuera-Aleman, & Yague-Guillen's study (2003) and Lim et al., study (2015), respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the following statements on a five-point scale, from 1(for strongly disagree) to 5 (for strongly agree): “I will continue getting news from this newspapers”, “I will recommend this newspapers to others,” and “I consider myself to be loyal to this brand.” To compute the index, the three items were summed and averaged.

### **Brand loyalty competitive or complementary relationship**

**RQ4 asked: “What is the relationship between brand loyalty towards Facebook and that towards newspapers---competitive or complimentary---controlling for demographic, news interest and news motivation.”** This dissertation explores the brand competitive or complementary relationship between Facebook and newspapers on Facebook to see whether Facebook takes away newspaper readers and turns them into loyal Facebook users. Adopting the definition of competitive relationship from previous studies (Huang, Yang, & Chyi, 2013; Lee & Chyi, 2015; Yang & Chyi, 2011), “a competitive relationship between two media outlets is the negative association between the use of one media outlet and the use of the other media outlet, meaning the

likelihood of using one media outlet is negatively associated with that of using the other, other things being equal (Lee & Chyi, 2015, p. 10).” This dissertation defines a brand loyalty competitive relationship as “the negative association between brand loyalty towards newspapers and the brand loyalty toward Facebook, meaning the likelihood of being loyal to the newspapers is negatively associated with that to Facebook as a news platform, other things being equal.” Hence, a negative relationship represents a brand loyalty competitive relationship whereas a positive relationship represents a brand loyalty complementary relationship.

#### **Perceived quality of news**

Perceived quality of news is the dependent variable of social media news engagement. **H7 predicted: “Social media news engagement is positively associated with perceived quality of news.”** Perceived quality of news is measured by asking respondents “What rating would you give to the quality of the news?” Responses were 1 (very bad), 2 (bad), 3 (neutral), 4 (good), 5 (very good).

#### **Perceived news satisfaction**

Perceived news satisfaction is the dependent variable of social media news engagement. **H8 predicted “Social media news engagement is associated with perceived news satisfaction.”** Satisfaction is defined as “need fulfillment, pleasure, displeasure, and evaluation of the consumption experience (Oliver, 1981).” Thus, news satisfaction represents the overall evaluation of news consumption on Facebook. Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with Facebook as a platform as well as

with newspapers on Facebook. Adapted from Palmgreen & Rayburn (1985), news satisfaction was measured by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they are satisfied with (1) Facebook as a news platform. (2) newspapers from 1 (mostly dissatisfied) to 5 (mostly satisfied). To compute the index, the three items were summed and averaged.

### **CONTROL VARIABLES**

Age, gender, and news interest were asked for control purposes. Adapted from a survey, titled “Key News Audiences Now Blend Online and Traditional Sources” by Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, 2008), news interest was measured by asking respondents “How much do you enjoy keeping up with the news?” on a 5-point scale, from 1 (for not at all) to 5 (for a lot). News motivation was also asked for control purposes. News motivation was asked whether respondents “mostly come across news on Facebook because they are looking for it” or “they mostly come across news on Facebook, when they are doing other things online”. Respondents were also asked whether they come across news on Facebook because (1) they are looking for news or (2) when they are doing other things online.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

The dissertation examines the antecedent and the effects of social media news engagement. Three statistical analyses were performed. First, a factor analysis: Factor analysis is performed to reduce a large set of variables into a few variables that measure the similar constructs and explain most of the variance in the original variables.

Therefore, a factor analysis was conducted in order to identify the concept of social media news engagement because the measures of social media news engagement are not standard and are drawn from other studies related to media consumption on other media. Second, a hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was conducted. OLS regression explored the relationship between news perceived attributes and social media news engagement as well as the relationship between social networks and social media news engagement. Hierarchical OLS regression analysis allowed the study via models to identify the prediction power of various news perceived attributes and social networks to social media news engagement. Hence, from H1 through H3, and from RQ1 through RQ 3, the dependent variable was social media news engagement and the independent variables were news perceived attributes and social networks. For H4 to H8, the dependent variables were brand awareness, brand loyalty, media credibility, perceived news satisfaction and news quality and the independent variable was social media news engagement. Third, partial correlation analysis was conducted to examine the competitive relationship (the likelihood of being loyal to the newspapers is negatively associated with that to Facebook as a news platform) or complementary relationship (the likelihood of being loyal to the newspapers is positively associated with that to Facebook as a news platform) between Facebook and newspapers in terms of brand loyalty.

## Chapter 4: Results

### DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The study sample was primarily white US citizens (74.1 percent), 9.7 percent African-American, 9.4 percent Hispanic, and 4.3 percent Asian. The data showed that 44 percent of the respondents were male and 56 percent were female. Some 46.5 percent of the sample aged under 34 ( $M=39.91$ ,  $SD=14.93$ ). About 7.5 percent of the sample was aged 65 or older. Some 15.7 percent were between ages 18 to 24. About 30.8 percent were between the ages of 25-34; 19.6 percent were aged 35-44; 13.8 percent were between the ages of 45-54 and 12.6 percent were aged 55-64. With regard to age and gender, the sample used in this dissertation can be considered representative of the U.S. Facebook users especially when compared to the data of Facebook users in the U.S (We Are Social, n.d.). The U.S. data showed the number of users from 55-64 is more than that from age group 65+ whereas the number of users from age group 65+ is more than that from 55-64. Overall, the sample did not deviate from the U.S. data by too much. After conducting Chi-square tests as a rough comparative measure, there was no difference between the current SSI sample and U.S. Facebook users' survey sample in terms of age ( $X^2(25)=30$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and gender ( $X^2(1)=2$ ,  $p > .05$ ). (See Table 4.1 for comparison.)

More than two thirds of the sample (67.4 percent) had a college degree or higher. More than half the sample (51.4 percent) reported a household income of less than \$50,000.



Age groups	% of Facebook users in the US	SSI participants (N=588)%
18-24	18.75	15.7
25-34	27.08	30.8
35-44	19.79	19.6
45-54	16.66	13.8
55-64	7.29	12.6
65+	10.41	7.5
Gender		
Female	51.0%	56%
Male	48.9%	44%

Table 4.1: The Comparison Of Facebook Users And The Sample

Source: (We Are Social, n.d.)

Respondents were regular Facebook users and got news from Facebook. More than half the participants reported they visited Facebook several times a day (64.2 percent) and 19.1 percent logged into Facebook once a day. On an average, participants' daily spent 75 minutes on Facebook. About 71 percent of the participants got news from Facebook at least a few times a week, 26.1 percent get news on Facebook several times a week and 34.9 percent of the respondents came across news on Facebook because they were looking for news, while 62 percent came across news on Facebook when they were doing other things online. On an average, participants spent 27 percent of their time on Facebook on news. Overall, respondents enjoyed keeping up with news (Range= 1-5, M=3.75, Median=4, SD=1.08) on Facebook.

#### **NEWS CONTENT PERCEIVED ATTRIBUTES**

Respondents were asked to rate the statements about news content in terms of six attributes (I find the news on Facebook (1) surprising (Range=1-5, M=3.09, Median=3,

SD=1.2), (2) interesting (Range=1-5, M=3.5, Median=3, SD=1.1), (3) funny (Range=1-5, M=3.03, Median=3, SD=1.12), (4) controversial (Range=1-5, M=3.49, Median=4, SD=1.1), (5) makes me angry (Range=1-5, M=2.94, Median=3, SD=1.28), and (6) anxious (Range=1-5, M=2.79, Median=3, SD=1.29). Respondents found news on Facebook most interesting and controversial but the least was making people anxious. In addition, respondents rated news on Facebook as mildly credible (Range=1-5, M=2.88, Median= 3, SD=1, Cronbach's alpha = .92) but somewhat relevant (Range=1-5, M=3.2, Median= 3, SD=1.15) and that somewhat refers to the utility of information (Range=1-5, M=3.3, Median= 3.2, SD=0.98, Cronbach's alpha = .95).

Variables	1 (Not at all) (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (Very much)
Surprising	12.2	18.8	32.2	21.7	15.1
Interesting	4.8	13.9	27.8	34.0	19.6
Funny	10.6	18.9	38.6	20.9	11.0
Controversial	4.9	11.7	30.5	35.2	17.7
Anxious	20.2	22.2	28.1	17.1	12.4
Angry	18.1	17.7	29.6	21.9	12.8
Relevant	10.0	15.1	32.7	29.5	12.7

Table 4.2: Frequency of News Content Perceived Attributes

How much do you agree with the following statements? I find the news on Facebook is surprising, interesting, funny, controversial, relevant, and makes me anxious, angry.

