Ithaca College
Digital Commons @ IC

Ithaca College Theses

2012

Best Practice Social Media Policy: Comparison of Organizational Use of Social Media Policy

Alison M. Rawlins
Ithaca College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.ithaca.edu/ic_theses

Part of the Social Media Commons

BEST PRACTICE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY:

COMPARISON OF ORGANIZATIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

_____

A Master's Thesis presented to the Faculty of the

Graduate Program in Communications

Ithaca College

_____

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Science

_____

by

Alison M. Rawlins

July 2012

Roy H. Park School of Communications
Ithaca College
Ithaca, NY

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

_____

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS

_____

This is to certify that the Thesis of

Alison M. Rawlins

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Master of Science in the Graduate Program in Communications
at Ithaca College has been approved.

Thesis Advisor:___   _____ date:___7-25-2012

Thesis Committee Member:____   __ date:__7/25/12_____

Thesis Committee Member:_____ date:_____

Chair, Graduate Program:_   _____ date:__7-25-2012

Dean, School of Communications   date:_7/26/12_____

Abstract

Social media is a phenomenon that businesses are using to communicate with both internal and external stakeholders. The new communication channel is different from the traditional channels used by marketing, public relations, and human resources because of user created content, social dynamics, and frequent changes to the autonomous online platforms' structure and social make-up. Social media websites like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter have received significant attention from both scholars and practitioners seeking best practice for organizational engagement with the phenomenon. Much of the information published for businesses, communities, and activists, who are looking into social media engagement provides consistent instruction, but are the recommended practices reflected in the practice of organizations? This thesis investigates the language used by organizations to manage use of social media in order to learn how closely they follow published advice. An analysis of the content presented in 25 organizational social media policy documents from sources spanning five industries is used to explore how corporations are approaching the use of social media. The findings reveal which practices are uniformly included in policy, and which practices are unique to the industrial focus or identity of particular organizations.

Acknowledgements and Dedication

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

Social media is a relatively new phenomenon in computer mediated communication. A loosely connected set of autonomous websites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and numerous others, give users separated by time and space a platform to connect. Social media lets people share information, ideas, personal messages, and images, etc., easily and quickly from any web connected device. This platform supports social interactions and keeping up with family, and it also allows individuals to quickly attach new business contacts to their extended networks.

Organizations in the fields of higher education, healthcare, manufacturing, news and entertainment media, and nonprofit causes, are using social media to communicate with multiple stakeholder audiences. Internally, social media platforms facilitate quick, informal, communication across department and hierarchical boundaries. Externally, fan pages, paid advertisements, video content, and product blogs, augment traditional marketing and advertising. Unlike traditional print and broadcast media, social media relies on user created content, which increases the power of individual voices, facilitating a dialogue rather than the traditional one-way broadcast communication model.

This dialogue raises many new benefits and risks to organizations. Benefits of the dialogic paradigm include: (a) increased credibility of organizational messages which "go viral," through trustworthy contacts, (b) low cost of online word of mouth, (c) greater access to consumer feedback, (d) timely response to crises, and (e) increased loyalty/approachability of brands. Risks include: (a) rapid proliferation of negative information or misinformation, (b) leaks of proprietary information, (c) legal ramifications to the organization from misconduct of connected parties, (d) dilution of the

1

brand identity, and (e) increased potential for personal conflicts to impact work of employees.

The dynamic nature of social networks which include both central and marginal connections has received a great deal of academic study (Achrol, 1997; Bloom & Dees, 2008; Cross, Borgatti & Parker, 2002; Preece, 2001; Rosen, Kim, &Nam 2008). These studies illuminate the phenomena of human networks- how people connect with one other. This phenomenon is separate from the social media platforms that individuals use. Understanding the social nature of human beings and the ways in which we navigate the complex dynamics of connections between coworkers and social contacts lends theoretical context to the advice bestowed by experienced practitioners of social media communication.

Frequent changes to the landscape of autonomous online platforms, their structures and functionality, as well as the social make-up of communities, makes social media engagement a complex topic which has inspired publication of numerous "how to" books (Blanchard, 2011; Boudreaux, 2009; Kabani, 2010; Kerpen, 2011; Shih, 2009). The consensus of advice about how to leverage the power of dialogue, and mitigate risks, found within these publications sets the benchmark of best practice for organizational engagement with social media. While studies vary in their focus on engagement and/or outcomes, the authors uniformly recommend strategic policy to guide the actions of employees or volunteers, to reduce risks such as misrepresentation, inconsistencies, external attacks, and to harmonize with the social dynamic of the platform.

Social networks and social media websites like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter have received significant attention from both scholars and practitioners who seek to

understand the trends, and publish best practice for organizational engagement. Much of the information published for news and entertainment media, nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, healthcare, or manufacturing concerns, looking into social media engagement provides consistent guidance, but in practice there are significant inconsistencies, specifically in the areas where risk is defined and managed. Therefore, this thesis examines the strategies expressed through 25 actual policy documents written by organizations spanning five industry categories: News, Nonprofit, Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Education, to answer these questions:

1. Who are the social media policies written for: internal, external audiences, or both? And, for what purpose?

2. What are the practices regarding the use of social media that are communicated in the policy?

3. What are the tactics for controlling behaviors of internal and external audiences expressed in the policies?

4. How are these practices and tactics expressed through the language of the policy? What does this language suggest about the organization's social media voice?

I sought to answer these questions through an analysis of the content of the written policies for: (a) audiences targeted; (b) practices and tactics; (c) language and readability; (d) description or indicators of the organizations' social media voice. The findings reveal which practices are uniformly included in policy, and which practices are unique to organizations within a particular industry, thus, providing insight into use of social media by organizations, the culture and values of individual organizations with respect to social media, and social media cultural that apply across each industry.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

How-to literature on the subject of social media by organizations is generally focused on four main concerns: governing use of social media, specific practice recommendations for optimal use of the media, tactics related to engaging on the platforms internally or externally, and the organizations' social media voice.

Policies

CEO of Likable Media Dave Kerpen (2011) advises in his work, *Likeable social media: How to delight your customers, create and irresistible brand, and be generally amazing on Facebook (and other social networks)*, to listen first, embrace the dialogic model of social media, speak in an authentic tone, provide value, and to give up expectations of a direct engagement-to-sales relationship. The guide provides a starting point for organizations to understand the value and power of social media. Much of the advice and instruction provided could be included in a policy written by an organization to manage the use of social media by its communications personnel, but unlike other works of this genre, there is no chapter dedicated to formalization of policy.

