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DO SOCIAL MEDIA THEORIES ACTUALLY WORK? AN ANALYSIS OF THREE SOCIAL MEDIA THEORIES IMPLEMENTED IN AN ACTIVE NONPROFIT CAMPAIGN

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by

Hannah Renee Erickson

B.A., Regent University, 2016

A Research Paper

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Science

Department of Mass Communication & Media Arts

in the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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A Research Paper Submitted in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

in the field of Professional Media and Media Management

Approved by:

Dr. Aaron Veenstra, Chair

Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

HANNAH RENEE ERICKSON, for the Master of Science Degree in MASS COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA ARTS, presented on April 5, 2018, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: DO SOCIAL MEDIA THEORIES ACTUALLY WORK? AN ANALYSIS OF THREE SOCIAL MEDIA THEORIES IMPLEMENTED IN AN ACTIVE NONPROFIT CAMPAIGN

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Aaron Veenstra

Social media has become an important part of donor and public relations for nonprofit organizations. But with various social networking platforms available, millions of potential viewers and countless theories and techniques, it can be challenging for these organizations to know what works in real-life situations. This study looks at three popular social media theories and how they are implemented into a live, nonprofit, social media campaign. These theories of dialogic communication, emotional appeals, and attitude formation are found to be greatly beneficial to both the daily maintenance of nonprofit social media pages, and for specific fundraising campaigns. This case study acts as a guide for future research, and a source of practical insight for current nonprofit organizations. Through a process of content analysis, data examination and personal interviews, an understanding of the most effective tactics for using social media to run productive fundraising campaigns and build public support is clearly established.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the age of social media communication and socialization, nonprofit organizations have launched into a new realm of public awareness and mass publicizing. Advertisements, hashtags, ambassadors, sponsored posts, interactive content, posed pictures, and specialized video clips are all tactics used by nonprofits. As these tactics have become common over the last several years, scholars and business people alike have worked to understand how people perceive and respond to these messages. Many theories have been introduced with the hope of understanding the consumer's mindset and creating a communication system that produces revenue and interaction. For the purpose of this project, three popular theories will be implemented and analyzed to evaluate their accuracy in Convoy of Hope's Million Dollar Match live social media campaign. A case study of this live campaign will give insight into the relativity of these theories and also point to the most effective ways for nonprofits to gather support and revenue through social media interaction. The research will provide an understanding of public perceptions of nonprofit campaigns and how these organizations can effectively connect their mission with the heart and minds of the public.

Overview of Convoy of Hope and the Million Dollar Match Campaign

Convoy of Hope is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has served over 80 million people worldwide (Convoy of Hope, 2017). Founded by one family in 1994, this nonprofit works to bring humanitarian relief to those who are impoverished, hungry and hurting, and is consistently one of the first organizational responders to disaster events throughout the world (Convoy of Hope, 2017). Headquartered in Springfield, Missouri, they partner with smaller community organizations to bring resources and relief through local churches and

nonprofits to those in need. As a privately funded organization, Convoy of Hope depends heavily on fundraisers and personal donations. They run multiple campaigns on a consistent basis, such as "Host a Party2Empower" campaign that works with women to empower those in individual communities, along with a "FeedOne Child Today" campaign that allows individuals to partner on a monthly basis to feed children in impoverished situations (Convoy of Hope, 2017).

Much of the publicity for this nonprofit is generated through word-of-mouth exposure, news coverage, university partnerships and online advertisements. However, social media also plays a considerable role in their public relations, fundraising efforts, and community involvement. At the time of this study, the Convoy of Hope Facebook page had 197,697 likes and 195,480 followers. Similarly, their Instagram account had 28,100 followers, and their Twitter account had 56,600 followers. Convoy of Hope uses their social media pages in a variety of ways, from pictures and stories of those they have assisted, to calls and openings for volunteers, informational posts and links, and specific fundraising campaigns and requests. This combination has worked to build the public impression of the organization, gather volunteers and community supporters, and raise necessary funds for the many relief efforts.

One of the largest and most successful social media efforts is the Million Dollar Match Campaign. This campaign is conducted throughout the month of December and allows individuals to give online, by phone or through the mail. While the campaign is run on multiple social media sites, the emphasis is on *Facebook* and *Twitter*. *Facebook* posts and advertisements allow individuals to easily access a giving page and donate to the cause. With the addition of a matched gift, individuals are encouraged to donate immediately in order to have their funds doubled by another donor. For the purpose of this research, the focus will be on Convoy of

Hope's *Facebook* and *Twitter* pages, and specifically on the 2017 Million Dollar Match Campaign.

Reasons and Significance of Study

According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, there are over 1.5 million nonprofit organizations registered in the United States of America (National Center for Charitable Statistics, 2016). While some of these organizations are funded through grants and foundations, many of them are dependent on individual donations and fundraising efforts. But in an over-saturated advertising environment, nonprofit organizations must depend on relationships rather than mass advertising to fund their efforts. Because social media facilitates personal connections, over 80% of nonprofits have turned to platforms such as *Facebook* and *Twitter* to connect with potential donors, sponsors and volunteers (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014). However, with 81% of Americans on social media (Statista, 2017), the market is far too wide for a nonprofit to post randomly and expect to have an effect on their target viewers. Thus, specific strategies have been implemented and examined to determine how a nonprofit can successfully use social media to raise necessary support. As strategies have been tried and tested, scholars and business people have developed many unique theories as to what social media users desire, what they respond to and how nonprofits can implement these tactics. By examining these theories, a better understanding is developed for the use of nonprofit organizations and other social media users.

This research will look specifically at theories that have been developed and examine how they relate to the Million Dollar Match Campaign conducted by Convoy of Hope. Once the analysis is completed, a conclusion can be drawn as to the effectiveness and accuracy of these theories. By conducting this study and research, nonprofits will be able to understand how to

frame campaigns and social media posts according to proven theories. This will assist nonprofits in developing strategies that fit their unique needs and desires. This not only increases the effectiveness of raising support for these organizations, but it also allows them to build an online presence that strengthens relationships with potential donors and builds a positive reputation with the general public.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media has become an all-encompassing network that represents a vast variety of

demographics, organizations and purposes. When the idea of social media was first launched in

1997 with the site *Six Degrees,* the main goal was connecting with friends to chat and share life

inspiration (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Over the years, the idea of an online social community has

developed and blossomed into a form of subcultures. The research of this medium has also

entered a sense of flux, persistently adapting, growing and shifting, and forcing researchers to

accept change rather than continuity (Lomborg, 2017). This continual adjustment causes social

media theories and research patterns to vary rapidly, making it challenging for nonprofit

organizations to know what is effective and how to implement these theories within their

business models. By focusing on three popular social media theories, this research project will

enable nonprofits to build a clear foundation for future development and implementation. These

theories of dialogic communication, emotional appeals, and attitude formation look at the

interactions between the nonprofit and the individual, along with building a case for how a

nonprofit can adapt their information to best connect with their consumer. Each theory has been

implemented in multiple studies to determine the relativity and accuracy. By examining these

theories in Convoy of Hope's Million Dollar Match campaign, this research will determine how

effective the theories are in a practical and implementable scenario.