### **Social Networks**

This dissertation examined the characteristics of social networks to explore how social networks influence news engagement on social media. The data suggest that respondents had moderately strong ties with their social networks in terms of having close contact and relationships with their social networks as well as reading news shared

by social networks (Range=1-5, M=3.7, Median= 3.67, SD=0.86, Cronbach's alpha = .79). In addition, respondents had a moderate similarity with their social networks in terms of background, attitude, interest, and other things in common (Range=1-5, M=3.45, Median= 3.5, SD=0.87, Cronbach's alpha = .88).

### **Brand Awareness/Brand Loyalty**

In order to examine the effect of social news engagement on brand awareness, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they remembered, knew, paid attention to, and recognized newspapers brand names on Facebook. Overall, respondents were moderately aware of the brand name of newspapers on Facebook (M=3.37, Median=3.38, SD=1.02). These were summed and averaged into an index with acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .87). With regard to brand loyalty in terms of continuing to get news from the newspapers they read, recommending the newspapers to others and being loyal to, respondents showed a moderate brand loyalty index score (M=3.32, Median= 3.33, SD=1.07, Cronbach's alpha = .88).

### **Perceived quality of news/Perceived News Satisfaction**

Most respondents perceived quality of news as moderate (Range=1-5, M=3.50, Median=4, SD=0.93). More than one-third of the respondents perceive news quality as neutral (35.6%) and good (39.5%). Similarly, respondents are moderately satisfied with the newspapers they saw (Range=1-5, M=3.54, Median= 4, SD=1.). More than one-third of the respondents report neutral (37.1%) and satisfied (34.2%) on perceived news satisfaction.

Variables	1 (Very bad) (%)	2 (Bad)(%)	3(Neutral)(%)	4 (Good) (%)	5 (Very good) (%)
Perceived quality of news	3.3	8.7	35.6	39.5	12.9
Variables	1 (Mostly dissatisfied) (%)	2(Dissatisfied) (%)	3(Neutral)(%)	4(Satisfied) (%)	5 (Mostly satisfied) (%)
Perceived news satisfaction	4.4	6.6	37.1	34.2	17.7

Table 4.3: Frequency of Perceived Quality of News/Perceived News Satisfaction

Perceived quality of news: What rating would you give to the quality of the news?

Perceived news satisfaction: How satisfied are you with newspapers you see on Facebook?

## FACTOR ANALYSIS

Before answering the research questions, the concept of social media news engagement had to be operationalized because the measures of social media news engagement are not usually available on single standard questionnaires, but are adopted from multiple studies; not all specifically relate to social media news. Hence, an exploratory principal components analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was conducted by analyzing inter-correlations among the 10 engagement measurement items. A scree plot and the traditional method for determining the number of factors, which relies on components with eigenvalues greater than 1, were used to determine the attributes. The sample was suitable for PCA because of the significant value for Bartlett's test,  $X^2 = 4009.42$ ,  $df = 45$ ,  $p < .001$  (Bartlett's test analyzes whether there are correlations between

variables), and a value of .94 for the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test (KMO measures were used to test whether it is appropriate to run a PCA on a data set.) According to Kaiser's classification (1974), the value of KMO more than .08 is meritorious for factor analysis.

The process extracted two factors composed of the concept of social media news engagement, which accounted for 75.3 percent of the data's total variance. The item "I enjoy the news reading experience via Facebook" was removed because of the low factor loading, .31. The data suggested two factors: attention engagement and behavioral engagement. The first factor consisted of two indicators of attention engagement (1. How much attention do respondents pay to news? 2. How often do respondents click on links of the news on Facebook?), accounting for 64.8 percent of the data's total variance. Attention engagement represents the attention paid to the news. The second factor consisted of seven indicators of behavioral engagement and accounted for 10.5 percent of total variance. Behavioral engagement indicates behaviors that share, comment, like, post, quote the news. Behavioral engagement had a high reliability (M=2.8, Median= 2.86, SD=1.17, Cronbach's alpha = .94) while attention engagement (M=3.48, SD= .99, Median= 3.5, Cronbach's alpha = .79) had an acceptable reliability level, which is .7 or higher (DeVellis, 2003; Kline, 2005).

	Item mean (SD)	Factor loading	Eigenvalues % of total variance explained
Factor 1: Attention Engagement (M=3.48, SD= .99 Cronbach's $\alpha$ =.79 )			64.81%
How much attention do you pay to news when you use Facebook?	3.40 (1.13)	.837	
How often do you click on links of the news on Facebook	3.48 (1.05)	.805	
Factor 2 Behavioral Engagement (M= 2.8 , SD= 1.17 Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .94 )			10.50%
How often do you share the news links on Facebook	2.8 (1.27)	.757	
How often do you comment on the news links on Facebook	2.66 (1.36)	.823	
How often do you click the "like" button for news links on Facebook	3.18 (1.35)	.691	
How often do you enjoy the news reading experience via Facebook	3.47 (1.17)	.310	
How often do you post your feeling about news on Facebook	2.9 (1.39)	.781	
How often do you quote from the new when it was good or witty	2.75 (1.41)	.835	
How often do you share opinion about newspapers you see on Facebook with other readers	2.8 (1.38)	.849	
How often do you share the news publishers' promotion messages	2.54 (1.38)	.818	

Table 4.4: Exploratory Factor Results For Social Media News Engagement

### **PREDICTORS OF SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT**

From H1 to H3 and from RQ1 to RQ 3, the independent variables are relevance, credibility of newspapers, news perceived attributes and social networks, and the dependent variable is social media news engagement. Hierarchical ordinary least squares

(OLS) regression was conducted to examine the effect of news perceived attributes, social networks, demographics (gender and age), news interest, and news motivation (with 14 individual items) on attention engagement and behavioral engagement, respectively. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), there are two ways of conducting OLS regression: One is to enter focal variables in the first model and control variables in the last model. That is, variables with greater importance are entered early. The rationale is that entering focal variables first allow researchers to see all the effects of independent variables on dependent variables at the first place and how control variables changes the effects (e.g. the size of the betas change.) as adding control variables in the equation. The other way is to enter control variables in the first model, which allow researchers to see if the relationship between the control variables and independent variables goes away. Both ways solve the same equation but with different approaches to get the result. This dissertation entered focal variables first because it provides the overall effects of focal variables. Besides, entering important variables first provides more information than entering control variables first.

The advantage of using hierarchical ordinary least square includes determining how much each set of variables uniquely adds to the prediction of the dependent variables by adding sets of variables to a regression equation. In this dissertation, the news perceived attributes were entered in the first block, the variables of social networks were entered in the second block, and control variables were entered in the third block.

### **Factor 1: Attention Engagement**

With regard to attention engagement, when all variables were entered, they accounted for 66.4 percent of the variance in attention engagement. The news perceived attributes (I find the news on Facebook (1) surprising, (2) interesting, (3) funny, (4) controversial, (5) makes me angry, (6) makes me anxious, (7) credibility, and (8) information utility) were entered in model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .605$ ,  $F(9, 467) = 79.4$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, the factors of relevance ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ), surprising ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < .001$ ), interesting ( $\beta = .32$ ,  $p < .001$ ), making people angry ( $\beta = -.09$ ,  $p < .001$ ), information utility ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of attention engagement.

In Model 2, social networks including tie strength and homophily were entered. The addition of tie strength and homophily to the prediction of attention engagement (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .01, and overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .615$ ,  $F(2, 465) = 6.29$ ,  $p < .01$ . The factors of relevance ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ), surprising ( $\beta = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ), interesting ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and information utility ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ ) remained significant predictors of attention engagement. Tie strength ( $\beta = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ ) also was a significant predictor of attention engagement, but homophily was not.

In Model 3, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were added into the equation as controls. Their addition to the prediction of attention engagement (Model 3) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .06, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .675$ ,  $F(4, 461) = 21.02$ ,  $p < .001$ . All the significant predictors remained, except the news content attribute of making people angry. In sum, H1 “Perceived relevance of news on Facebook



is positively associated with social media news engagement,” H2 “Perceived utility of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement,” and H3 “Perceived tie strength in a social network is positively associated with social media news engagement,” are supported in terms of attention engagement.

All the control variables – gender ( $\beta = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ), age ( $\beta = -.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ), news interest ( $\beta = .29$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and news motivation ( $\beta = -.07$ ,  $p < .05$ ) – were significant predictors of attention engagement. The data suggest that male readers were more likely to be engaged than female readers in news on Facebook. Likewise, younger readers were more likely to be engaged with news on Facebook than older readers.

Comparing the three models, news perceived attributes had stronger prediction power than social networks to attention engagement, based on the  $R^2$  change added by social networks to the model. However, credibility was not a significant predictor of attention engagement. Homophily was not a significant predictor of news attention or engagement and tie strength had little prediction power. Overall, news interest was the strongest predictor of attention engagement and uniquely accounted for 5.1 percent of the variance in attention engagement ( $sr=.226$ ). Information utility was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 0.86 percent of the variance in attention engagement ( $sr=.093$ ). Tie strength was the third strongest predictor of attention engagement and uniquely accounted for 0.6 percent of the variance in attention engagement ( $sr=.08$ ). These findings suggest that news interest was the main driving force for attention engagement, although news content and tie strength also played important roles (see table 4.5).