As an innovator in the leverage of social media for organization relationship building, Clara Shih (2009) understands and clearly expresses the need to strategically plan and govern social media communication for organizations. It's not just compliance with legal regulations or mitigating civil risks, but carefully considering the dynamics of the communities and the infrastructural constraints of the social media platforms being engaged with. According to *The Facebook era: Tapping online social networks to build better products, reach new audiences, and sell more stuff*, a good policy guides the implementation of the campaign plan, and facilitates the management of various social

media campaign activities and constituencies (Shih, 2009). Guidance for employees

outside of communication functions, through clearly stated rules, mitigates various risks

just as a strategic plan for the personnel directly responsible for implementing tactics

cultivates audience engagement.

Zen Marketer, Shama Kabani (2010), delivers matter-of-fact instructions to

develop a comprehensive common sense policy in the 8th chapter of *The Zen of social

media marketing: An easier way to build credibility, generate buzz, and increase

revenue.* Similarly, in *Social media ROI: Managing and measuring social media efforts

in your organization,* brand strategist, Olivier Blanchard (2011), dedicates chapter seven

to establishing guidelines for an organizations' social media interactions.

Literally hundreds of social media how-to guides, from authors of various

perspectives, are available but much of the insights and advice will likely echo the best

practices for policy development practice, tactics, and voice discussed by the set of

authors presented here. Five themes about composing a policy for social media emerged

from the reading: (1) guidance for employees (2) guidance for the communications staff

(3) internal/external strategies, (4) implementations and (5) evaluations.

Guidance for employees

Guiding employees both inside and outside of communication, marketing, and

sales functions of the organization is an important reason to draft and implement policy to

manage the use of social media. Authors agree that the various risks to an organization

such as confidentiality breach, brand defamation, or inappropriate use of company

equipment, to name just a few, are important to mitigate through social media policy

(Blanchard, 2011; Kabani, 2010; and Shih, 2009); however Blanchard argues

"unfortunately, most social media policies in existence today fail to provide thorough

guidance for employees, favoring instead a tendency to limit themselves to the legalities

of using company-owned equipment such as computers on mobile devices for personal

use" (Blanchard, 2011, p. 84). Setting limitations and restrictions as opposed to providing

information and guidance may hinder creative productivity.

Guidance for the communications staff

Social media policy directed at communication staff typically includes the

strategy and tactics to implement social media communication campaigns; advice that

Kabani (2010) repeatedly touts as common sense. It is also agreed that planning for

outcomes and evaluation of the man-hours dedicated to the endeavor are highly important

considerations (Blanchard, 2011; Shih, 2009). The universal assumption this literature

revealed is that specific employees are dedicated to the implementation of social media

communication activities, and that the communication personnel must feel empowered to

express their creativity, stretch beyond the box, and represent the most positive face of

the organization.

Internal/external strategies

Internal and external strategies differ significantly in terms of their goals if not

methods. Shih advises careful consideration of the community design of the platforms

that make up social media before embarking on either an internal or external facing

campaign. She explains the differences between open and closed networks "an open

network like Facebook, which anyone can join, or a closed network like a specialized

Ning network, which would be limited to your community only" (Shih, 2009, p. 195).

This consideration is mirrored by Blanchard's attention to three audience strategies in his

list of ten sections to include in the organizations' social media policy: 2. Internal use guidelines, 3. External use guidelines, and 10...guidelines for agency partners contractors and external representatives (Blanchard, 2011, p. 85). The platforms of social media are always changing, and the communities they support also evolve over time, so it is important to draft adaptable strategies for the people, not the platform targeted.

Implementation

Implementation of the organizations' social media policy should include adequate attention to making those directly affected (usually the employees or strategic partners) by the policy aware, and training to sufficient knowledge and understanding (Blanchard, 2011; Shih, 2009). Beyond metrics that track man-hours, or engagement analytics, Shih advises change management strategy that respects the diversity in age and technical savvy of the target audiences. Whether internal or external, various constituencies will have diverse perspectives on the technology, it's relevance to them personally, and ultimately willingness to comply. In the end no one will comply with a policy that is written and never implemented.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the success of the policy is needed just as much as evaluation of the individual initiatives carried out under its guidance. Kabani's (2010) common sense approach extols formation of realistic expectations for the outcomes of social media interactions – Shih (2009) said the idea of evaluation must be present from planning through the execution in order to yield useable insights. Social media is new, and volatile, and risky; only by systematic evaluation of the activities which interface through social platforms can future plans achieve success.

The social media policy that an organization adopts should ultimately provide the guidance toward practices, tactics, and voice the organization will use to interface with the social media public. The literature reviewed confers consistent guidance on the potential risks and benefits of using social media for organizational communication. Some authors nod at unique situations of particular industry, mission, or focus of the organizations authoring policy; however study of what those specific situations or influences are, or how they might affect the language found in the final document is lacking.

Practices

Practices are actions undertaken to achieve the strategies laid out in the organizations policy. Blanchard (2011), Kerpen (2011) and Shih (2009) all recommend laying the operational groundwork for authentic, hyper-targeted, honest, communication strategies. Kerpen (2011) and Blanchard (2011) both advocate listening first – then responding based on what the audience is saying. The idea of consistent messaging that creates an integrated experience for internal or external audiences was recommended by both Kerpen (2011) and Shih (2009). Kerpen further recommends leveraging the interrelationships between groups in the larger social networks. Kabani (2010) adds that the social media expression be aligned with the organizations values, and provide for program evaluation, just as for any other communication campaign. These practices outline ways to guide the behavior of employees, potential customers, and strategic partners, but lack an evaluation of the outcomes as they relate to specific differences between practices adopted by organizations of diverse industries.

Social Media Voice

The voice of social media is not only expressed through the words, images, and video, media that are shared, but the contexts of the network where it is published. Micro blogging website, Twitter, allows only 140 characters in each tweet. These constraints are meant to inspire creative concision, but organizations with a longer message are linking to the message in order to circumvent the limitation. Depending on the values of the community being addressed, the tactic could be perceived as either informative, or lazy. Consideration of the community values is important in crafting content for publication to social media venues.

At the front of this chapter Kerpen's (2011) guidebook to *Likable social media* instruction to: listen first, embrace the dialogic model of social media, speak in an authentic tone, provide value, and give up expectations of a direct engagement-to-sales relationship, are a means to establish the organizations' social media voice. The practices and tactics that an organization chooses ultimately translate into the voice perceived by the target audience(s). The authentic tone means to share stories that inspire, demonstrate curiosity about the audience needs/desires, admit any wrongdoing - should it occur, and most of all provide information – not a sales pitch (Kerpen, 2011). Social media communication is about relationships, and people resist relationships with entities focused solely on exchanging a product for profit.