Theory 1: Dialogic Communication is Important for Building an Online Community

Dialogic communication theory is one of the most popular theories in public relations and

uses the collaborative features of the internet to build and strengthen relationships between

consumers and organizations (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014). Nonprofit organizations utilize

this theory most often by creating social media pages that serve as a platform for information and interaction. Nonprofit organizations greatly outweigh for-profit organizations in social media use (Barns & Andonian, 2011), but nonprofits tend to distribute more basic informational rather than dialogic communication on these networks (Lovejoy and Saxton, 2012). Organizations have traditionally depended on websites to display and share their basic information, but are now refocusing to newer applications that provide dramatically different interaction opportunities (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). Previous studies have examined the social media communication patterns of nonprofit organizations and have concluded that two-way communication is an important part of the overall online relationship (Cho, Schweickart & Haase, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Jiang, Luo & Kulemeka, 2016). The two-way dynamic can occur in multiple ways, depending on the social media platform used. Direct messages, comments, shares, and likes are some of the most common forms of dialogue and allow the consumer to share their reactions to the posted information.

This dialogic communication serves many purposes for nonprofit organizations. In a study done by Jiang, Luo and Kulemeka (2015) that evaluated social media reactions in a time of crisis, it was found that two-way engagement provided a foundation of trust for users and assisted in managing emotions and reactions. "Social media interactions centered on resonating with the negative feelings of the online publics helped calm down the angry publics and paved the way for dialogue (Jiang, Luo & Kulemeka, 2015, p.688)…" By having the culture of online dialogue, individuals generated trust in the organization and had the ability to talk through and resolve crises and concerns.

In a similar study, Gregory Saxton and Richard Waters conducted a content analysis of 1,000 updates from organizations on the *Nonprofit Times 100* list to examine what type of social

media messages received the best response from individuals. By categorizing all of the status updates from the organization, and then evaluating the responses based on *likes, comments, and shares*, it was determined that "the public prefers dialogue over information (Saxton & Waters, 2014)." While individuals are happy to see and even share basic informational posts, they would rather be involved in the conversation and be connected to the action of the organization. Thus, dialogic communication is important to nonprofit organizations to build the community and connect individuals to the heart of the mission.

While social media content is most effective when the target audience is actively engaged in the relationship (Jiang, Luo & Kulemeka, 2015), nonprofits notoriously struggle to maximize their dialogic opportunities (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). Whether this is related to a lack of economic resources, or a mistaken perception from public relations managers, this disparity can cause nonprofits to lose community involvement and potential philanthropic support. While additional research has shown that dialogic communication is not the end-all solution to social media communication, it has been found to be a key foundational aspect of online success (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012).

For the purpose of this study, the term "dialogic communication" is congruent with the concept of interactivity. Research articles and scholarly articles often interchange these terms, which can create confusion. While conducting interviews with top digital public relations professionals, it was found that the terms *dialogue, engagement, interactivity,* and *responsiveness* were all used interchangeably without being prompted (Anderson, Swenson & Gilkerson, 2016). Thus, the dialogic theory discussed in this study will also correlate with research that addresses these terms.

Theory 2: Emotional Appeals Affect Community Response

Humans are highly emotional creatures and often match their behavioral patterns to past and current emotional responses (Baumeister, Vohs, Dewall & Zhang, 2007). Research has found that people will purchase products on the basis of either rational or emotional reasoning (Copeland, 1924). The rational side depends on basic logical reasoning, while the emotional appeal can be from either positive or negative reactions, and persuades individuals to adjust their behaviors (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017). It is on the basis of this belief that companies, products, and services work to bring emotional components into their sales to entice the consumer to buy the product. A similar scenario occurs in social media interactions. Posts that trigger an emotional reaction often get higher interaction and responses from viewers. Further research discovered that emotional appeals created more positive attitudes than what informational appeals generated (Lwin & Phau, 2013).

In a study done using eye-tracking technology to assess the impact of appeals on donor behavior, it was discovered that emotional appeals were connected to donor gifts (Bebko, Sciulli & Bhagat, 2014). By evaluating what subjects focused on in an advertisement and determining that decisions were made based on how the individual reacted to an appeal, this research suggested that nonprofit organizations should craft appeals that generate strong reactions, prompting the individual to focus on the appeal and make decisions based on those feelings (Bebko, et al, 2014). When an individual reacts to a message, they retain the information better and are more likely to recommend donations to the advertised cause (Bebko, et al. 2014). Additional research proposes that vivid messages, such as photos and music, help to create these emotional appeals and do much to change the mood of the social media user (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017). While responses are possible through basic informational posts, emotional appeals

greatly increase the likelihood of individuals sharing, recommending and donating to nonprofit organizations.

Theory 3: Positive Attitude Formation Strengthens the Commitment to Nonprofits

As nonprofit organizations work to fill areas of need in society, they are often dependent on committed donors to meet budgetary needs. As the nonprofit fundraising shifts more and more to an online environment, these organizations have scrambled to build systems that cater to the desires of their supporters. Online giving has continued to grow steadily for several years (MacLaughlin, Longfield & Shelnutt, 2016). Traditional websites are able to supply basic information but are unable to supply the interactivity and specific features that many organizations have found to be helpful. In a case study done in 2015 by the Network for Good, it was found that 60% of donations occur through online giving portals (Network for Good, 2015). Because of this trend towards online giving, the attitude formation built from online requests become a key component of giving patterns.

When people feel connected to a nonprofit, they build a positive attitude towards that organization (Farrow & Yuan, 2011). Often, strong ties between individuals and a community environment elicit these positive feelings. Nonprofit organizations can utilize these ties to develop a relationship with potential donors. Thus, when organizations generate a sense of community on the social sites, people find like-minded supporters and develop trust and connection with the causes and missions of the nonprofit. In a study done to discover the ties of alumni to volunteerism and charitable giving to the university they had attended, it was discovered that emotional closeness on social networking sites strengthens positive attitudes toward volunteering and giving (Farrow & Yuan, 2011). Additionally, this study found that

positive attitudes predicted both volunteering and giving behaviors (Farrow & Yuan, 2011).

Thus, as the attitudes toward an organization shifted, the direct behaviors also shifted.

Just as positive attitudes produce a commitment to nonprofits, the specific types of

appeals build diverse attitudes in potential donors. In a study looking to evaluate which types of

advertisements motivated people to give time rather than money, it was discovered that altruistic

and egotistical appeals had a huge impact on attitudes and behaviors (Namin, 2014). When

altruistic appeals were present in the content, donors were more motivated to donate time as

feelings of genuine connection and concern were generated (Namin, 2014). However, when the

content appealed more to an egoistic attitude, donors contributed in a monetary fashion (Namin,

2014). Thus, the specific type of content posted created attitudes that played a role in what type

of reaction individuals had and how they responded behaviorally.

History of Convoy of Hope

While these theories can be implemented by a variety of organizations and companies,

this research will focus on the nonprofit organization, Convoy of Hope. In 1994, Hal Donaldson

launched this nonprofit with the purpose of feeding the world through children's feeding

initiatives, community outreach and disaster response (Convoy of Hope, 2017). In 2016, the total

revenue for this organization was $139,399,958, with over $137,000,000 coming directly from

donations (Convoy of Hope, 2016a). This revenue was used to serve over 8 million people,

feeding 160,000 children and mobilizing over 47,000 volunteers (Convoy of Hope, 2016b).

Because this organization is so dependent on support from donors, specific strategies and

theories play a dominant force in the success of the nonprofit. Convoy of Hope has a full website

with information for volunteers and donors and also has an active social media presence. They

employ various techniques for their online fundraising efforts, utilizing many known

communication theories on their social media pages. For the purpose of this research, these theories will be compared to the work of this nonprofit to examine the effectiveness of both the theories and the organization.

History and Description of Million Dollar Match Campaign

Of the many annual campaigns that Convoy of Hope launches, the Million Dollar Match Campaign has some of the greatest potentials for success. This campaign takes place from December 1st thru December 31st and has an angel who matches all monetary gifts, up to one million dollars (Convoy of Hope, 2017). Timing is a key aspect of this social media fundraiser. As people are looking to make tax-deductible gifts at year-end, this campaign offers an easy and accessible solution. Over 29% of all digital giving takes place in December, with 11% on the last three days of the year alone (Network for Good, 2015). Because of this high potential for year-end giving, Convoy of Hope can craft their campaign in such a way to prepare people ahead of time for this coming opportunity, and then provide easily accessible online giving options.