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
News Perceived Attributes						
Interesting	.32***	.04	.30***	.04	.26	.04
Surprising	.16***	.03	.15***	.03	.11**	.03
Funny	-.02	.04	-.02	.04	-.04	.03
Controversial	.03	.03	.01	.03	.00	.03
Make anxious	.03	.03	.03	.03	.05	.03
Make angry	-.09*	.03	-.07	.03	-.05	.03
Relevance	.18***	.04	.18***	.04	.12**	.04
Credibility	-.01	.05	.05	.05	.01	.05
Information Utility	.27***	.06	.24***	.06	.20**	.06
Social Networks						
Tie Strength			.15**	.05	.12**	.05
Homophily			.05	.05	-.07	.04
Controls						
Gender					.06*	.06
Age					-.07*	.002
News Interest					.29***	.03
News motivation					-.07*	.06
F	79.44		6.29		21.02	
R <sup>2</sup>	.605		.615		.675	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.597		.606		.664	

Table 4.5: Hierarchical OLS Regression Of Variables On Attention Engagement, N=588

## Factor 2: Behavioral Engagement

With regard to behavioral engagement (e.g. sharing, commenting news, posting feeling about news, and clicking “like button”), when all variables were entered into blocks, they accounted for 55.7 percent of the variance in behavioral engagement. The news perceived attributes (Respondents were asked “I find the news on Facebook: (1) surprising, (2) interesting, (3) funny, (4) controversial, (5) makes me angry, (6) makes me anxious, (7) credibility, and (8) information utility”), were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .524$ ,  $F(9, 470) = 57.6$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, the factors of relevance ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $p < .01$ ), surprising ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .001$ ), funny ( $\beta = .16$ ,  $p <$

.001) making people anxious ( $\beta = .10, p < .05$ ), and credibility ( $\beta = .17, p < .01$ ) were significant predictors of behavioral engagement. In other words, these news perceived attributes have influence on behavioral engagement.

In Model 2, social networks including tie strength and homophily were entered. The addition of tie strength and homophily to the prediction of attention engagement (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .02, and overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .548, F(2, 468) = 12.02, p < .001$ , and the factors of relevance ( $\beta = .16, p < .01$ ), surprising ( $\beta = .18, p < .001$ ), funny ( $\beta = .15, p < .001$ ), making people anxious ( $\beta = .10, p < .05$ ), and credibility ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ) remained significant. Tie strength ( $\beta = .18, p < .001$ ) also had a significant influence on behavioral engagement but homophily did not.

In Model 3, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were added into the equation as controls. The addition of demographics, news motivation and news interest to the prediction of behavioral engagement (Model 3) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .02, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .571, F(4, 464) = 6.24, p < .001$ . All the significant predictors remained. Gender ( $\beta = -.07, p < .05$ ), age ( $\beta = -.07, p < .05$ ), and news motivation ( $\beta = -.11, p < .01$ ) were significant predictors of behavioral engagement but news interest was not. The data suggest that male readers were less likely than female readers to share or react to news on Facebook. Then, younger readers were more likely to share or react to news on Facebook than older readers. Last, Those whose intention is looking for news on Facebook were less likely, than those who happen to see news on Facebook, to share or react to the news on Facebook. In sum, H1 and H3 are supported but H2 is not in terms of behavioral engagement.

Overall, tie strength was the strongest predictors of behavioral engagement and uniquely explained 1.69 percent the variance in behavioral engagement ( $sr=.13$ ), suggesting that people were more likely to share or react to the news shared by those with whom they have strong contact with. Compared to attention engagement, among all news perceived attributes, credibility was the strongest predictor of behavioral engagement but information utility was not, and it was vice versa for attention engagement. In addition, news interestingness was a predictor of attention engagement but not for behavioral engagement. See table 4.6.

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
News Perceived Attributes						
Interesting	.08	.05	.04	.05	.03	.05
Surprising	.19***	.04	.18***	.04	.13**	.04
Funny	.16***	.05	.15***	.04	.12**	.04
Controversial	.00	.04	-.02	.04	-.03	.04
Make anxious	.10	.04	.10**	.04	.11*	.04
Make angry	.01	.04	.02	.04	.04	.04
Relevance	.17**	.05	.16**	.05	.11*	.05
Credibility	.17**	.06	.15**	.06	.13*	.06
Information Utility	.06	.08	.01	.08	.01	.08
Social Networks						
Tie Strength			.18***	.06	.19***	.06
Homophily			.02	.06	.02	.06
Controls						
Gender					-.07*	.07
Age					-.07*	.003
News Interest					.07	.04
News motivation					-.11	.08
F	57.58		12.02		6.24	
R <sup>2</sup>	.524		.548		.571	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.515		.537		.557	

Table 4.6:

Hierarchical OLS Regression Of Predictors For Behavioral Engagement And Control Variables On Behavioral Engagement, N = 588.

Hypotheses	Attention Engagement	Behavioral Engagement	Supported?
H1: Perceived relevance of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement	$\beta = .12, p < .01$	$\beta = .11, p < .05$	Yes
H2: Perceived information utility of news on Facebook is positively associated with social media news engagement	$\beta = .20, p < .01$	$\beta = .01, p > .05$	Partially supported
H3: Perceived tie strength in a social network is positively associated with social media news engagement.	$\beta = .12, p < .01$	$\beta = .19, p < .001$	Yes
RQ	Attention Engagement	Behavioral Engagement	
RQ1 Which news content emotional attributes related to social media news engagement.	Surprising news	Surprising news Funny news News that makes people anxious	
RQ2 What is the relationship between perceived credibility of news on Facebook and social media news engagement?	Insignificant relationship	Positive relationship ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ )	
RQ3 What is the relationship between perceived homophily in a social network and social media news engagement?	Insignificant relationship	Insignificant relationship	

Table 4.7: Summary of H1-H3 and RQ1-RQ3

## THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT

To advance research on social media news engagement, this dissertation examines the effects of social media news engagement on brand awareness and brand loyalty on the newspapers on Facebook as well as perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction they see on Facebook. Hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was conducted with age, gender, news motivation and news interest as control variables. Attention and behavioral engagement were entered in the first block, and control variables were entered in the second block.

### Brand Awareness

**H4 predicted “Social media new engagement is positively related to newspapers brand awareness.”** When all variables were entered, they accounted for 44.6 percent of the variance in brand awareness of newspapers on Facebook. Attention

engagement and behavioral engagement were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .442$ ,  $F(2, 480) = 189.9$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, attention engagement ( $\beta = .52$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .001$ ) had significant influence on brand awareness.

In Model 2, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were entered as control variables. The addition of control variables to the prediction brand awareness (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .01, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .673$ ,  $F(4, 476) = 6.29$ ,  $p < .05$ . Attention engagement ( $\beta = .45$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 8.7 percent of the variance in brand awareness ( $sr=.295$ ). Behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 1.79 percent of the variance in brand awareness ( $sr=.134$ ). News interest ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was the third strongest significant predictor of brand awareness, and uniquely accounted for 0.7 percent of the variance in brand awareness ( $sr=.083$ ). These findings suggest that news attention engagement was the main driving force for brand awareness although behavioral engagement and news interest also played a role. That is, attention and behavioral engagement have positive influences on brand awareness. H4 is supported.

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Social Media Engagement				
Attention engagement	.45***	.35	.45***	.05
Behavioral engagement	.18***	.05	.18***	.04
Control variables				
Gender			-.002	.07
Age			.033	.002
News interest			.11*	.043
News motivation			-.03	.08
F	189.9		2.47	
R <sup>2</sup>	.442		.453	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.439		.446	

Table 4.8: Hierarchical OLS Regression Of Social Media News Engagement For Brand Awareness And Control Variables On Brand Awareness, N = 588.

### Brand Loyalty

**H5 posited “Social media news engagement is positively related to newspapers brand loyalty.”** When all variables were entered, they accounted for 44.4 percent of the variance in brand loyalty of newspapers on Facebook. Attention engagement and behavioral engagement were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .427$ ,  $F(2, 479) = 178.8$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, attention engagement ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of brand loyalty. In Model 2, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were entered as control variables. The addition of control variables to the prediction brand loyalty (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .02, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .451$ ,  $F(4, 475) = 5.03$ ,  $p < .01$ . Attention engagement ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 4.8 percent of the variance in brand loyalty ( $sr=.22$ ). Behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 2.9 percent of the variance in brand

loyalty ( $sr=.17$ ). News interest ( $\beta = .14$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was the third strongest significant predictor of brand loyalty and uniquely accounted for 1.2 percent of the variance in brand awareness ( $sr=.11$ ). News motivation also was significant ( $\beta = -.11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and accounted for .09 percent of the variance in brand loyalty ( $sr=-.097$ ). Similar to brand awareness, these findings suggest that attention engagement was the main driving force for brand loyalty although behavioral engagement, news interest and news motivation also played a role. That is, attention and behavioral engagement have a positive influence on brand loyalty. H5 is supported.