Relationship marketing has gained popularity given the tools that social media provides. Shih (2009) projected that new categories of relationships would evolve from the influence of social media. Messages that take best advantage of social media strengths win over thousands of social filtering gatekeepers. Increased trust in the message is

garnered through perceived endorsement of individuals who pin, like, tag, or otherwise link to the source. This trust is accomplished through alignment of the voice with values of the influential people in the target communities.

Remembering that the social media voice is both internal and external, Blanchard (2011) suggests that the social media voice sings from the social company. In an organization that espouses social empowerment and individual creativity, the values will be reflected in the social media content created by both communications staff, and general personnel (Blanchard, 2011).

In addition to the how-to guidebooks, many blogs and communities of practice are talking about how to engage through social media. And perhaps the content is more up-to-date. At the very least – it's simpler to engage with people responsible for organizational use of social media where they operate. In "11 Ways to find your social media voice", Genevieve Coates (2012) Reiterates Kerpen's (2011) *Likable* qualities of transparency, credibility, inquiry and admissions of any misdeeds. Matt Medeiros, (2011) Matt Repost blog installment echoes Shih's (2009) counsel, to pick and choose the platform wisely rather than trying to scattershot all of social media. Michelle McNickle (2012), Web Content Producer for Healthcare IT News, a community of practice of sorts amongst health-focused people, lists six reasons why health care providers need to develop their voice in social media: (1) tell your story, (2) find a community, (3) express opinions and commentary, (4) discover your passions, (5) social media marketing, (6) manage your online reputation. These reasons are consistent with aspects of likability recommend by Kerpen (2011).

The literature reviewed in this chapter has been focused on the day to day how-tos of social media. The next chapter expands on the theories that drive this advice.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

In the previous chapter, practical advice relating to the development of social

media policy was presented in five thematic categories: (1) guidance for employees (2)

guidance for the communications staff (3) internal/external practices, (4) implementations

and (5) evaluations. This section discusses theoretical assumptions that underlie the

practical recommendations for creating social media policies, and the impact these

assumptions make on the voice expressed by the organization internally and externally by

discussing theories which are relevant to the five themes set up in the policy section of

the previous chapter.

Guidance For Employees

Guidance for employees is an internal objective of a social media policy. As

mentioned in the last chapter, Blanchard (2011) argues that social media policy attention

to guiding employee behavior is too often focused on legal minutia like non-disclosure

agreements, and preventing misappropriation of company resources to personal use,

while typically too little guidance is included which empowers employees. Value creation

and social learning are theories that lead to use of empowering rather than restrictive

language in an organizations' social media policy.

Value Creation

In *The Facebook Era*, Clara Shih (2009) explained Metcalf's Law: economic

value is created when individuals who are part of a network exchange information. The

cost of giving a referral or sales lead is quite low, yet the recipient might gain revenue by

making a sale or engaging a client. Recipients of successful referrals and leads are

motivated to reciprocate. Shih (2009) calls the phenomena of the resulting favor trading

circle a reciprocity ring. This value creation phenomenon is an important reason to use

the social media policy to empower all employees to make the best use of their

professional social networks. Policy clauses could also be written that restrict sharing

sensitive information.

Social Learning Theory

Training and collaboration experts, Tony Bingham and Marcia Conner (2010)

cited Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman's theory about social construction of reality to

explain how the knowledge individuals have provides the scaffolding and context for

interpretation of new information gained through social interactions. The framework and

perspectives contributed by multiple participants build on each other to generate greater

outcomes than would be individually possible. "Social learning theory," was developed

by John Dewey around 1954, and was based on sociology, behavior modification and

psychology of the era. Initially the focus was on behavior modification, but *social*

learning has been picked up and expanded upon as the years progressed (Bingham &

Conner, 2010). The rapid evolution of digital platforms for communities has dramatically

impacted the relevance of collective thinking.

Language used in a social media policy which empowers all employees to

collaborate and build on others' ideas is intended to take advantage of theoretical value

creation inherent of collaboration and networking. Restrictive clauses such as

nondisclosure statements limit the risk of losing ownership of valuable ideas. Blanchard's

lamentation for the lack of empowering language in policies is based on an assumption

that a greater number of minds in the collective thinking pot create more value, but

restrictive language might be necessary to ease risks to an organizations intellectual

property. The potential risk is minimal when an individual fails to reciprocate referrals,

but could be catastrophic to the viability of an organization if an external party takes

credit for an idea built on collaborative foundations.

Guidance for the communications staff

Communication personnel with access to the approved information and messages

should be empowered to represent the most positive face of the organization through all

available channels. Social media is more of dialogue than the traditional media broadcast

pattern. The influence of two way communication moves the process from linear (a

targeted message based on the research transmitted to a specific audience segment) to a

cyclical adaptive response to feedback from the target as well as untargeted individuals.

Paul Bloom and Gregory Dees (2008) of Duke University's Fuqua School of

Business liken the business network to a biological ecosystem. Mapping interactions

between the players (resource providers, competitors, complimentary organizations and

allies, beneficiaries and customers, opponents and problem makers, affected or influential

bystanders), the environmental conditions (political climate, economic markets,

geographic infrastructure), and the culture and social fabric in which they operate helps

communicators gain a deeper understanding of networks that exist within the

organization as well as audiences outside it (Bloom & Dees, 2008). Viewing social media

as a network ecosystem informs policy language which supports adaptability of both

internal and external communicators.

Internal/External Tactics

Traditionally, the internal communications practices were isolated to employment

topics while external communications addressed marketing and sales to external

audiences. Social networking and social media blur the internal/external line because the

social network crosses internal department boundaries and external constituencies are

increasingly expecting feedback to be heard and responded to beyond marketing, sales, or

customer service silos. Ravi Achrol (1997), Professor of Marketing at the George

Washington University, explained that massive industry restructuring, downsizing,

vertical disaggregation, and outsourcing contributed to the development of the modern

networked organization. The network paradigm he describes lends greater flexibility

through technology and networks of strategic alliances between both internal and external

stakeholders such as suppliers, distributers, and even competitors.

Given the shift to an increasingly complex and interconnected set of

constituencies, language used in a social media policy that speaks to internal and external

tactics should reflect the current understanding of group dynamics. Two theories that

address the function of modern networked groups are flock theory and tribes.

Flock Theory

Flock theory, which is based on emergence of new phenomena from complex

systems, and self-organizing human interaction systems, is presented by Rosen et al.