The three theories mentioned in this research provide the framework for the analysis of Convoy of Hope's Million Dollar Match. This campaign serves as a sample for the thousands of other social media campaigns that are run by nonprofit organizations, and the three theories are just a small piece of the potential research that is continually conducted on social media fundraising campaigns. As a multi-million-dollar organization, Convoy of Hope represents the upper 5% of charities (McKeever, 2015). By looking at this nonprofit in conjunction with the popular social media theories, a beneficial analysis can occur to determine both the practicality of these theories and the most useful forms of implementation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

Social media theories are often discussed in the academic world, but unless those theories work in real-life scenarios, they are not entirely helpful for nonprofit organizations. Dialogic communication is a commonly discussed theory that is well received by many scholars (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012; Jiang, Luo & Kulemeka, 2015; Cho, Schweickart & Haase, 2014). By implementing the dialogic communication theory into this research, a determination is built for whether or not direct communicative interaction contributes to the number of likes, comments, shares, retweets, and reactions on the Million Dollar Match Campaign's social media posts. Understanding how users react to dialogue on social media, allows nonprofit organizations to decipher which types of posts are most successful for fundraising campaigns. Hence, the following research question is proposed for this study;

RQ1: How does dialogic communication affect a nonprofit social media campaign?

Similar to the dialogic theory, the topic of emotional appeals is widely accepted in the advertising world (Baumeister, Vohs, Dewall & Zhang, 2007; Ridout & Searles, 2011). Research shows that moral and positive emotions are linked to purchasing and donating intentions of individuals (Xu, 2017). When people feel drawn by a social media post or advertisement, they are more likely to act on those emotions, whether it is through volunteerism, donations or other actions. These emotions are often elicited from graphics, stories or other imaginative content pieces. Many nonprofits get so caught up in sharing information, the emotional side of the content is overlooked (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). The emotional appeals theory provides an avenue for organizations to communicate in a new and personal way with their potential donors and supporters. However, while this theory is commonly understood and accepted, it must be

implementable for it to be successful in nonprofit campaigns. Thus, the second research question

of this paper asks;

RQ2: Do emotional appeals affect social media responses, and if so, how are these

emotions elicited?

Additionally, various attitudes can be fostered that contribute to user's reactions and

responses to online campaigns. When a campaign is shared or passed along by known

acquaintances, trust is built in the online environment (Farrow & Yuan, 2011). Many of these

attitudes stem from the overall online reputation of the organization, which is built in part

through the visible interactions that take place on social media (Wiencierz, Poppel & Rottger,

2015). However, reputation and attitude are challenging to nail down in a practical sense and can

leave nonprofits confused as to the practicality of attitude formation. For this reason, the third

question of this research asks;

RQ3: Does attitude formation contribute to campaign commitment, and how can

nonprofits build a positive online environment?

Methodology

To address these questions, a system of theoretical and practical social media evaluation

is employed. The specific research strategies of content analysis and interviews are used to

assess Convoy of Hope's social media campaign, Million Dollar Match. This campaign serves as

a case study for other nonprofit organizations and is examined under the assumption that other

comparable organizations will have similar results. This campaign included *Instagram*,

Facebook, and *Twitter*, but most of the focus and response was on *Facebook*. This research

evaluates all three platforms but emphasizes the campaign's push on *Facebook* and *Twitter*.

Content Analysis of Research Theories

The basis of this research examines the three theories of dialogic communication, emotional appeals, and attitude formation. To understand these theories, a content analysis of popular research articles occurs to build a framework for the definitions and implications of these theories. As Berger (2016) explained, "content analysis tells us what is in the material being studied, not how it affects people exposed to this material" (p. 273). For this research, the research tool of EBSCOhost was used to locate studies involving these three particular theories.

For the first theory, all of the articles associated with the keywords, DIALOGIC COMMUNICATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, and NONPROFIT were downloaded and evaluated. For the second theory, all of the articles associated with the keywords, EMOTIONAL APPEALS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND NONPROFIT were evaluated, and then another search removing the word NONPROFIT. The third theory was researched using the keywords, ATTITUDE FORMATION and NONPROFIT. This search only generated one article that was relevant to this study, so a second search using the words ATTITUDE FORMATION and SOCIAL MEDIA was also utilized. This generated some articles that were not particularly significant to this research project, but the articles that were relevant were evaluated and analyzed to gather a better understanding of the theory. Because of the relationship between attitude formation and trust, the keywords were adjusted to include TRUST, SOCIAL MEDIA and NONPROFIT. This produced additional articles that were relevant to this study.

All of these articles were collected in an Excel spreadsheet and evaluated based on the individual research focus of the study and the final results. The results of the studies were then examined to determine the application and results of each theory. Thus, this study builds on the previous theoretical research and works to implement the three theories into the live Million

Dollar Match social media campaign. All three theories are detailed in the research questions of this study, and each social media post is examined under the specifications of these questions.

Content Analysis of Social Media Campaign

The data for this study was gathered through a content analysis of the three social media networks, *Facebook, Twitter,* and *Instagram.* To understand how people are responding and reacting to the Million Dollar Match Campaign, all of the likes, comments, retweets and shares from the campaign posts were downloaded and evaluated. The posts were sorted into three categories that represented the three proposed theories, and then evaluated to see if the posts were successful in gathering attention and responses from the consumers. By evaluating how individuals react to the dialogic posts, emotional posts and attitude formation posts, the research questions were answered. Additionally, how the nonprofit responds to the users was scrutinized to understand the impact those interactions have on the attitudes and actions of potential donors.

To perform this analysis, a social media analytics tool, Fanpage Karma, was used. This tool downloads all of the posts and reactions, and compare which type of communication produces positive results. All of the posts specifically related to the Million Dollar Match were downloaded and recorded in an Excel document. These posts were then sorted into three categories, coinciding with the three theories examined in this research. The posts that did not fit with these theories were examined and then categorized based on the general format of the post. After analysis, these posts were identified as either basic informational posts or call-to-action posts that did not involve dialogue or emotion. While these publications did not fit the exact theories utilized in this research, they still contributed to building the overall attitude towards the campaign and were thus productive and worthy of consideration and study.

Previous research has shown that responses demonstrated in the form of likes, comments, and shares all have specific meanings attached to them (Saxton & Waters, 2014). Comments often determine the level of engagement an individual has with the post, likes reveal an impression as to how many people read the post and had positive feelings toward it, and shares reflect the level of importance found in the message (Saxton et al., 2014). By using these three features as evaluation instruments, the analysis ran against the theories to determine a reasonable conclusion regarding the practicality of these theories and a framework for future social media campaigns was determined.

Interviews with Convoy of Hope Social Media Manager

As one of the most widely used and fundamental forms of research, interviews provide deeper insights into the thought patterns behind actions (Berger, 2016). For this research, an interview with the Convoy of Hope social media manager provided those insights and gave more depth to the driving motivations behind the social media operations of this organization, and to the Million Dollar Match Campaign specifically. The interview was a semi-structured phone interview and evaluated how Convoy of Hope typically launches social media campaigns, how dialogue and interaction played a part in the process if emotional appeals in content were common, and if so what results they produced, and how the attitudes of the online community were formed. To collect the data, the interview was recorded and evaluated, and careful notes were gathered. The social media coordinator had the opportunity to share openly about the organization, the management of social media accounts and fundraising campaigns in particular. The insights from this interview assisted in answering the research questions and understanding the practicality and implementation of the three proposed theories in a nonprofit social media campaign.