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Social Media Engagement				
Attention engagement	.44***	.05	.34***	.06
Behavioral engagement	.27**	.04	.24***	.04
Control variables				
Gender			.002	.08
Age			-.011	.03
News interest			.14**	.05
News motivation			-.11**	.08
F	178.8		5.04	
R <sup>2</sup>	.427		.451	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.444		.444	

Table 4.9: Hierarchical OLS Regression Of Social Media News Engagement For Brand Loyalty And Control Variables On Brand Loyalty, N = 588.

### **Brand Loyalty Competitive Or Complementary Relationship**

**RQ4 asked “What is the relationship between brand loyalty towards Facebook and that towards newspapers---competitive or complimentary---controlling for demographic, news interest and news motivation.”** Brand competitive relationship is defined as “a negative correlation between brand loyalty towards



Facebook and that towards newspapers,” whereas a complementary relationship represents “a positive relationship between represents brand loyalty toward Facebook and that toward newspapers.” Partial correlation, controlling for age, gender, news interest and news motivation, indicated a complimentary relationship between brand loyalty toward Facebook and that toward newspapers ( $r = .55, p < .001$ ). A follow-up analysis examined whether using Facebook to get news influences readers’ intention to visit newspapers’ sites. The result showed that respondents were somewhat likely to directly visit newspapers home website while they used Facebook to receive news (Rang: 1-5,  $M=3.4, SD=1.2$ ). The data suggests that Facebook was not taking away newspapers readers but Facebook and newspapers enhance each other brands.

### **The Credibility Of Newspapers**

**RQ 2 asked the relationship between perceived credibility of news on Facebook and social media news engagement.** When all variables were entered, they accounted for 41.0 percent of the variance in newspapers media credibility. Attention engagement and behavioral engagement were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .402, F(2, 480) = 161.3, p < .001$ . In Model 1, attention engagement ( $\beta = .32, p < .001$ ) and behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .38, p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of newspapers media credibility. In Model 2, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were entered as control variables. The addition of control variables to the prediction newspapers media credibility (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .02, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .417, F(4, 476) = 2.76, p < .05$ . Behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .33, p < .001$ ) was the strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for

5.7 percent of the variance in newspapers media credibility ( $sr=.24$ ). Attention engagement ( $\beta = .31, p < .001$ ) was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 4.2 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=.20$ ). News motivation ( $\beta = -.11, p < .01$ ) was the third strongest significant predictor of newspapers media credibility and uniquely accounted for 0.96 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=-.098$ ). These findings suggest that attention engagement was the main driving force for perceived news credibility although behavioral engagement and news motivation also played a role. That is, attention and behavioral engagement have a positive influence on the credibility of newspapers.

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Social Media Engagement				
Attention engagement	.32***	.05	.31***	.05
Behavioral engagement	.38***	.04	.33**	.04
Control variables				
Gender			-.04	.07
Age			-.06	.002
News interest			-.01	.04
News motivation			-.11*	.08
F	161.3		3.13	
R <sup>2</sup>	.402		.417	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.400		.410	

Table 4.10: Hierarchical OLS Regression Of Social Media News Engagement For Perceived News Satisfaction And Control Variables On The Credibility Of Newspapers, N = 588

### Perceived Quality Of News

H6 posited “Social media news engagement is positively associated with perceived quality of news.” When all variables were entered, they accounted for 31.4 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news on Facebook. Attention engagement and behavioral engagement were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was

significant,  $R^2 = .317$ ,  $F(2, 483) = 112.2$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, attention engagement ( $\beta = .37$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of perceived quality of news. In Model 2, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were entered as control variables. The addition of control variables to the prediction perceived quality of news (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .02, and the overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .333$ ,  $F(4, 479) = 2.76$ ,  $p < .05$ . Attention engagement ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 5.3 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=.23$ ). Behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 2.5 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=.16$ ). News motivation ( $\beta = -.12$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was the third strongest significant predictor of perceived quality of news and uniquely accounted for 1.21 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=-.11$ ). These findings suggest that attention engagement was the main driving force for perceived quality of news although behavioral engagement and news motivation also played a role. That is, attention engagement had positive influence on perceived quality of news. H6 is supported.

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Social Media Engagement				
Attention engagement	.37***	.05	.36***	.05
Behavioral engagement	.25***	.04	.23***	.04
Control variables				
Gender			.06	.07
Age			-.04	.002
News interest			-.02	.04
News motivation			-.12**	.08
F	112.1		2.76	
R <sup>2</sup>	.317		.333	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.314		.324	

Table 4.11: Hierarchical OLS regression of social media news engagement for perceived quality of news and control variables on perceived quality of news, N = 588.

### Perceived News Satisfaction

**H7 posited “Social media news engagement is associated with perceived news satisfaction.”** When all variables were entered, they accounted for 38.3 percent of the variance in perceived news satisfaction on Facebook. Attention engagement and behavioral engagement were entered in Model 1, and the overall model was significant,  $R^2 = .377$ ,  $F(2, 481) = 145.8$ ,  $p < .001$ . In Model 1, attention engagement ( $\beta = .49$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of perceived news satisfaction. In Model 2, age, gender, news interest and news motivation were entered as control variables. Their addition to the prediction of perceived news satisfaction (Model 2) led to an increase in  $R^2$  of .01, and overall model remained significant,  $R^2 = .39$ ,  $F(4, 477) = 2.50$ ,  $p < .05$ . Attention engagement ( $\beta = .44$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 7.8 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=.28$ ). Behavioral engagement ( $\beta = .14$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was the second strongest predictor and uniquely accounted for 0.9 percent of the variance in

perceived quality of news ( $sr=.097$ ). News motivation ( $\beta = -.01$ ,  $p < .05$ ) was the third strongest significant predictor of perceived quality of news and uniquely accounted for .08 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news ( $sr=-.09$ ). These findings suggest that attention engagement was the main driving force for perceived news satisfaction although behavioral engagement and news motivation also played a role. That is, attention engagement had positive influence on perceived news satisfaction. H7 is supported.

Variables	Model 1		Model 2	
	$\beta$	SE	$\beta$	SE
Social Media Engagement				
Attention engagement	.49***	.05	.44***	.08
Behavioral engagement	.17***	.04	.14**	.003
Control variables				
Gender			.01	.07
Age			-.06	.003
News interest			.06	.05
News motivation			-.10*	.08
F	145.8		2.50	
R <sup>2</sup>	.377		.390	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.375		.383	

Table 4.12: Hierarchical OLS regression of social media news engagement for perceived news satisfaction and control variables on perceived news satisfaction, N = 588.

Hypotheses	Attention Engagement	Behavioral Engagement	Supported?
H4: Social media new engagement is positively related to newspapers brand awareness	$\beta = .45, p < .001$	$\beta = .18, p < .001$	Yes
H5: Social media news engagement is positively related to newspapers brand loyalty	$\beta = .34, p < .001$	$\beta = .24, p < .001$	Yes
H6: Social media news engagement is positively associated with perceived quality of news	$\beta = .36, p < .001$	$\beta = .23, p < .001$	Yes
H7: Social media news engagement is associated with perceived news satisfaction	$\beta = .44, p < .001$	$\beta = .14, p < .001$	Yes
RQ	Results		
RQ4: What is the relationship between brand loyalty towards Facebook and that towards newspapers---competitive or complementary---controlling for demographic, news interest and news motivation.	Complementary relationship ( $r = .66, p < .001$ )		

Table 4.13: Summary of H4-H7 and RQ4

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

Overall, the purpose of this study was to examine the influences on social media news engagement and the effects of news engagement on brand awareness, brand loyalty, media credibility, and perceived news satisfaction. In addition, this dissertation presented a comprehensive picture regarding competition between Facebook and newspapers in terms of brand loyalty. I used Survey Sampling International (SSI), a survey research company, to test a theoretical model that used survey data from 588 respondents. The results challenged popular beliefs about the influence of Facebook on the business of journalism. This empirical examination had findings on the following areas: 1) the brand loyalty competitive-complimentary relationship between Facebook and newspapers. 2) the concepts of social media news engagement —attention engagement and behavioral engagement. 3) influence of news perceived attributes and social networks on social media news engagement. 4) the effect of social media news engagement on brand awareness, brand loyalty, the credibility of newspapers and perceived news satisfaction, The next section summarizes key findings and the implications.