(2010) as a theory of decentralized communication. Decentralization of decision making

is one of the phenomena that move Theory X management to Theory Y as predicted by

Douglass McGregor in the 1960s. Increased access to like-minded individuals through

technology increases social power. According to Rosen et al., "homophily" is the

selection or presence of others who are similar, and therefore contact between similar

people will be more frequent than among dissimilar people. The idea of homophily has

been expressed in a variety of contexts to explain network and group dynamics. The

notion that similarity breeds connection i.e., "birds of a feather flock together" suggests

that people self-organize into homogeneous groups to achieve various goals. Social

media policy based on the assumptions of flock theory will include tactics directed at

homogenous groups.

Tribes

Some believe that any organization without cohesion is doomed to fail. Dave

Logan, John King, and Halee Fischer-Wright (2008), partners of CultureSync, a

consulting firm that focused on organizational culture and leadership, describe groups

within organizations as tribes comprised of 20 to 150 people. According to their model,

the dynamic of a tribe will evolve through five stages from chaotic to transcendent

groups. In the lower stages, the members of a tribe are largely disorganized, lack trust,

and frequently engage in counterproductive in-fighting. Individuals in an evolved stage

tribe communicate simultaneously with many others more frequently than one-to-one and

are united through a common goal or set of values rather than superficial resemblance

(Logan et al., 2008). This perspective suggests that the internal audience may have

several segments which are not necessarily defined by departmental boundaries.

A social media policy that embraces these theories will frame audience

segmentation strategy in terms of affiliation rather than assigned department, geography,

or demographic information. If the channel used to implement these strategies matches

well with the targeted groups, it facilitates implementation.

Implementation

Implementation of the social media policy must attend to making those directly

affected by the policy aware that there is a policy, and how to access and understand its

relevance to them. According to leaders in the corporate training and development field,

Tony Bingham and Marcia Conner (2010), social constructivism best describes how

people learn together by a process of complimentary insights that ultimately result in a

greater comprehension for each party than would be possible by any individual on their

own. In their e-book *The new social learning: A guide to transforming organizations*

through social media, Bingham and Conner explain, "Someone else's understanding

compliments yours, and together you start to weave an informed interpretation. You

tinker until you can move on" (Location 401 of 3,735).

Once a policy is ready for implementation, tinkering with the ideas could be

viewed as undesirable, but the how-to books all acknowledge the rapid pace of change in

the social media playing field, so an implementation strategy that embraces social

constructivism allows for the adaptability required in the social media venue. Meta

language about how to implement the policy may even be omitted from the policy

document.

<div align="center">

Evaluation

</div>

Theoretically, the construction, implementation and evaluation of social media

policy are a continuous, cyclical, process. Since social media is relatively new, is

constructed of a large number of independent resources, and embodies a rapidly changing

environment, evaluation of the outcomes on a regular periodic basis is essential.

Continuous evaluation allows the leadership to discard assumptions that prove unfounded

and explore new strategies. The impact of shifting perspectives could be seen as

undermining the consistency or authority of the organizational voice, however if this is

done with adherence to the core values and brand identity, the result will be expression of

a tone that is current and relevant.

The various theories discussed in this chapter support the advice established in

how-to literature. The methodology described in the following section is intended to

discover if actual social media policies follow the theories and how-to instruction

available about social media.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This thesis seeks to answer questions about the social media policies written for use by organizations of various industries:

1. Who are the social media policies written for: internal, external audiences, or both? And, for what purpose?

2. What are the practices regarding the use of social media that are communicated in the policy?

3. What are the tactics for controlling behaviors of internal and external audiences expressed in the policies?

4. How are these practices and tactics expressed through the language of the policy? What does this language suggest about the organization's social media voice?

In order to explore organizational use of social media in terms of these four aspects, qualitative methods are used to understand the meanings expressed in the social media policy texts. The theory and practical recommendations discussed in the previous chapters construct the world view through which these questions were formulated. This chapter will explain the content analysis method chosen to analyze textual information presented in the form of written social media policy, and the sample selection process.

Content Analysis

The authors (Blanchard, 2011; Kabani, 2010, Kerpen, 2011, Shih, 2009) of how-to literature discussed in Chapter 2 generally agree upon what constitutes best practices in social media engagement, such as creating a written policy. The range of naturally occurring empirical materials available, to examine the practical adherence to recommendations, is far less uniform. For example, the lengths of social media policy

documents range from under 100 words to several thousand. Also, many of the

documents provide contact information for the author, or authoring department, while

several organizations do not include much detail. Due to wide variation, and low quantity

of available samples, qualitative methods, which afford interpretation of broad meanings,

rather than quantitatively reviewing occurrence of specific keywords, are necessary.

In an article published in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, (2011)

Anssi Peräkylä and Jonanna Ruusuvouri distinguish two types of empirical materials

used in qualitative study: interviews, and naturally occurring materials. This thesis

examines the naturally occurring empirical materials in the form of of written policies

which were published by organizations.

In *Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods*,

Lawrence Frey, Carl Botan and Gary Kreps (2000) define "content analysis" as "a form

of textual analysis used to identify, enumerate, and analyze occurrences of specific

messages and message characteristics embedded in relevant texts" (p. 413). The content

of selected social media policy documents is examined and analyzed to discover the

express or implied audience addressed by the policy, which practices or tactics are

included, and how the language used to communicate the body of the policy expresses

the personality or voice of the organization.

A measure that quantifies the quality of writing style is the Flesch readability

score. The formula described on the website, http://www.readabilityformulas.com/flesch-

reading-ease-readability-formula.php, translates the qualities of sentence length, and

number of syllables in words, into a score for a selection of text which can be easily

compared. This measure is used to evaluate the readability aspects of the empirical

materials.

Sample Selection

As demonstration of industry leadership, Converseon executive, Chris Boudreaux,

created an online database where 179 organizations have published their policies

governing the use of Social Media (http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php).

According to the website, Converseon has been leading the industry since 2001.

Socialmedia.biz, also offers guidance to those seeking to spread their

organizational message on the webs. A library of social media policies that have been

written by various organizations is also available on their website,

http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/. There is some overlap to the two

listings.

From the pool of self-published policies available on these two sources, I selected

25 policies to analyze and compare. The policies were carefully chosen to equitably

represent each of the five categories: education; healthcare; news and entertainment;

manufacturing and nonprofit. Table 4.1 represents the merging of taxonomies from those

used on the source websites to those this work seeks to compare.