CHAPTER 4

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THEORIES RESULTS

Theory 1: Dialogic Communication is Important for Building an Online Community

Using EBSCOhost, four articles were found using the keywords of DIALOGIC

COMMUNICATION, SOCIAL MEDIA, and NONPROFIT. These four studies only serve as a

sampling of the many other articles available on these topics. By removing the keyword

NONPROFIT, an additional twenty-two articles were found. Sorting through the articles and

categorizing based on studies more directly related to fundraising and the nonprofit world, the

total twenty-six articles were filtered to nine. By analyzing the research questions and results of

these studies, a pattern was determined and several key insights were made.

First, an analysis of these studies demonstrated that companies and organizations often

depend on social networks to provide the interactive element that is missing from websites and

other online portals (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014; Wirtz, Ngondo & Poe, 2013). Websites

are proven to lack the personal element that many donors and consumers are interested in, so

organizations have looked to the social sites as the supplementary piece in the communication

process. "…Websites demonstrated one-way communication by focusing on pushing out

information to Website visitors (Wirtz, Ngondo & Poe, 2013)." While this information is

important and valuable in the nonprofit and donor relationship, it does not supply the full

measure of trust and connection. Supplementing this information with interactivity on social

media sites provides an extra layer between organizations and their audience.

The second key insight from this content analysis discovered that dialogic

communication on social media provides a human and individual element to the online

environment (Hyojung & Hyunmin, 2013). The dialogic theory works in congruence with the

idea of interactivity, as it has been found that the more interactive a message is, the more

engagement occurs (Abitbol & Lee, 2017). This idea of interactivity and dialogue indicates that

questions, comments, tagged photos, personal responses and individual messages all imbue a

more personal aspect to the media content. Research indicates that the use of graphics generates

a higher number of liked and shares, while links, photos and, graphics also yields a higher

number of comments (Abitbol & Lee, 2017). In general, multimedia content has been found to

elicit the most feedback and response, as opposed to text only messages (Taylor, Kent & White,

2001; Abitbol & Lee, 2017). Additionally, this human element strengthens the word-of-mouth

process amongst consumers and the general public.

The third key insight derived from this study found that while possibly beneficial for the

nonprofit campaigns, dialogic communication is rare on social media sites (Linvill, 2012; Wirtz,

Ngondo & Poe, 2013). While organizations often associate social media with their online

interactive forum, less conversation is actually happening than what might be expected. The

majority of posts are informational-based and rarely elicit dialogic communication in the form of

comments or shares. Because of the private messaging capabilities of most social media

platforms, dialogue more often occurs in private. A specific study on the use of *Twitter* in higher

education nonprofits found that tweets are usually "monologic, disseminate information (vs.

eliciting action), link to a relatively limited and insular ecosystem of web resources, and express

neutral or positive sentiment (Kimmons, Veletsianos & Woodward, 2017). In many instances,

dialogic elements could be found in the social media posts (Hether, 2014), but the responses

rarely developed into true dialogue.

The fourth insight determined from this study was the variance in purpose and reaction

based on the social media platform used. *Facebook* was found to be more beneficial in building

an online community and broader participation (Hether, 2014), but "organizational financial capacity is positively correlated only with Twitter in the overall dialogic principle employment (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014)." These two platforms appear to be the most popular for nonprofit organizations and are often managed simultaneously, but the key audiences can differ and create fluctuating dynamics and reactions. After websites, *Facebook* and *Twitter* were the two most popular social networks used, while little mention was made of *Instagram, SnapChat, Reddit, Pinterest, Tumblr* or other sites, in research articles or studies.

The final area of insight from this study revealed that dialogic communication is most effective when an organization posts content that is congruent with the core mission (Abitbol & Lee, 2017). When a company, nonprofit or other similar organization utilizes social sites to show a level of social responsibility, the public will usually only respond positively if the content is consistent with the other institutional values and goals. This not only builds trust in the organization, but it also coincides with the interests of the target audience. The individuals who are following these social media sites often have some interest or relation to the goals of the organization. Therefore, content that coincides with that vision generally creates more interaction and response.

Theory 2: Emotional Appeals Affect Community Response

The topic of emotional appeals is a common discussion in advertising research and work. Thus, narrowing down the correct information for this study was built around specific keyword searches in EBSCOhost. The initial search utilized the words of EMOTIONAL APPEALS, SOCIAL MEDIA and NONPROFIT. However, this only uncovered one article with specific relevance to all three keywords. Thus, the search was expanded by eliminating the word NONPROFIT. This generated eleven more studies, with only four holding relevance to this

research. These five studies in total built the framework for the content analysis of the emotional

appeals theory and produced several key insights.

The foundational element discovered in this study was the effectiveness in motivating the

public through the use of emotional appeals on social media. Research indicates that posts

containing emotional elements elicit a higher percentage of engagement and response from the

target audience (Kite, Foley, Grunseit & Freeman, 2016; Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017; Dua,

2017). These emotional appeals can appear in the form of graphics, photos, videos, interviews or

quotes, and can be linked to more likes, shares, comments, and retweets on *Facebook* and

Twitter. Emotions drive the reasoning portion of the brain and often lead to actions (Dua, 2017).

The emotional appeals increase arousal, which generates action in the form of assisting others,

response to offers and sharing of information (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017). However,

because of the overuse of emotional elements, organizations must utilize this technique by

crafting a long-lasting connection with the audience, so as to build an authentic experience (Dua,

2017). When emotional appeals are combined with trustworthy and valuable content, the public

is more likely to respond positively.

The second key insight derived from this study is the connection between emotional

appeals and vividness in social media posts. Vividness is described as the "extent a mediated

environment can simulate a direct sensory experience" (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017).

Examples of such vividness are posts that contain video, audio or pictures to produce a media

richness. These posts have been found to generate more interaction on social media (De Vries,

Gensler & Leeflang, 2012). Further research suggests that these responses are correlated to the

emotional arousal caused by the post. In essence, the vividness creates an emotional reaction,

which generates more likes, comments, and shares on social media. Thus, a mutual effect exists

between vividness and emotional appeals on social media posts (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017).

Theory 3: Positive Attitude Formation Strengthens the Commitment to Nonprofits

Similar to the exploration of theory two, only one article was found in the initial search of theory three using the keywords ATTITUDE FORMATION and NONPROFIT. By revising the search using the words ATTITUDE FORMATION and SOCIAL MEDIA, an additional fourteen articles became available, with three having specific relevance to this research project. Additionally, the search was modified by using the keywords TRUST, SOCIAL MEDIA, and NONPROFIT. This search generated another thirteen articles, with another three articles fitting the framework of this study. Thus, seven key articles became the basis for the content analysis of attitude formation and provided a broader understanding to answer RQ3: *does attitude formation contribute to campaign commitment, and how can nonprofits build a positive online environment?*

Attitude formation relates to the level of trust that the public or an individual has towards an organization. Trust is seen as the key factor in developing a long-term relationship between the nonprofit organization and the stakeholders (Wiencierz, Poppel & Rottger, 2015; Aurier, N'Goala, 2010). Additionally, nonprofits are dependent on trust from stakeholders to ensure long-term organizational survival (Lee, Johnson & Prakash, 2012). Thus, trust is vital in the relationship between nonprofits and their audiences (Bryce, 2007). This level of trust is often determined by how the public perceives an organizations ability, benevolence, and integrity (Wiencierz, Poppel & Rottger, 2015). The more the nonprofit posts content that is consistent with the values and interests of the public, and the principles of the organization, the more likely

positive attitudes of trust will be built. Strategic online posts and campaigns that are correlated to these values play a central role in building relational trust (Ball, Coelho & Machás, 2004).