### **DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT**

The concept of news engagement has been widely used, but it lacked consistent conceptions as its operationalization varied across studies. For example, in some studies, the term news engagement referred to “a collection of experiences that readers have with media (Mersey et al., 2012; Mersey, Malthouse, & Calder, 2010) while in other studies, it referred to “the time readers spend on media” (O’Brien, 2011). Napoli (2011) documented multidimensional of engagement, including attentiveness, exposure, loyalty,

emotion, appreciation, recall, attitudes, and behavior (Napoli, 2011). The varying definition of the term “engagement” and the use of engagement under different contexts can potentially cause confusion. One contribution of this dissertation was to identify the concepts of news engagement in the case of news on social media.

Social media news engagement consists of two constructs: attention engagement (e.g. attention paid to news and clicking on links of the news) and behavioral engagement (e.g. sharing, commenting, quoting the news and posting feelings about news). The dissertation established that attention engagement explains the most variance-- in brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived news satisfaction, and perceived quality of news – outweighing behavioral engagement. However, behavioral engagement and attention engagement have similar influence on media credibility, suggesting that readers were concerned about media credibility when disseminating news. Overall, the findings showed that news on Facebook moderately engages readers’ attention does (Range 1-5, M=3.44, SD=.99) and engages readers’ behaviors less than attention (Range 1-5, M=2.8, SD=1.17).

### **FACEBOOK AND NEWSPAPERS MUTUALLY GAIN BRAND LOYALTY**

The data about brand loyalty toward Facebook and about brand loyalty toward newspapers showed a positive correlation, indicating a brand loyalty complimentary relationship. Such results suggest that Facebook promoted newspapers’ brand to a certain degree. In addition, readers loyal to Facebook as a news platform were loyal to the newspapers they saw on Facebook. Thus Facebook used news content from newspapers to attract users and gain loyal Facebook users in return. Similarly, newspapers that used



Facebook as a distribution platform to reach more readers gained brand loyalty from Facebook users. This finding tempers the case for news aggregators and news outlets. Jeon & Esfahani (2012) found out that Google News replaced the major news websites for informing users by providing a wide range of news outlets. Readers have a seemingly limitless choice of news on Google News. As a result, Google News increased the share of small news outlets but subsequently decreased the share of big news outlets (Jeon & Esfahani, 2012). This dissertation provides empirical data explaining the difference between the case of Google News and the case of Facebook lies in the referral given by friends. The data showed that news shared by friends increase audience attention to news, and hence, increased the brand awareness and brand loyalty toward newspapers.

Moreover, the finding here that Facebook and newspapers were mutually beneficial in enhancing brand values contradicted some popular beliefs that Facebook may dilute newspapers brands. One study suggests that as readers accept getting news from Facebook in the long run, the perceptions of newspapers' brand name is decreases (Garrahan & Kuchler, 2015).

### **CONTRIBUTION TO NEWSPAPERS' BRAND AWARENESS**

Facebook is integrating a variety of news sources as does a news provider, and thus the time is ripe to examine if Facebook influences brand awareness toward newspapers. The data showed that Facebook as a news platform engages readers and this engagement enhanced brand awareness toward newspapers.

Confirming the finding is marketing research that companies use social media to generate brand awareness (Barreda, Bilgihan, Nusair, & Okumus, 2015; Erdoğan &

Çiçek, 2012; Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013). The results show that the generation of brand awareness on Facebook applies in the case of news, although news content differs from other commodities in general.

Social media generate brand awareness because of how users share information. This sharing behavior serves as a kind of advertising that enhances brand awareness (Barreda et al., 2015; Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). The greater the amount of advertising, the greater the level of brand awareness (Yoo et al., 2000). This dissertation further demonstrated that as readers paid attention to the news content, they paid attention to the newspapers' brands, and therefore, increased brand awareness. This result is confirmed by other studies that social media promote a brand among social media users and create brand awareness (Barreda et al., 2015; Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012; Hutter et al., 2013) as well that users actively engaged in social media interactivity with a brand have higher brand awareness (Hutter et al., 2013). The findings showed that attention, rather than behavior (e.g. share, comment, react to the news), is the main force driving brand awareness.

In sum, readers engaged with the newspapers' news on Facebook are able to recognize newspapers' brands. This finding contradicts the concern that as Facebook provides news from a wide arrange of news outlets, the awareness of newspapers brands decreases as the case of Google News (Athey & Mobius, 2012; Garrahan & Kuchler, 2015). So adopting Facebook as a news distribution platform to engage readers likely increases readers' newspapers' brand awareness to a certain extent, because the attention paid to news enhances readers' recognition of the brand.

## **ATTENTION AND NEWSPAPERS' BRAND LOYALTY**

The data also suggested that readers' social media news engagement increased brand loyalty toward newspapers. Specifically, investigation of brand loyalty toward newspapers revealed heavy influence by attention engagement (i.e. attention paid to or clicking news on Facebook), followed by behavioral engagement (i.e. share, react to, or comment news on Facebook). In other words, on Facebook, news that catches readers' attention was more effective than news that incited readers to share, react and comment in enhancing loyalty to newspaper brands. While behavioral engagement may be effective, attention engagement had stronger effects on brand loyalty. In effect, readers who pay attention to the news content also pay more attention to newspapers' brands than those who simply share the news. Overall, the finding corroborates previous studies indicating the positive association between users' engagement and media brand loyalty (Bowden, 2009; Sashi, 2012; Lim, et al, 2015).

## **SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT CONTRIBUTES TO THE CREDIBILITY OF NEWSPAPERS**

The data also showed that behavioral engagement is a significant predictor of the credibility of newspapers, indicating that more interactions (e.g. sharing, commenting, quoting and reacting to the news) with news on Facebook increase readers' perceived credibility. The finding suggests that those who consume news on Facebook more often are more likely to perceive news as credible information. The result is in line with previous studies indicating a positive relationship between media use and perceived credibility. Studies suggest that greater media exposure is related to higher levels of

perceived credibility (Bucy, 2003; Johnson & Kaye, 2016; Johnson & Kaye, 1998; Tsfaty & Cappella, 2003).

The reasons for this finding might include that Facebook's interactive (e.g. share, comment,) functions and hyperlinks, contribute to the perceived newspaper credibility because readers receive hyperlinks and have more interactions to various news sources and opinion (Chung, Nam, & Stefanone, 2012). In other words, providing access to a variety of news content helps readers to be better informed and, hence, increases perceived credibility (Chung et al., 2012). For example, users rate Google news and Yahoo news credible because of the hyperlinks and the ranking of the news' popularity give users an impression that the news is credible (Chung et al., 2012). Similarly, on Facebook, news getting shared is like getting endorsed by trusted friends. A consumer survey showed that 89 percent of the respondents trusted the information referred by friends (Brettel, Reich, Gavilanes, & Flatten, 2015). Therefore, readers are more likely to perceive the news shared by friends as credible. Moreover, credibility is something readers check before they decide whether to share. Readers are more inclined to share, comment, quote and react to credible news. This finding provides evidence for the positive relationship between interpersonal communication and news credibility (Kioussis, 2001). In sum, sharing, commenting, and reacting to news shared by friends on Facebook increases perceived news credibility.

In addition, this dissertation further offers evidence that attention is a major force for increasing perceived credibility, suggesting that readers who pay more attention to the news are more likely to consider newspapers credible.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT INCREASES PERCEIVED NEWS SATISFACTION**

The data also show that attention engagement and behavioral engagement are significant predictors of perceived news satisfaction, suggesting that those who pay attention to the news or share, comment, and react to the news on Facebook are more likely to have a satisfying news experience on Facebook. Specifically, attention is the main driving force that increases perceived news satisfaction on Facebook. Such result is in agreement with previous findings that attention is a stronger predictor of perceived satisfaction than media use (Mersey et al., 2012; Perse & Rubin, 1988). Mersey et al (2012) surveyed newspaper readers and found that news engagement is positively related to perceived satisfaction. This dissertation confirms that this relationship also is applicable in the case of Facebook news consumption.

Two reasons explain why Facebook increases news satisfaction. First, the functions of sharing, commenting, and reacting to news enable readers to interact with others on the news, which increases perceived satisfaction because interactivity features of a website are positively associated with perceived satisfaction (Chung & Nah, 2009; Teo, Oh, Liu, & Wei, 2003). Second, rich information on a website enhances perceived news satisfaction because readers tend to consider the news that provides more information and perspectives credible (Chyi, Yang, Lewis, & Zheng, 2010). Similarly, Facebook provides access to a variety of news sources through social networks. The discussion of news with others via social networks increases perceived news satisfaction among readers.