Table 4.1

Selection Analysis – Categories

Boudreaux categories	Socialmedia.biz categories	Selection categories
agencies: advertising, PR, Marketing		
business products or services		
consumer products or services	corporations	Manufacturing
healthcare	hospitals and health	Healthcare
govt. or non-profit	govt.	
	nonprofits	Nonprofit
		Education
	news organizations	News and Entertainment

Thirty-three organizations were found which could represent the one or more of

the five selection categories. These organizations were further examined in order to

narrow the sample to 25 policies with five representatives in each of the five selection

categories. Final selection sought to represent diversity of size and geographic influence

across the sample. Financial measures were retrieved from Gale databases

(galenet.galegroup.com) for selection analysis. Where financials were not available on

Gale, the home websites for the organizations were examined for selection purposes. In

cases where two or more organizations represented the same category, and were similar

in size or reach, the policy written by the organization most familiar to the author was

chosen. Several organizations could represent more than one category, and were assigned

as needed to the category with lower representation. A full list of the selected policies

which were used as empirical materials for this research is shown in Appendix1.

The next chapter will provide the results found in the selected policies in terms of

who is addressed, what the policy seeks to control, and how the desired practices are

communicated. The analysis of the policy content will continue to illustrate the concepts

introduced in the previous chapters in terms of audience and issues addressed in the

policy, and language used, as they relate to the expression of culture and personality of

the authoring organization, and the industry in which it operates in the social media

arena.

Chapter 5: Results

The sample policies selected (see Appendix 1) were analyzed for themes, meanings, and the subjective feeling of voice expressed. The variations of document length, presentation style, use of images, and definitions, make most quantitative comparison unwieldy. While it is possible to compare the number of words or pages, no meaningful relationship emerged between these numbers and the organizations' industry or size. Even counting the occurrence of specific keywords yielded little comprehensible meaning—the semantic structure and punctuation greatly influence word meanings and connotations, therefore the Flesch reading ease score, which quantifies qualities of syllables and sentence length, is the only numeric comparison used in this analysis. This chapter will clarify the results of the qualitative thematic content analysis in terms of the audience addressed, social media practices, management or behavioral influence practices, and the style or voice of the policies across each of the five categories.

Audience and Purpose

While examining the policies, listed in appendix 1, for express or implied target audience, the purpose of the social media policy was also explored. The purpose expressed in the documents range from managing use of corporate resources to encouraging personal expression. Within the five categories thematic trends emerged which differentiated the groups in terms of the organizations' goal for creating the social media policy document.

News

The organizations representing the news segment include: Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Associated Press (AP), British Broadcasting

Corporation (BBC), Los Angeles (LA) Times, and Reuters. Uniformly, news

organizations' social media policies are written for the journalist staff. While mention is

made of support personnel, the purpose of these documents is to encourage appropriate

use of social media in the journalistic capacity while protecting the organization and

individual identity concerns.

The most succinct document of all 25 policies included in the sample belongs to

the ABC. ABC's third directive is "Do not imply ABC endorsement of your personal

views." Clauses like this illustrate the news industry's need to protect its credibility. In

the spirit of independent and impartial reporting, the BBC policy states: "the intention of

this note is not to stop BBC staff from conducting legitimate activities on the Internet, but

serves to flag-up those areas in which conflicts can arise" (2011, p. 1). In this way, the

social media policies of news organization address their journalists with guidance and

principles to maintain credibility of the organizations' as well as their own identity.

Nonprofit

The organizations representing the nonprofit segment include: Bread for the

World, Easter Seals, Fellowship Church, National Public Radio (NPR) and the Red

Cross. Some overlap of categories exists, especially in this sector. Organizations which

might have been selected as a news, health or educational example are found here based

only on their lack of profit motive. In spite of the breadth of missions followed by the

selected organizations, the inclusion of volunteers and/or blending of internal and

external constituencies in the audience for the policies are found in all but the NPR

document which is, like other news organizations, focused on journalists.

Nonprofit institutions such as the Red Cross, and Easter Seals, are using the policy as a tool to develop Web 2.0 strategies. The stated goals of the Bread for the World policy exemplify the purpose of social media policy for nonprofit organizations:

Our goals in making better use of new online communication tools (e.g., Web 2.0 technologies, social media, or social networking sites) are:

- Expand and strengthen Bread's advocacy work for poor and hungry people

- Expand our membership

- Better communicate with existing members and target audiences

- Strengthen our relationships with our members

- Fulfill our mission to end hunger here and abroad. (2009, p. 1)

The nonprofit policies reviewed demonstrate grassroots movement, and democratic campaigning. While Easter Seals policy is written specifically to manage comments on the Autism Blog, the unifying theme of nonprofit organizations' social media policy is to educate individuals, both internally and externally, about the risk and benefits of social media.

Manufacturing

The organizations representing the manufacturing segment include: Coca Cola, Daimler AG, Hewlett-Packard (HP), International Business Machines (IBM), and Kodak. The audiences for most of the manufacturing organizations' social media policies are internal. Kodak's (2009) express purpose of "sharing lessons learned to help your business grow," is totally unique (p. 1). No other organization in any category addressed its policy to other organizations beyond a cursory mention of strategic partners.

The motivation for manufacturing organizations to create a social media policy, in all cases to at least some degree, is uniformity. The policies of manufacturing organizations list aims such as: to further leadership, collaboration, and accountability (Coca Cola), or protect employees while embracing the blogosphere (IBM). However, in reality, the policy is setting the stage for the employees addressed to engage their individual audience segments in a way that is consistent with the organizations brand identity.

Healthcare

The organizations representing the healthcare segment include: the Cleveland Clinic, Iowa Hospital Association, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, Pfizer, and Hospital Sant Joan de Déu. The policies in this group are mainly addressed to external audiences, patients, potential patients, and families of patients, for the purpose of managing comments on the proprietary networks, support groups, and blogs, administered by the healthcare organization.

As has been mentioned of organizations in other categories, the group is not homogeneous. The most outlying organization of this set is Pfizer, which is a drug manufacturer. Also, the Iowa Hospital Association is not only a single healthcare organization, but a voluntary membership association that includes hospitals and health systems across the state of Iowa. Even with the diversity within this set, the unifying aim of the policies is to protect the audiences. The hospitals and health systems are addressing the patients, and their families, who might wish to share stories on the hospital blogs, while Pfizer is addressing both their employees and external affiliates. The purpose that

characterizes policies used by health organizations' documents is protection, whether it is

patient's private medical information or Pfizer's intellectual property.

Education

The organizations representing the education segment include: DePaul University,

Hamilton College, Lake Forest College, Ohio State University Medical Center, and

University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. In this group, two of three entries are

health centers affiliated with an educational institution. While the MD Anderson policy is

primarily concerned with the Cancerwise blog and external participants, the bulk of

social media policies written for higher education institutions are addressed to internal

audiences.