The second key insight relates attitude formation back to the topic of emotional appeals. When the emotional intensity towards an advertisement or posts increases, the attitudes of the individuals may also shift (Bebko, Sciulli & Bhagat, 2014). This surge in emotional intensity strengthens engagement, which has been found to increase donor contributions (Bendapudi, Singh & Bendapudi, 1996). The attitudes are formed as individuals feel an emotional connection, act on the basis of those feelings, and then develop a personal standpoint towards the organization or cause. The emotional attachment creates the action, but the attitude is formed because of the action.

The final element of this study determined that positive attitude formation in the form of trust and satisfaction increases consumer donor intentions (Feng, Du, & Ling, 2017). When the public becomes confident in the reliability and integrity of the organization and the content posted on social media, there is a higher engagement in charitable behavior and donations (Feng, Du, & Ling, 2017). Disclosure of information, transparency of goals and adherence to values all increase the levels of trust, which play a factor in the decision-making process of stakeholders and donors. Satisfaction also builds positive attitudes, as it is often related to the quality of service received on social media (Feng, Du, & Ling, 2017). Thus, the combination of trust, satisfaction, and quality form strong attitudes and high levels of receptivity among the general public and organizational target audiences.

CHAPTER 5

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF CAMPAIGN RESULTS

An analysis of the actual posts of the social media campaign provides a reasonable glimpse into the success of the project. The three major platforms of *Facebook, Twitter and Instagram* were examined and all of the content that was posted, plus the public's responses were categorized and analyzed. Facebook produced the most conclusive study, as this network has proven to be more conducive to supporting vibrant online communities (Hether, 2014).

Facebook

During the month of December, Convoy of Hope published 59 *Facebook* posts, 97 *Twitter* posts, and 26 *Instagram* posts.
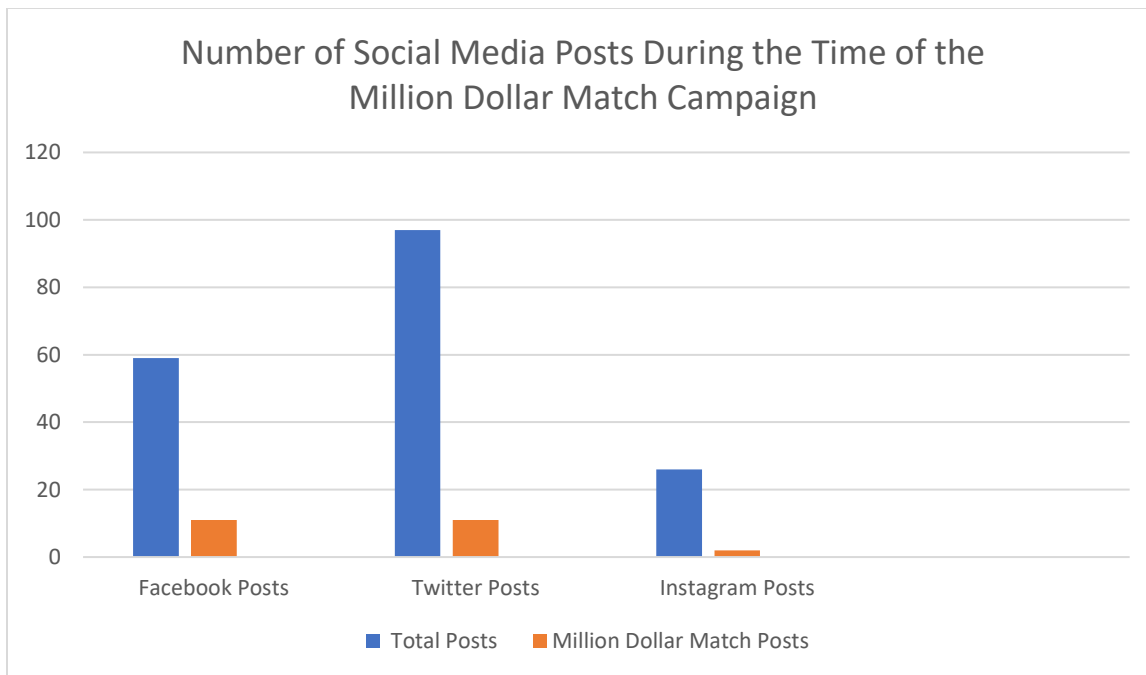

Figure 1

While all of these posts had some influence on the viewer, this study specifically analyzed the posts that mentioned the Million Dollar Match Campaign. With the Million Dollar Match *Facebook* related posts, the highest quantity of posts fit into the emotional appeals theory. Out of

the 11 posts mentioning this campaign, 4 fit the emotional appeals category, 1 in the dialogic category and 1 in the attitude formation category. The posts fitting the emotional appeals section often contained a picture of a child and related the ask to the impact on the child. This worked to evoke emotions in the viewer and caused reactions based on these emotions.

During the month of December, your donations are being matched dollar for dollar, up to the $1 million total! Donate today to help twice as many people and spread even more hope!
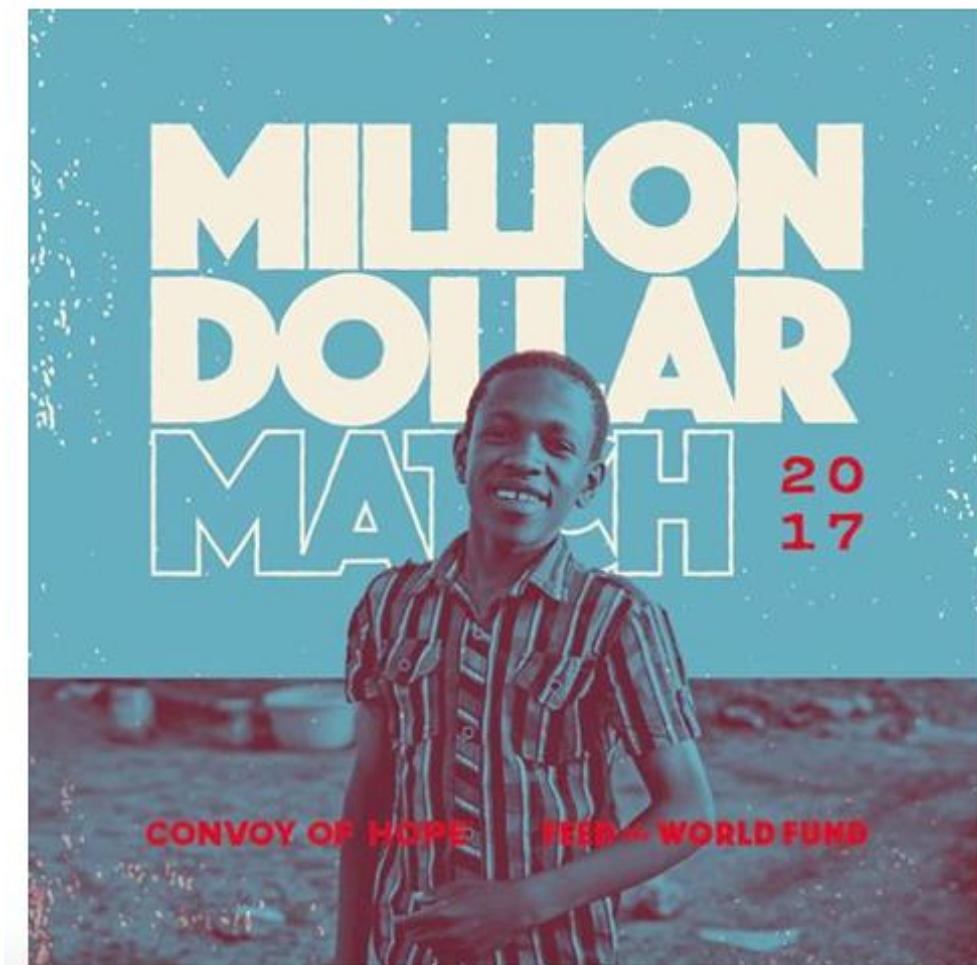
Figure 2

These emotional posts far outweighed the other two theories in quantity but did not gather the highest overall amount of reactions. Rather, despite having fewer numbers, the posts that built on attitude formation had far higher percentages of likes, comments, shares. This

mostly relates to one post that fit in this category and far exceeded the numbers of every other

post. The picture for that situation portrayed a Convoy of Hope volunteer serving young children

Figure 3

food. This posting fit the attitude formation theory as it caused the viewer to connect on a personal level with the volunteer, and thus build trust and connection. While Convoy of Hope did not employ the attitude formation theory as often as the other theories, it was the most successful at causing a reaction in the viewers.