## **NEWS CONTENT THAT AROUSES EMOTION INCREASES SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS ENGAGEMENT**

The data demonstrated that the type of emotion that news content arouses is a significant predictor of social media news engagement. Specifically, surprising news content catches readers' attention and incites them to click. This result confirms previous studies that show that readers are inclined to click the news containing "unexpected" stories (Kormelink, 2017). Surprising, funny news content, as well as the news that make people anxious, incites readers to comment, share and react to news. The finding confirms previous research that indicated news that contains anxiety and amusement drives information-sharing (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013). Previous studies have demonstrated that controversial stories predicted Twitter sharing (Garcia-Perdomo, Salaverria, Kilgo, & Harlow, 2017), but as this study shows, this is not the case on Facebook. Controversial news on Facebook is neither a significant predictor of attention engagement nor behavioral engagement. Future studies are encouraged to examine the difference between Facebook users and twitter users especially in the area of controversial news. But overall, readers are relatively more likely to engage with news that arouses emotion (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Stieglitz & Dang-Xuan, 2013).

However, news content containing negative emotion (e.g. controversial, making anxious, making angry) fails to draw readers' attention. In other words, readers are less likely to click on controversial news as well as news that makes people anxious or angry. The reason might be that people are inclined to avoid negative emotion and thus users are less likely to click the news that arouses negative emotion. The finding is akin to what Berger and Milkman (2012) found when studying what content attributes goes viral

online and the result indicated that positive content went more viral than negative content.

Compared to social networks, these results demonstrate that news perceived attributes have stronger prediction power than social networks to engage readers, reinforcing the notion that “content is king.” News content is a major force driving readers’ engagement and social networks are distribution channels. In other words, social networks will be powerless to distribute the content if the content does not engage readers. News organizations are good at news production, and the news produced is no doubt the most valuable asset for news organizations to engage readers (Picard, 2006).

#### **WHAT SPREAD THE NEWS? TIE STRENGTH BUT NOT HOMOPHILY**

Many studies praise the effects of social networks on disseminating information (Halberstam & Knight, 2016; Hermida et al., 2012; Vitak & Ellison, 2012; Wohn, Lampe, Vitak, & Ellison, 2011). This study further identifies the specific attribute of social networks that influence social media news engagement and suggests that social networks may have a less influence in the dissemination of news online than currently believed.

Two attributes of social networks were examined: tie strength (the degree of closeness with social network) and homophily (the extent to which two or more individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, social status, and preferences (Rogers, 2003)). Facebook users do not necessarily feel close to their social networks even though they might share various similarities. The findings show that people are more likely to engage (attentionally engaged and behaviorally

engaged) with news shared by Facebook friends when they have strong ties (e.g. good relationship, close contact, strong bond). The current result confirmed previous studies that show that tie strength is a strong predictor of sharing news on social media (Bakshy, Rosenn, Marlow, & Adamic, 2012; Lerman & Ghosh, 2010).

However, homophily (friends with similar thoughts, interest, background, attitudes) has no significant relationship with social media news engagement. In other words, readers are only engaged with the news shared by close friends but not necessarily friends with similar interests. On the contrary, some studies indicated that homophily is the main driver of disseminating the news (Halberstam & Knight, 2016) as in the case of political news, where conservative readers link to conservative news which is then shared by their conservative network of friends and liberal readers share the news from liberal friends (Halberstam & Knight, 2016). This dissertation shows that this is not the case with news in general.

Sharing information among social networks has a less significant effect than originally thought. Oeldorf-Hirsch & Sundar (2015) examined whether sharing information among social networks increase a sense of being influential on social networks and significant effects were not found. This study's findings suggest that users are only engaged with news shared by close friends, regardless of the size and the homophily of their social networks. Based on this result, this dissertation argues that the size of a social network does not necessarily help spread the news because readers are instead engaged with the news shared by close friends.



As a result, news organizations need to carefully target Facebook users in terms of social networks. The data suggest that it might not be useful for news organizations to anticipate more shares from readers who have sizable social networks or homophilous social network.

Overall, this dissertation found out that to use Facebook as a news distribution platform might not as harmful as it thought to be because 1. News readers are moderately engaged with news on Facebook. 2 Engagement with news on Facebook increases newspapers' brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction. 3 While Facebook seems to dominate distribution platforms and the way to distribute and select news content for readers, Facebook needs news content from newspapers organizations to attract users. Although Facebook has a lot of users that newspaper organizations do not have, newspapers have news content that Facebook needs. Moreover, the finding showed that Facebook and newspapers are mutually beneficial on brand loyalty. As a result, newspapers organizations have a strong bargaining power in partnership with Facebook.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

### **THE CHALLENGE**

To recap the previous discussion, newspapers currently face the fundamental challenge of an online news engagement crisis. Their news websites do not keep readers for long, and the profits from the news websites are relatively small. Newspaper companies' digital revenue accounts for a quarter of total advertising revenue, and the gains in digital revenue have not made up the decline in print revenue (Pew Research Center, 2016). Facebook, the largest social networking site (SNS) for news, reaches 67 percent of U.S. adults, while Twitter only reaches 16 percent of U.S. adults (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016; Newman et al., 2016). As newspapers continue to lose online news engagement, Facebook has become a news platform to which many people turn. The fact that Facebook has 214 million users in the U.S. (eMarketer & Squarespace, n.d.) and earns one-third of all digital revenue (Pew Research Center, 2016) prompts newspaper organizations to adopt Facebook as a news distribution platform. This raises several concerns: First, although though Facebook is the largest SNS for news, most people see news on Facebook only incidentally (Mitchell & Page, 2013). To what extent is Facebook able to engage readers? Second, as people continue to rely on Facebook for news, will Facebook harm or lessen newspapers' brand and become a major news outlet in readers' minds (Athey & Mobius, 2012; Charness et al., 2012; Garrahan & Kuchler, 2015)? Third, will Facebook decrease the credibility of newspapers as people turn to Facebook for news (Lafrance, 2015)? These concerns raise the question of whether Facebook is an effective platform for newspapers to reach readers, in terms of news

engagement, brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived news credibility, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news.

Uses and gratifications theory provides a framework to examine perceived satisfaction in media use, focusing on the audience's needs and expectations. Considering the concept of value chain from the readers' perspective, the antecedents and the effects of social media news engagement can be explored in the following areas: First, content creation. Media content is the key driver which influences readers to use a particular medium (Picard, 2006). News perceived attributes, such as interestingness, relevance, and information utility affect news engagement (Berger & Milkman, 2012; Bobkowski, 2015; Christofides et al., 2009; Knobloch et al., 2003; Ma et al., 2014). Second, content aggregation, such as Facebook or Google news, which integrate a variety of news sources for readers. The argument about content aggregators lies in either helping news providers gain more exposure (Lee & Chyi, 2015) or decreasing their brand awareness (Athey & Mobius, 2012). Third, content distribution. Facebook play a role in content distribution by sharing and referring the news content: such as half of social networking site users have shared the news (Anderson & Caumont, 2014), and a quarter of social media users share news on social media during a week (Newman Nic et al., 2016). Fourth, social media news engagement, the end point of the value chain. Social media news engagement brings media trust and brand loyalty (van Kranenburg & Ziggers, 2013).

This dissertation sought to examine the effects of adopting Facebook as a news distribution platform by proposing a model based on the concepts of value chains and uses and gratifications theory. The dissertation mainly answers three questions: First, to

what extent does Facebook engage readers as a news distribution platform for newspaper organizations? Second, what are the antecedents of social media news engagement? Third, to what extent does social media news engagement influence newspapers' brand awareness, brand loyalty, credibility, perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news? An online panel survey was conducted by a survey company with forty years of experience. This dissertation's purpose is threefold: (a) To borrow the concepts from the social media journalism business model, and combine them with uses and gratifications theory, to propose a theoretical model to examine news engagement on social media. (b) Extend uses and gratifications theory to branding, in order to evaluate the benefits of adopting Facebook as a distribution platform from the readers' perspective. (c) Provide news practitioners with the knowledge of how to leverage digital technology, to increase the lasting benefits in their partnership with social media.

Although the study tested eight hypotheses and examined four research questions, the main findings are highlighted here. Mostly importantly, the study found Facebook and newspaper organizations to be mutually beneficial. The correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between brand loyalty toward Facebook and brand loyalty toward newspapers ( $r=.65$ ,  $p<.01$ ), suggesting that readers who consume news on Facebook are likely to be loyal to Facebook as a news platform as well as to newspapers. Moreover, adopting Facebook as a news distribution channel increases newspapers' brand awareness for two reasons: First, the news shared by Facebook users gains exposure through the users' social networks. Second, friends' referrals catch the readers' attention and direct that attention to the news. Readers who pay attention to the news on Facebook also are

likely to pay attention to the newspaper brands.