The reason for creating social media policies for higher educational organizations

is to assemble "best practice" guidelines. Even though it is targeted to an audience

external to the organization, the rules for created by University of Texas MD Anderson

Cancer Center for posting to its' Cancerwise blog represent a best practice motive. Other

policies from this group encourage expression while delineating clear boundaries. For

example, Hamilton and Lake Forest College both restrict the use of the official school

logo to the central accounts that are run by communication departments.

The aim for diversity of organizations, and the limited selection pool, blurs some

borders of the industry categories. For example, NPR is nonprofit and news organization,

Pfizer is a manufacturer of a healthcare product, and the social media policies available

for Ohio State University and the University of Texas are written for the schools'

teaching hospitals. Regardless of the fringes, examination of the audience and purpose

expressed in the policy documents revealed trends suggesting that social media policies

are addressed to an audience, to serve a purpose, which is dependent on the industry alignment:

- News organizations value impartiality and a credible identity, and are written to journalists.

- Nonprofit organizations want to empower their grassroots support to use Web 2.0 tools to forward the mission, and are written to a broad audience which includes paid staff, volunteers, and external constituencies.

- Manufacturing businesses have products to sell, and brand identities to create—they embrace the new tools, but use the social media policy to communicate uniform practices to their internal audience.

- Healthcare organizations deal with trauma and tragic illness, so they want to use the social media tools to empower support systems built of external individuals while protecting personal privacy for patient's sensitive medical information.

- Institutions of higher education value scientific exploration, but they seek the "best practice" methods, which have been tried and proven sound, to direct decentralized groups of academic departments, student organizations, and clubs.

Ultimately, the specific practices that are recommended by each organization's social media policy will be the means of reaching its purpose. Practices described include the recommendations for interacting with the social media websites, and those aimed at managing behavior. The next section reveals the themes discovered in terms of social media practices exhibited in social media policies across the five categories.

Social Media Practices

Similar to the organizations chosen to analyze, there is some overlap between the

topics explored. Demonstration of the purpose for writing a social media policy has been

expressed through the practices listed for engaging with social media and managing

behavior. For purpose of clarity, the topics of social media and individual management

are discussed separately even though they may use similar tactics. An example of a social

media practice which might be included in a policy is using a central account for the

organization, rather than multiple accounts on social media websites for various

subgroups. An example of a behavior management practice is editing or deleting

comments. The distinction is managing the use of social media at a group or individual

level. This section describes practices used by different types of organizations to define

and use social media at the group level.

News

News organizations define social media as a new communication channel, and

generally concentrate on the news-feed aspects of websites like Twitter and Facebook.

Reuters' policy encourages "common sense" while engaging in use of social media. AP

reminds journalists to disclose their AP affiliation even in personal accounts and restricts

or forbids online behavior which would risk the credibility of the organization. The BBC

policy also includes Wikipedia, the collaborative encyclopedia, in the social media

environment, and includes this clause in the online editorial guidelines:

> If staff members edit online encyclopaedias [sic] at work the source of the
>
> correction will be recorded as a BBC IP address. The intervention may therefore
>
> look as if it comes from the BBC itself. BBC staff should therefore act in a

manner that does not bring the BBC into disrepute and should not post derogatory

or offensive comments on any online encyclopaedias.

The social media practice of news organizations is to go ahead and use it—with caution.

Nonprofit

National Public Radio is included in the nonprofit group, but describes practices

in a similar way to other journalistic organizations. In general, the social media practices

described for nonprofit groups engagement in social media is more open, due to the

grassroots nature of this sector. Bread for the World encourages staff, activists and

members, to go forth and propagate all kinds of Web 2.0 tools in support of feeding the

hungry people of the world. Easter Seals is concerned only with its proprietary Autism

Blog, and focuses the Online Community Guidelines published on the website on

behavior management practices of external commenters. The overarching practice in this

group is the respectful use of any social media space. Encouragement of open dialogue is

typical of all policies in the nonprofit sector.

Manufacturing

The practices included in manufacturing organizations' social media policies

include:

- create a separate account for personal use and maintain businesslike conduct in
  personal and professional accounts

- measure and evaluate the engagement on business accounts

- create open and honest dialogue by monitoring comments and responding quickly
  and professionally

- respectfully correct inaccurate information

The instructive nature of the practice described in a business or brand focused policy

uniformly reflects the consensus on practices of how-to authors (Blanchard, 2011;

Kabani, 2010; Kerpen, 2011; Shih, 2009) described earlier in chapter two.

Healthcare

The focus of healthcare entities is on sharing successful stories of their patients to

create a supportive, hopeful, nurturing forum. There is a great deal of concern for

protecting private medical information, but the practices listed in the policies remain

focused on helpful articles and compelling accounts that inspire physical and emotional

healing. Pfizer's Social Media Playbook stated that the "hallmarks of all Social Media are

user-generated content and interaction." The Children's Hospital LA limits the social

media practice to its private forum. The main social media practice is to disclose the

hospital's intended use of the users' content, as well as uses which the hospital cannot

control, in Share Your Story – Use and Access guidelines. Healthcare social media

practices can be generalized as cautious participation.

Education

Communication departments of higher education institutions both recognize the

decentralization of academic hierarchies and the need to maintain a uniform school

branding and identity. Lake Forest College Social Media Guidelines expresses the lack of

capacity to manage "other social media sites beyond the Lake Forest College Official

Facebook Page and recommends that departments consider the resources they have

available before establishing their own social media presence." The Hamilton College

office of communication, advises in Creating a Social Media Presence at Hamilton

College "Before creating a separate social media presence for your office or

administrative department, consider whether you would be better served by working with the Office of Communications to utilize Hamilton's primary social media presence." Policies written in this category refer to the centralized social media accounts run by the school's communication office, and recommend subgroups which manage their own social media understand the time and resource commitments. Timeliness and engagement are focal practices to this group.

There are different practices for each of the five industries. News organizations cautiously embrace the opportunity for social media to extend the relevance of their news channels to online audiences. Nonprofit organizations practice similar community building in social media as they always have as grassroots initiatives that serve people. Manufacturing organizations are adapting to the increasing relevance of consumer voices in creating brand identity. Healthcare organizations, like news organizations, cautiously embrace the new arena of social media, but whereas news organizations seek to protect the credibility and identity of the organization, journalist, or news source, health organizations are obligated to protect the identities and personal health information of their patients. Organizations of higher education create policies that highlight allocation of resources needed to do social media well. The various social media practices expressed in policy reveal the ways in which the organizations of various industries define the social media arena. The practices found in policy for behavior management, are focused on individual behavior rather than interaction with the social media websites.