The posts in the dialogic communication category used a form of interaction to generate response from the donors. By posting collaborative material, individuals and donors had the opportunity to join the conversation and participate with the campaign.

Figure 4

The posts that fit within the dialogic communication theory generated the quickest response from people in the way of comments, and thus started the conversation on the campaign. The posts that fit in the emotional appeals theory were the most common and produced the most consisted numbers of reactions. The posts that fit into the attitude formation theory had the fewest number of posts, but produced the highest numbers of likes, comments, and shares.
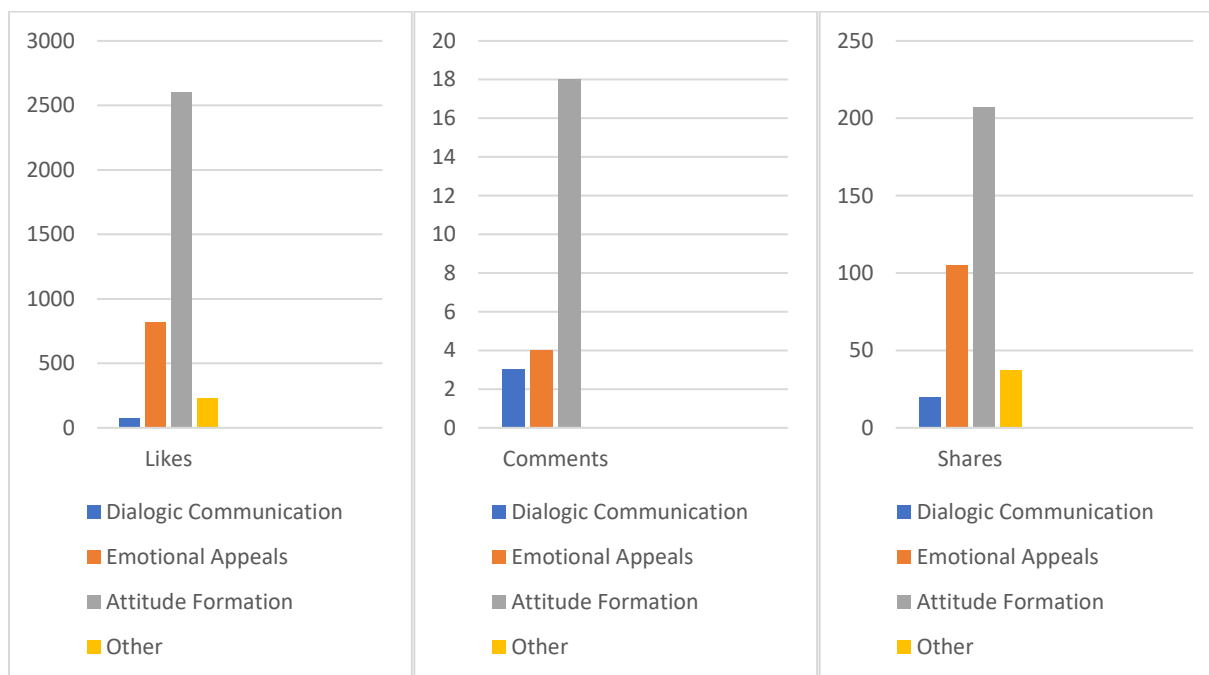
Figure 5

Twitter

Convoy of Hope posted 97 times on Twitter during the time period of this campaign, but only 11 of those posts directly related to the Million Dollar Match campaign. Similar to the reactions on Facebook, the posts that related to the attitude formation theory had the highest responses. Similarly, the attitude formation posts were the only to receive comments, all of the other theory divisions gathered only likes and retweets. Similarly, the posts relating to emotional appeals were the most frequent and created a steady stream of likes and retweets. There were no

posts directly related to dialogue, and no real dialogue was created on *Twitter* during this campaign. While there was not a dramatic difference between theories, it was clear that attitude formation created a reaction in the viewers, and the steady supply of emotional appeal fostered a regular response.
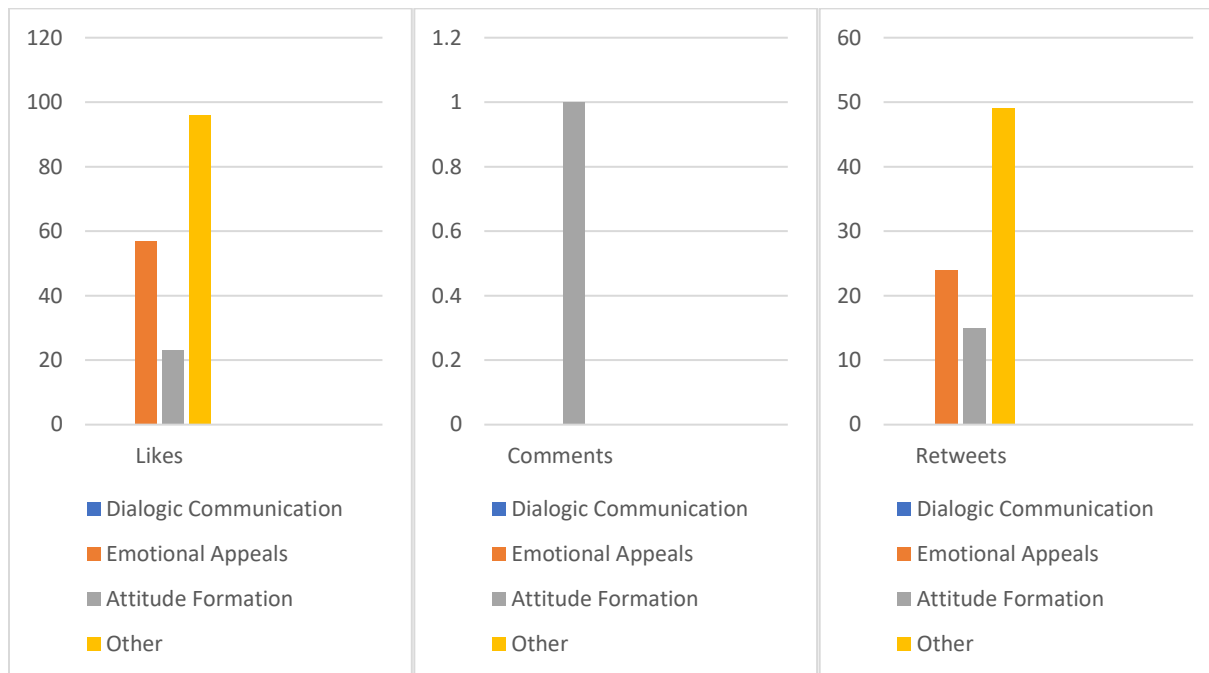

Figure 6

Instagram

The Million Dollar Match was also mentioned on Convoy of Hope's *Instagram* account, but only two posts specifically linked to it. Thus, there was not enough data to be helpful for this study. While the overall posts may have fostered subconscious feelings towards the organization, no real connection provided valuable insights in relation to these three theories.