Secondly, this dissertation found that attention engagement is more powerful than behavioral engagement in enhancing brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction. After controlling for age, gender, news interest and news motivation, attention engagement uniquely explained 8.7 percent of the variance, whereas behavioral engagement uniquely explained only 1.79 percent of the variance in brand awareness. With regard to brand loyalty, attention engagement uniquely explained 4.8 percent of the variance, whereas behavioral engagement uniquely explained 2.9 percent of the variance.. Additionally, attention engagement uniquely explained 5.3 percent of the variance while behavioral engagement uniquely explained 2.5 percent of the variance in perceived quality of news. Finally, attention engagement uniquely explained 7.8 percent of the variance whereas behavioral engagement uniquely explained 0.9 percent of the variance in perceived news satisfaction. In other words, attention engagement explained at least twice and sometimes more of the percentage of the variance in brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction than behavioral engagement. Overall, this result suggests that readers' attention to the news on Facebook brings more benefits than readers sharing, commenting and reacting to the news. However, behavioral engagement explained more variance (5.7 percent) than attention engagement (4.2 percent) when it come to the credibility of newspapers, suggesting that readers are concerned more about the credibility of newspapers when they share, comment and react to the news on Facebook.

The third finding of this dissertation is that positive news content, rather than

negative news content, is more likely to engage readers on Facebook, controlling for gender, age, news interest and news motivation. Surprising, relevant, and useful news articles engage readers' attention, but controversial topics and news that makes people angry and anxious do not. Regarding behavioral engagement, surprising, funny news and news that makes people anxious are more likely to incite readers to share, comment and react to the news.

Finally, this dissertation found that the specific factor of social networks contributes to social media news engagement. Tie strength (closeness with Facebook friends) is a significant predictor of social media news engagement, while homophily (the similarities held by Facebook friends) is not. After controlling for age, gender, news interest, news content and news motivation, tie strength uniquely explained 1.02 percent of the variance in attention engagement and uniquely explained 1.69 percent of the variance in behavioral engagement. The finding suggests that readers engage with the news shared by close friends more than that news shared by Facebook friends with whom they share traits.

## **THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

This dissertation also offers several theoretical contributions-- to the extension of uses and gratification theory in the era of news consumption on social media, as well as to the examination of the antecedents and the effects of social media news engagement-- by proposing a theoretical model.

First, this dissertation studies the use of technological features to explain media use (e.g. clicking, commenting, sharing, reacting to the news). Uses and gratifications

theory has been criticized on focusing too much on psychological aspects (e.g. news consumers' needs and satisfaction) (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). Sundar and Limperos (2013) pointed out that if we keep using psychological motivation to examine the uses and gratifications of new media, our understanding of new media will be very similar to our findings from traditional media. New gratifications of news media need to be explored. In addition, scholars have called for a need to consider new technology in uses and gratification theory (Sundar & Limperos, 2013). This dissertation responds to this criticism of uses and gratification theory by incorporating the technological features of social media. Rather than focusing on psychological factors driving media use, this dissertation found the positive effects of the interactive features of social media (share, comment, clicking "like" buttons) on the enhancement of readers' news consumption.

Second, this dissertation extends the effects of uses and gratifications theory on the scope of branding. Traditionally, the media effects with which uses and gratification theory is concerned are related to repeated media use. This dissertation expands the effects of media use to the scope of marketing by integrating the concepts of brand awareness, brand loyalty, and perceived news satisfaction.

By combining the concepts of a social media journalism business model and uses and gratifications theory, this dissertation proposes a model to examine the effect of adopting social media to amplify the marketing effects of newspapers and increase audiences from the readers' perspective. The model illustrates the relationships between news content, social networks and social media news engagement as well as the relationship between social media news engagement and newspaper brands, credibility,

perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news. The dissertation identifies the main forces driving social media news engagement and the major factors contributing to newspapers' branding and perceived satisfaction.

Given to the disagreement on the definition of engagement in different studies (Lim et al., 2015; McKerlich et al., 2013; Mersey, Malthouse, & Calder, 2012; O'Brien, 2011), another contribution of this dissertation is identifying the concepts of social media news engagement, attention engagement and behavioral engagement. This dissertation defines the term "engagement" specifically for social media news by identifying attention engagement as a major effect for brand awareness/ loyalty, perceived quality of news and perceived news satisfaction.

## **PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

This dissertation uncovers several concerns about the effects of adopting Facebook as a news distribution platform for newspapers organizations, including

1. To what degree can news publishers engage readers by distributing news content on Facebook?
2. What kind of news content engages readers on Facebook?
3. Does the appearance of news on Facebook decrease readers' newspaper brand awareness?
4. Does distribution of news on Facebook erode the credibility of newspapers?

Finally, whether it is wise for newspapers to cooperate with Facebook to distribute news will be discussed.

1. Given that newspapers are encountering a reader engagement crisis, the data showed moderately greater news engagement on Facebook than with traditional media, indicating that disseminating news content via Facebook increases readers' engagement to a certain extent. Specifically speaking, Facebook's interactive features that enable



readers to discuss and share the news with friends contribute to the readers' engagement. That is, Facebook provides a valuable tool for engaging readers, social networks, which newspapers do not have. Newspapers are not good at inventing and maintaining technological hardware to engage readers. In this respect, newspaper organizations should take advantage of the social networks provided by Facebook to help them engage readers. However, social networks alone do not necessarily contribute to social media news engagement. Specifically, tie strength of the social networks is the factor driving news engagement. That is, it is among close Facebook friends that the news spreads. This finding might contradict the common belief that news will get more exposure in a large size network because large size social networks are not necessarily close social networks. It might be a wrong approach if newspaper organizations target Facebook users with large social networks. In sum, social networks play a role in reaching more readers, but the effect of social networks is not as much as the effect of news content per se.

2. In fact, the news content attribute is a major factor in reader engagement. Specifically, news content containing positive emotion and relevance is more likely to engage readers' attention and elicit interactive behaviors. For example, surprising, funny, credible and relevant news articles are more often shared than the news articles that are not surprising, funny, credible and relevant, while controversial news -- as well as news tending to make people angry -- failed to engage readers. These findings indicate that news content is a fundamental factor in engaging readers' attention. Subsequently, the attention gathered by such articles increases the readers' newspaper brand awareness, brand loyalty and perceived news satisfaction.

3. Regarding the issue of whether Facebook decreases newspapers' brand, the finding suggests that as readers pay attention to news content on Facebook, readers also pay attention to the newspapers' brands. In fact Facebook increases readers' brand awareness towards newspapers. The data demonstrate that social media news engagement is positively associated with brand awareness, suggesting that those who actively consume newspaper news on Facebook are more likely than those who are not to notice the newspapers' brands on Facebook. Specifically, attention paid to news content on Facebook is a main factor increasing brand awareness. In sum, Facebook serves as a platform to establish, promote news brands, increases readers' newspaper brand awareness along with their brand loyalty.

4. In addition, the dissertation uncovers another concern about whether Facebook is eroding people's trust in media as people turn more to Facebook for news (Lafrance, 2015). In fact, the interactivity of Facebook enhances newspaper credibility with readers because discussion of news with friends provides more information and perspectives about the news.

This dissertation's fifth practical contribution finds that attention, rather than behavioral engagement (e.g. share, comment on, react to the news), is the major force driving readers' newspaper brand awareness, loyalty and credibility. Furthermore, news content is a major factor in drawing readers' attention. Taken together, newspapers organizations are encouraged to focus on producing news content that creates positive emotions to engage readers' attention and hence increase their brand awareness, loyalty and credibility.

In sum, it is not wise to completely refuse to cooperate with Facebook because it provides some valuable tools that newspaper organizations cannot otherwise provide. However, it is not wise to fully cooperate with Facebook by providing all the news on Facebook because news content is the most valuable asset that a newspaper organization has. A newspaper loses its value without its content. Therefore, it is wise to cooperate with Facebook within planned, defined boundaries.

### **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES**

Although the evidence found in this study has provided some important insights, this dissertation is not without limitations that should be addressed in future research.

First, the findings of this dissertation show the competitive relationship between newspaper brands and Facebook to be optimistic rather than pessimistic, which is against widely held beliefs. The use of individual data might raise a concern that the data came from self-reporting, suggesting that the respondents' perceptions might be different from their behaviors. Whether Facebook is negatively influencing newspapers' revenue and readership should be further examined using aggregate data. Future studies are encouraged to collect two types of aggregate data: 1. Both news sites' and Facebook traffic data. 2. Newspapers' revenue data to examine whether Facebook or newspapers' websites is more profitable in terms of advertising revenue.

Second, this dissertation did not examine the revenue data to explore how Facebook affects newspaper publishers in terms of profit making and revenue. The results related to revenue and readership can only be inferred from the results that measure the readers' perceived news satisfaction and perceived quality of news. Future

studies are encouraged to examine the effects of Facebook on newspapers' revenue.

Third, although this dissertation reveals some emotionality contained in news engage readers (e.g. surprising, funny and the news that make people anxious), this dissertation doesn't examine the nuances of what makes news surprising and funny. Future studies can content analyze news elements to explore what constitutes news funny or surprising.