Behavior Management Practice

The practices expressed in the social media policies are divided between social

media practices and behavior management practices because of the direction they target.

Where the social media practices are about designing a social media account, or

managing external conduct, behavior management practices are for managing behavior of

internal audiences. Even the policies that are written for external audiences use separate

tactics for interacting with the social media websites, and behaving as a representative of

the organization.

News

In the news industry, affiliation and political bias, or the appearance of such,

reduce the credibility of the journalist and the news organization. Behavior management

tactics included in this group of policies reflect the industry's value of impartiality and

fact-finding. Social Media Guidelines from Reuters request that employees "seek the

permission of your manager before setting up a professional presence on a social

networking site." The AP policy acknowledges "These networks also have become an

important tool for AP reporters to gather news – both for big, breaking stories and in

cases in which we're seeking out members of the public who might serve as sources for

our stories." AP therefore includes these behavior practices:

> Employees must identify themselves as being from the AP if they are using the
>
> [Facebook and Twitter] networks for work in any way. Posting material about the
>
> AP's internal operations is prohibited on employees' personal pages, and
>
> employees also should avoid including political affiliations in their profiles".

The Standards and Practices Committee (2009) for the LA Times instructs writers to "identify yourself as a Times employee online if you would do so in a similar situation offline," in the updated Social Media Guidelines. Requesting permission of editors, abstaining from membership in certain political groups and forums, and disclosing affiliation, are behavior management practices used in the policies of news organizations.

Nonprofit

The nonprofit world is naturally collaborative, and often organizations have grown out of the distillation of a grassroots community movement. The behavior management practices expressed in this group of policies reflects the open and collaborative nature of the industry by focusing on guidance and reminding readers of ethical considerations such as copyrights. Bread for the World expresses their commitment to moderate their blogs. The policy states "We will ensure that no spam, profanity, defamatory, inappropriate or libelous language will be posted to our sites. Neither will we use such language when we post comments to other people's sites." The Easter Seals community guideline bottom line, "Easter Seals reserves the right to delete any comments at any time. Users who persist in violating community guidelines may be barred from posting to this site." Doesn't seem to follow the open and democratic community persona of nonprofit, but the trend to delete or edit inappropriate comments, rather than formalize editorial review prior to publication on social media, does not restrict the freedom of an individual to compose and publish a comment.

Manufacturing

Coca Cola created a media certification program, and encourages employees to gain certification in the training program before entering the social media arena. The

trend in the manufacturing policies is to provide clear definitions and training for

employees. Daimler AG included a map of the social media sphere that structures a

consistent understanding across all who view it (Howe) the figure is reproduced as figure

5.1. Standardized training which includes clear definitions of the types of social media

and the websites that comprise each type manages online behavior of employees by way

of education. Where the employees are provided with uniform training and clear

definitions their behavior on social media will reflect the group concept of it.

Figure 5.1

Daimler Social Media Definitions
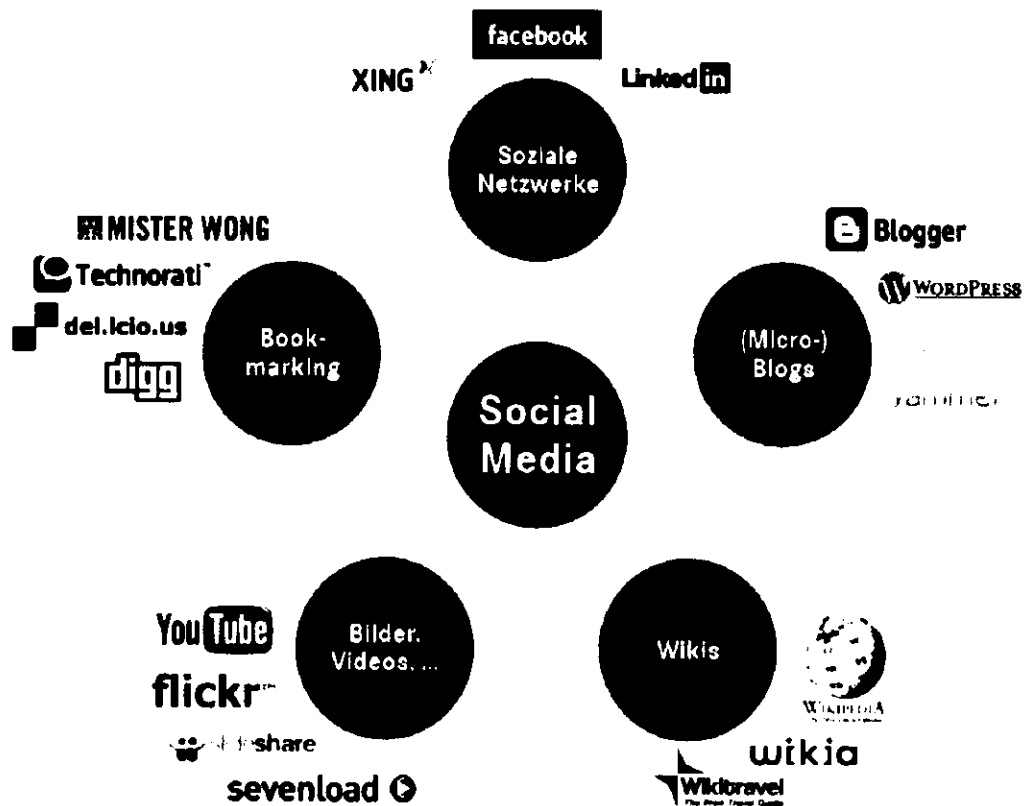
Healthcare

The healthcare industry is highly regulated in terms of privacy. Legislation like

the Health Information Privacy Protection Act (HIPPA) is the most likely cause behind

the industry trend towards warnings, disclosures, and non-disclosure clauses, included in

this group of policy documents. The Children's Hospital LA warns patients who share

stories through the website that "Owners of other personal and corporate websites do not

need to ask our permission to link to our website or to specific pages in our site. As a

result, you may find your story linked from other sites on the web." While some of the

organizations take the gentle approach the Cleveland Clinic clause number three of the

social media policy reads:

> You are prohibited from posting any content that is personal health information
>
> including patient images on any Social Media Site. You are also prohibited from
>
> using the Social Media Site to provide medical advice or medical commentary by
>
> non-CC physicians or to use the Social Media Site to make, recommend or
>
> increase referrals to physicians who are not employed by CC.

Due in part to legislation regulating privacy, the second document legalese is more

typical of this industry practice toward behavior management for social media.