CHAPTER 6

INTERVIEW RESULTS

For this research project, an interview was conducted with the social media manager of

the nonprofit, Convoy of Hope. This individual has the official title of Social Media Coordinator

for Convoy of Hope and has been in this position for approximately six months. Several key

questions were asked in this interview to determine how Convoy of Hope typically launched

social media campaigns, how dialogue and interaction played a part in the process if emotional

appeals in content were common, and if so what results they produced, and how the attitudes of

the online community were formed. This interview took place over the phone but was recorded

and analyzed to ensure accuracy and reliability.

The interview opened with a question to analyze what the overall perception of social

media was for this organization. The coordinator answered with a strong assurance of the

importance of social media for Convoy of Hope, explaining that it is the main way for this

organization to reach their audience, connect with the general public, share information about

current disasters and announce where they would be giving assistance. The manager explained

that the social media followers were perceived as the supporters of the ministry and were "fans

of Convoy of Hope that want to know what's happening with what we're doing and how they

can help, but it's still more the general public." This understanding allowed the social media

coordinator to craft information that fit the needs of the known audience.

The main focus of this interview was on social media fundraising campaigns, and in

particular, the December 2017, Million Dollar Match Campaign. When asked about the general

format for hosting fundraising campaigns online, the Convoy of Hope social media manager

explained that while there is no set formula, a general pattern can be found. First, a theme is built

for the campaign. In the case of the Million Dollar Match, one generous donor offered to give one million dollars in a match format. Once this foundation is laid, the coordinator begins to publish a variety of posts, working to insert a variation as to not bore or overwhelm the audience. Next, the timeline is determined by how often to push the campaign and information. The coordinator explained the timeline of the posts, stating, "…[we would] be careful about how often [we] were asking for money. It wasn't a thing I was posting about every single day, more of a once a week, at most, and then we posted more the closer we got to the end of the campaign and the closer we got to the end of the year since it was a last chance kind of thing. But we definitely pushed it a little lighter towards the beginning."

After determining the broad picture for how this organization navigated a campaign, several questions were asked to understand the significance of dialogue and interaction on the social media networks. The social media coordinator stated that every direct or private message was answered, with the goal response time of fifteen minutes. At the very most, all messages were answered within the first hour. Comments were handled slightly differently, as they give a broader and public platform for discussion. The manager explained, "for comments, it is up to me to decide if I think it is valuable to respond. If someone asks a direct question, I almost always try to answer that direct question. If people give a shout-out like, 'thanks for what you're doing' or 'we love what you do', then I always like to make sure and remind people that we can only do what we do because of their support. So, I will go back and comment on those, especially with the aspect of [saying] 'thank you for being a supporter.'" When asked if that format adjusts when a specific campaign is in process the social media coordinator stated that it was a standard protocol for every season, not just during fundraising efforts.

The next area of discussion was on the type of posts that were published by the organization, and an examination of the responses these produced. The first point the coordinator emphasized was variety. She explained, "we try not to do the same kind of posts every time. So, we would switch it up between photo or graphic, and then having a link that a link card would pop up for and use that as the graphic." The social media manager went on to explain that the best responses came when the organization was very direct in the ask. Often this type of posts was supported by a quote or graphic, but the emphasis was on the call-to-action statement. She was cautious not to overuse this type of publication because it was easy to create donor fatigue and lose the attention of the target audience. Additionally, posts that contained emotional or inspirational aspects were added to the schedule but were always followed by informational or data-centered posts. Thus, finding a healthy balance between information, emotion and direct asks appeared to be the key to nurturing a responsive online community for this organization.

The last section discussed in this interview revolved around building the general attitude of the online community. One of the key elements highlighted was how Convoy of Hope mobilized volunteers and launched efforts to bring assistance during natural disasters. Social media played an important role in this function by alerting the public of new efforts, ways to assist, opportunities to donate, and general updates on the current activities. Because of this unique feature of the organization, the attitudes of the general public were molded by what was happening in the world, and how Convoy of Hope represented and responded to those occurrences. The coordinator stated that "the more that's happening in the world that is already in the public view, the more traffic we will get to our site…" Similarly, the coordinator explained that when she is posting, "out of our six initiatives, disaster services almost always gets the best response because it is something that is in the general public view…and when disaster strikes

that is when our numbers go up the most, because people come directly to us instead of us having to go to the people. In this time, our posting frequency will go up as we are giving more live updates as the situation develops." Thus, the coordinator correlated an increase of attention to also generating an increase in social media interaction and response.

The results of this interview produced foundational information in regard to the daily functions of Convoy of Hope social media marketing plans. While not specifically outlined and discussed, all three theories studied in this research project were evaluated in the interview process. The social media coordinator expounded on the daily processes of *Facebook, Twitter,* and *Instagram* management*,* and determined that the overall social media presence of Convoy of Hope was strong and beneficial. Similarly, it was concluded that the Million Dollar Match Campaign was a general success and increased the connection between the organization and the general public, along with raising valuable year-end funds. When asked if anything could have been changed to increase the effectiveness of this campaign, the only concern was overexposure. Donor fatigue was one of the highest risks the Convoy of Hope social media coordinator found while managing these social networks. This concern motivated the organization to be cautious about the frequency and duration of fundraising campaigns, along with a careful management of all interactions that could diminish the effect and strength of their social media presence

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION

Consistent with prior research on the involvement of nonprofit organizations on social media (Gálvez-Rodriguez, Caba-Perez, & López-Godoy, 2014; Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012), this study finds that fundraising campaigns can be an effective way to raise money, build public support and strengthen the organization. Implementing specific theories and strategies appears to be an important factor in the order and success of these online campaigns. In reference to RQ1: *How does dialogic communication affect a nonprofit social media campaign,* this study determined the importance and value of interactivity for strengthening relationships between the organization and the public. Dialogic communication on social media is found to be an important trust builder between stakeholders and the nonprofit. Websites offer static information and helpful descriptions, but social media bridges the gap between the organization and the public (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014; Wirtz, Ngondo &; Poe, 2013). Dialogue also creates a human connection between the parties (Hyojung & Hyunmin, 2013), allowing potential donors to feel more confident in the security of their gifts. Interactivity through comments and messages provides a valuable platform for social media coordinators to direct individuals to other important information or in the direction of a gift or similar support.

Additionally, dialogic communication is a key way for organizations to start relationships with their target audiences. Based on the content analysis of the Million Dollar Match Campaign, the posts related to interactivity were the first to receive comments. Dialogue through comments gives organizations a platform to express gratefulness and navigate the individual towards a monetary donation. This type of interactivity is public for others to see and plays an important role in exemplifying the reliability, goals, and purposes of the organization. Thus, dialogic

communication affects the social media campaign by strengthening relationships, building trust, and directing potential donors towards monetary giving. This analysis can be beneficial for researchers to understand the place of this theory, while also acting as a helpful guideline for nonprofit organizations to implement dialogue in various campaigns and online efforts.

Emotional appeals are a key way for nonprofit organizations to motivate their audience on social media, especially through specific campaigns. In reference to *RQ2: Do emotional appeals affect social media responses, and if so, how are these emotions elicited,* this study determined that these types of posts play a considerable role in the levels of engagement and response from the target audience, and can be useful in motivating individuals to action. Based on the content analysis of the Million Dollar Match social media campaign, emotional appeals are a popular type of post and produce consistent reactions, such as likes, comments, and shares, from the viewers. Convoy of Hope employed this technique very often in their campaign which motivated the public to respond consistently. As the coordinator balanced these emotional appeals with concrete information, people felt moved without being overwhelmed. The emotional aspects kept the audience interested and in-tuned to what the organization was focusing on and generated a steady stream of positive responses.