Fourth, this dissertation has an instrumental limitation. This study is limited in its ability to capture a comprehensive picture of perceived quality of news and relevance because it uses single measures to measure perceived quality of news and relevance. Future studies are encouraged to use multiple measurements to measure these two variables, and compare the results with this study.

Another limitation to consider is that this dissertation is based on an online panel survey, which used a nonprobability sample. Regardless of using quota sampling to match demographic characteristics of the U.S data and high completion rates, the findings are limited in their generalizability to other social media users. Future studies are encouraged to replicate this dissertation multiple times with probability samples from other social media users to compare the results. In addition, because survey data can only prove the association relationship between variables rather than causal relationships, the results should be cautiously interpreted as association relationships but not causal effects. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to conduct longitudinal studies.

While Facebook is a major social networking site for news, the data from Facebook alone is insufficient to document social media news engagement in general.

Whether the proposed model works on other social media platforms needs further examination. The result might not be generalizable to other cases. Nonetheless, the proposed models serve as starting points for future reassessments or explorations of general online news consumption. Future studies are encouraged to replicate this dissertation to examine news engagement on other social media platforms, such as Twitter or Reddit, to provide a more comprehensive picture of social media news engagement.

Again, the reader's cautioned that although this dissertation uses some concepts (i.e., audience activity and news satisfaction) from uses and gratifications theory to build this research model, this dissertation is not a uses and gratifications study. Motivations about social media use were not examined. Future studies are encouraged to build on this dissertation based on the finding about the effect of news perceived attributes and social networks on social media news engagement to explore whether both variables enhance social media news motivation (gratification sought) and how they influence social media news gratification obtained.

## Appendix

### Survey Questionnaire

Q1 Are you older than 18 ?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q2 Do you have a profile on Facebook or not?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q3 Do you ever get news or news headlines on Facebook? By news we mean information about events and issues that involve more than just your friends or family.

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q4 Thinking about the social media sites or mobile apps you use... About how often do you visit or use Facebook?

- Less often (1)
- Every few weeks (2)
- A few times a week (3)
- About once a day (4)
- Several times a day (5)

Q5 In the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on Facebook?

- less than 10 minutes (1)
- 11–30 minutes (2)
- 31–60 minutes (3)
- more than 1 hour and less than 2 hours (4)
- more than 2 hours and less than 3 hours (5)
- more than 3 hours (6)

Q6 How many minutes do you use Facebook in a typical day?

Q7 Which statement best describes how you get news on Facebook, whether on a computer, phone, or tablet, even if neither is exactly right?

- I mostly come across news on Facebook because I'm looking for it (1)
- I mostly come across news on Facebook, when I'm doing other things online (2)
- Dont know (3)

Q8 Which news organizations do you often view on Facebook? (check all that apply)

- The New York Times (1)
- The Wall Street Journal (2)
- The Washington Post (3)
- USA Today (4)
- The Los Angeles Times (5)
- The Chicago Tribune (6)
- Newsday (7)
- The Guardian (8)
- Huffington Post (9)
- NBC News (10)
- Fox News (11)
- CNN News (12)
- CBS News (13)
- Yahoo News (14)
- NPR (15)
- BreitBart (16)
- other (17) \_\_\_\_\_

Q9 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how often do you get news or news headlines shared by newspapers or anyone on Facebook?

- Less Often (1)
- Every few weeks (2)
- A few times a week (3)
- About once a day (4)
- Several times a day (5)

Q10 What percentage of time that you spend on Facebook is spent consuming news ? (Answer in %, not in minutes)

Q11 In general, how much do you enjoy keeping up with the news? (1 is “Not at all” and 5 is “A lot”)

- 1 Not at all (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 A lot (5)



Q12 How much attention do you pay to news when you use Facebook? From 1 (little attention) to 5 (close attention)

- 1 Little attention (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 Close attention (5)

Q13 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how often do you do the following?

	1 Never (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 All the time (5)
I click on links of the news on Facebook. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I share the news links on Facebook. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I comment on the news links on Facebook. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I click the "like" button for news links on Facebook. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy the news reading experience via Facebook. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have posted my feelings about news on Facebook. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have posted my feelings when I liked	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

news on Facebook. (7)					
I have posted my feelings when I disliked news on Facebook. (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have quoted from the news when it was good or witty. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have shared my opinion about the newspapers I see on Facebook with other readers. (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have shared the news publishers' promotion message. (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how much do you agree with the following statements. From 1(Not at all) to 5 (Very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I find the news on Facebook surprising. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news I often see on Facebook interesting. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook funny. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook controversial. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The news on Facebook makes me anxious. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The news on Facebook makes me angry. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news from newspapers I often see on Facebook relevant to me. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q15 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how much do you agree with the following statements. From 1(Not at all) to 5 (Very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I find the news on Facebook unbiased. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook objective. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook trustworthy. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook accurate. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news on Facebook tells the whole stories. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how much do you agree with the following statements. From 1(Not at all) to 5 (Very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I find the news from news papers I often see on Facebook helpful. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news from news papers I often see on Facebook important. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news from news papers I often see on Facebook informative. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news from news papers I often see on Facebook useful. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find the news from news papers I often see on Facebook valuable. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 Thinking about your social network (Facebook friends) on Facebook, how much do you agree with the following statements. From 1(Not at all) to 5 (Very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I have good relationships with people in my online social network (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am in close contact with the people in my online social network (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy reading news stories shared by the people in my online social network (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Facebook friends' thoughts and interests are similar to mine (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My Facebook friends express attitudes similar to mine (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Most people I connect with on this platform have a lot in common (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My Facebook friends' backgrounds are similar to mine (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Q18 Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, how strongly do you agree with the following statements. From 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

	1 Strongly disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Strongly agree (5)
I remember the name of the newspapers I often see on Facebook. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the news I read on Facebook is produced by newspapers, not by Facebook. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I pay attention to the name of the newspapers that provides the news I get on Facebook. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I click the news because I recognize the news source's brand. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not click the news because I recognize the news source's brand. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q19 The following questions ask your “brand loyalty” to Facebook Thinking about getting news on Facebook, how much do you agree with the following statements, from 1(not at all) to 5 (very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I will continue getting news from Facebook. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider myself to be loyal to Facebook. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will recommend Facebook as a news source to others. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 The following questions ask your “brand loyalty” to newspapers. Thinking about news from newspapers you often see on Facebook, the news here refers to the news from newspapers. How much do you agree with the following statements, from 1(not at all) to 5 (very much)

	1 Not at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 Very much (5)
I will continue getting news from these newspapers. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider myself to be loyal to these newspaper brands. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I will recommend these newspapers to others. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 Thinking about the following statement, rate how strongly you are satisfied

	1 Mostly dissatisfied (1)	2 dissatisfied (2)	3Neutral (3)	4satisfied (4)	5 Mostly satisfied (5)
How satisfied are you with Facebook as a news platform (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How satisfied are you with newspapers you see on Facebook (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22 Thinking about the news you get on Facebook, what rating would you give to the quality of the news?

- 1 Very bad (1)
- 2 Bad (2)
- 3 Neutral (3)
- 4 Good (4)
- 5 Very good (5)

Q23 Now that you use Facebook, how likely are you to directly visit newspapers sites for news?

- 1 least likely (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 very likely (5)

Q24 Finally, a few questions about your background. All the information you provide will remain confidential

Are you

- male (1)
- female (2)

Q25 What was your age on your last birthday?

Q26 What is the last grade or class that you completed in school?

- None, or grade 1-8 (1)
- High school incomplete (Grades 9-11) (2)
- High school graduate (Grade 12 or GED certificate) (3)
- Business, Technical, or vocational school AFTER high school (4)
- Some college, no 4-year degree (5)
- College graduate (B.S., B.A., or other 4-year degree) (6)
- Post-graduate training or professional schooling after college (e.g., toward a master's Degree or Ph.D.; law or medical school) (7)

Q27 Last year, that is in 2016, what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes?

- Less than \$10,000 (1)
- \$10,000 to \$14,999 (2)
- \$15,000 to \$24,999 (3)
- \$25,000 to \$34,999 (4)
- \$35,000 to \$49,999 (5)
- \$50,000 to \$74,999 (6)
- \$75,000 to \$99,999 (7)
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 (8)
- \$150,000 to \$199,999 (9)
- \$200,000 or more (10)

Q28 What is your race?

- Asian/Pacific Islander (1)
- Black/African-American (2)
- White/Caucasian (3)
- Hispanic/Latino/Latina (4)
- Native American/ Alaska Native (5)
- Other/Multiracial (6)
- Prefer Not to Respond (7)

Q29 Do you live in

- A city (1)
- Suburb of a city (2)
- Small town (3)

Q30 What was your age on your last birthday?

- 18-24 (1)
- 25-34 (2)
- 35-44 (3)
- 45-54 (4)
- 55-64 (5)
- Over 65 (7)

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