This study also found that posts containing vivid content, such as graphics, videos or pictures, create strong emotions in the viewer (Liu, Li, Ji, North & Yang, 2017), and drive the individual to make decisions (Dua, 2017). The vividness cultivates a positive attitude in the viewer, and then a call-to-action statement in the post generates direct response. In the case study of the Million Dollar Match campaign, posts containing pictures of young children, gripping stories, brief testimonials and other similar themes were the most successful in generating this arousal and response from the public. The combo of emotion and information was found to be

the most profitable format for producing direct action from the public. Thus, nonprofit organizations can implement similar strategies in other social media campaigns to generate interaction, direct responses, and donations.

An additional component of this strategy is merging emotion with authenticity. Trust was found to be an essential element in the social media context and can be a determining factor in the decision-making process of individuals (Ulusu, Yurtkoru, & Durmuş, 2011). Organizations must be careful to not only create an arousal through emotional but also back these feelings up with an authentic relationship with the public that provides a platform for trustworthy giving. Convoy of Hope's social media coordinator emphasized this point and the importance of balancing the posts while not fatiguing potential donors. Thus, emotional appeals built on vivid posts generate steady response and actions from the general public and target audience.

Attitude formation can be determined by several things but is especially dependent on trust between the organization and the public. To answer RQ3: *Does attitude formation contribute to campaign commitment, and how can nonprofits build a positive online environment*, this study found that consistency between organizational values and specific social media posts strengthens the overall relationship and builds trust with the public. Positive attitudes were determined to be an important factor in the long-term relationship between the organization and a donor (Bryce, 2007). It was also found that when an individual feels confident in the integrity of the organization and their online message, there is a higher rate of charitable giving and door engagement (Feng, Du & Ling, 2017). In the case of Convoy of Hope and the Million Dollar Match, this trust was formulated over time with posts that were consistent with the purpose of the organization. The social media coordinator pointed out that promptly informing the public of natural disasters or similar events helped to generate frequent

interactions and responses. Individuals responded well to this format because the posts matched the mission of the organization, and thus strengthened the authenticity and trust. This consistency between the organization and the posts created a higher level of trust and positive responses. In the analysis of the Million Dollar Match campaign, it was determined that attitude-forming posts generated the highest numbers of likes, comments, and shares. As the nonprofit portrayed a trustworthy example of social media, individuals responded. Thus, consistency and trust were found to be the key ways to build commitment and positivity.

Researchers may note that positive attitude formation is dependent on trustworthy social media management and consistency between direct fundraising asks and organizational values. Other nonprofits can utilize this information by creating an online presence of authenticity. This comes from disclosing important information, being transparent with motives and goals, and adhering to the key mission of the organization. The Million Dollar Match represented a positive environment as it balanced emotion and information with the central focus of the nonprofit. Organizations can also be diligent to build social media satisfaction through prompt replies, quality service and high levels of receptivity. All of these components work together to build a positive attitude and a strong, but trustworthy, environment.

CHAPTER 8

LIMITATIONS

It is important to recognize that social media is an ever-changing platform, and research occurs in a continual pattern. The research of this medium is in a sense of flux, as the online world persistently adapts, grows and shifts (Lomborg, 2017). What might be effective at one point could adjust as more time passes. Social media theories and strategies develop continually as research grows with societal needs and desires. Thus, while the theories mentioned in this study are accurate and beneficial, various elements might adjust over time.

Due to the nature of this project, the case study of Convoy of Hope's Million Dollar Match campaign is limited based on a one-month time period. Longer efforts may generate results more conducive to various research questions. Similarly, while this study gives a snapshot view of the effect of social media theories, it pertains to the response from the public based on a specific campaign, not the entire social media page. Further research might expand on the implementation and effects of theories for the total social media experience, not just one campaign.

Additionally, the Million Dollar Match campaign took place in December of 2017, after several severe natural disasters had occurred in the recent time-frame. The social media coordinator of Convoy of Hope expressed some concern that the target audience may be growing fatigued from hearing frequent updates and requests on the *Facebook, Twitter* and *Instagram* pages. This matter was not further analyzed because, after examination, it did not appear to hold particular significance to this study.

While this study serves as an analysis of a nonprofit campaign, it does not necessarily transfer to all social media campaigns. Similarly, Convoy of Hope specializes in disaster relief

services, which may differ from other organizational goals. While this nonprofit utilizes social

media extensively for mobilizing volunteers and performing key organizational functions, not all

nonprofits, or similar entities, may have the same objectives or purposes. Further research

comparing the three theories implemented in this study to other organizational social media

campaigns, may produce beneficial information. Based on the industry and profession, varying

results may be determined.

Finally, this study focuses on the social media platforms of *Facebook* and *Twitter*. While

these two networks are the most popular for nonprofit organizations, with 80% of nonprofits

utilizing these platforms (Kim, Chun, Kwak & Nam, 2014), other social media sites might have

differing results. Further research on other platforms may produce varying and valuable insights

for nonprofit organizations.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Social media plays an active role in the fundraising efforts of many nonprofit organizations. Because of continual shifts and adjustments in the trends of these platforms, researchers and social media managers must constantly be evaluating what type of actions produce the best current results. This study determines the practicality of three popular social media theories, and how nonprofits can best utilize their resources to run successful campaigns. The three theories of dialogic communication, emotional appeals, and positive attitude formation give a foundation for nonprofit social media and act as a measure for building successful online campaigns. By evaluating Convoy of Hope's Million Dollar Match social media campaign, this study determined the value of these theories and set a framework for future researchers and social media managers to both analyze and implement these concepts.

It was determined that all three theories can be beneficial for nonprofit use and are practical formats for online campaigns. Dialogic communication creates an environment for conversation, which strengthens trust, increases satisfaction, produces positive emotions and encourages action. Correctly implemented, this theory also helps the organization build relationships with potential donors, which is proven to result in higher rates of engagement and donation (Feng, Du, & Ling, 2017; Bendapudi, Singh & Bendapudi, 1996). Thus, it is both a practical and beneficial theory for nonprofits to implement in social media campaigns. Similarly, emotional appeals are found to be effective in generating responses and producing high levels of social media interactivity. Posts that contain graphics, videos and pictures are important in eliciting these reactions and can be helpful in building a positive online environment. Nonprofit organizations can utilize this theory by balancing emotion with

information to build authenticity. The theory of emotional appeals can be helpful in constructing valuable and enticing social media campaigns.

The last theory of attitude formation was also determined to be helpful and practical for nonprofit organizations. This study found that positive attitudes are built on trust and consistency and are vital for the sustainability of nonprofit fundraising goals. Attitude formation was linked to a high percentage of online interactions and is an important key in the long-term relationships between the public and the organization. By matching social media campaigns and posts with the core values of the nonprofit, it was found that individuals felt more comfortable responding online and with monetary donations. This theory was determined to be both practical and foundational for all nonprofit social media campaigns.

Convoy of Hope and the Million Dollar Match serve as an evaluative measure for other nonprofit social media pages and campaigns. As the online world continues to adapt, grow and change, nonprofits are forced to constantly readjust the social media tactics and strategies. However, implementing these three basic theories provides an important framework for consistency, authenticity, and trust that will be valuable in all situations and campaigns. This research provides an understanding of public perceptions of nonprofits and a foundation for how these organizations can effectively unite their mission with the heart and minds of the public.

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