Education

Similar to the nonprofit policies, the policies written for organizations of higher

education highlight the sharing of information and protection of intellectual property

rights. Similar to news organizations, they try to manage behavior toward maintenance of

respectable personalities on social media websites. Defining the venues and types of

content is another practice used in many of the policies of higher education institutions

which resembles the trend found in policies of the manufacturing category. Lake Forest instructs social media users to dedicate at least five hours per week to managing Facebook accounts. Hamilton requests that sub-groups coordinate their social media efforts through the central marketing office. The Hamilton College guidelines state that "the images for all Hamilton Facebook pages will maintain a consistent graphic identity and must be coordinated through the Director of Visual Communications." Even thought the tactics included mirror those in other groups, the behavior management practices in the educational organizations use an academic voice.

Behavior management practices are included in social media policies of all types of organizations for managing behavior of internal audiences toward social media. News organizations approach the behavior of their journalists to manage the credibility of the organizations' image. Nonprofit organizations seek to limit harm to the individuals using social media accounts associated with the organization by managing content. Manufacturing organizations manage behavior through supporting knowledge. Healthcare organizations focus mainly on legal responsibilities or liabilities that may befall them through inappropriate disclosure on social media. Educational organizations seem to employ tactics of many other types of organizations. As with the social media practices, and the underlying purpose, the behavior management practices included in social media policies are presented in a style and voice consistent with the culture of the industry, and individual personality of the organization. The next section analyses the language used to communicate the purpose, and practices which have been discussed thus far.

Style and Voice

The style and voice of the policies reflect the values and goals of the

organizations and of the industry within which the organizations operate. The different

culture of news, nonprofit, manufacturing, healthcare or higher education industries is

shown through the social media policies they published. One quantitative measure that

allows the writing style of policies to be charted graphically, as shown in figure 5.2, is the

Flesch reading ease score. The organizations were ranked from smallest to largest, and

are grouped by industry. A weak relationship between the industry and the readability of

the policy emerged. Policies written for educational institutions scored lowest and news

media scored highest in readability—academic writing typically includes lengthy,

complex, sentence structure and multisyllabic vocabulary, while brevity and concision

are hallmarks of the journalism industry.

Figure 5.2

Flesch Reading Ease Score
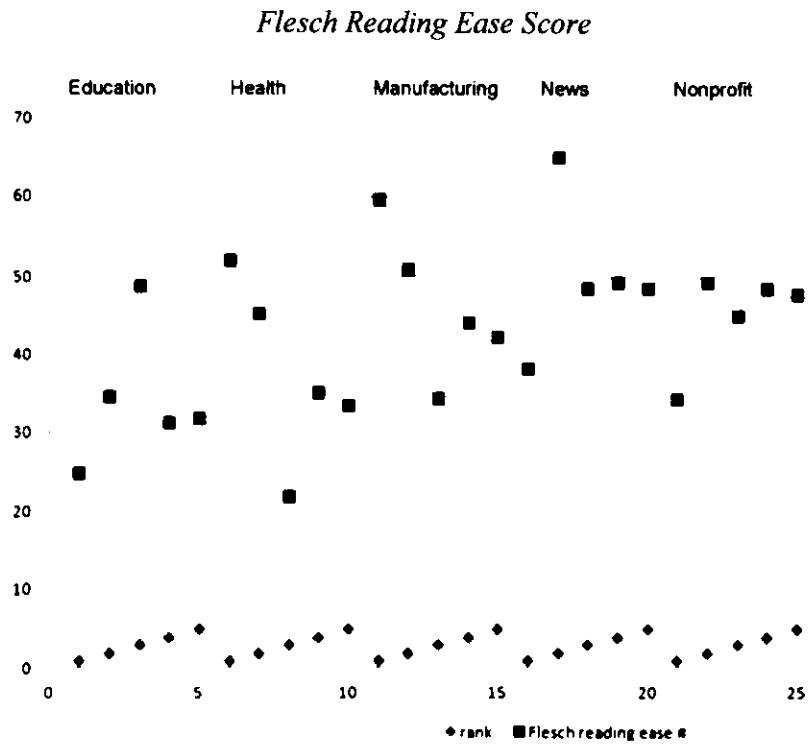
News

The policy of the Associated Press scored 65 on reading ease, the highest of any policy tested. The use of short sentences and simple words is consistent with concise and accurate reporting of information. Readability is a style factor highly prized in the news industry. The ABC used only 50 words to express four tenets of what NOT to do on social media – in spite of the brevity, their text scored less than 50 on readability. As a group, the social media voice of news organizations is principled, confirmed, and reviewed. The policies addressing their journalists encourage using social media as a resource and a channel, and values accuracy and diplomacy.

Nonprofit

The policies of nonprofit organizations are written in a flexible and informative style. The readability scores in this set are grouped closely in the upper forties with the policy of Fellowship Church outlying slightly in the mid thirties because of the multisyllabic words like: fellowship, communications, and confidentiality, which are used throughout the blog post. The voice of these policies and the social media voice for nonprofits as a group are values driven, ethical, compassionate, guiding, and credible. Many of the nonprofit policies do include consequences for misbehaving, but the purpose is to guide appropriate conduct rather than direct or punish.

Manufacturing

The friendly, informative, and instructive handbook published by Kodak scored almost 60 on the readability scale while the set in this industry bounced around leaving Coca Cola flat with a score in the mid 30s. Even at the bottom of the set, the values, principles, and ethical commitments discussed in the Coke policy reads far more

effervescently than the code of conduct HP offers bloggers. The range of style and voice in this group is highly reflective of the various brand personalities represented.

Healthcare

The healthcare industry has a very professional approach to policy. Even though the purpose of these documents is to permit the expression of emotional stories and messages of hope for patients and potential patients, the voice of the documents themselves is legalistic, and necessarily so. In this segment, the policy voice and the social media voice are the most disparate. The policy purpose is to protect all involved and to set out the legal terms and conditions that inform users and protect institutions – this is far from the emotional sort of soft-appeal the social media practices suggest.

Education

Finally, the group of policies guiding institutions of higher learning scored lowest on the readability scale. The likely culprit is the academic audience. Small words and short sentences are easy to digest, but academics don't want to be talked down to. Ohio State's philosophy roughly translates to: be smart, be respectful, be human – but they take nearly 1,900 words to express it. The institutions of higher education value collaboration, exploration, and accurate information. The policy voice reflects these values.

Personalities are expressed through the values, meanings, voice represented in the various industry groups included in the empirical materials examined. While there does not seem to be a relationship between the number of pages or words used and the organizations' industry or size, a weak trend in the readability, or length of sentences and words used has emerged. The next section will reconcile these results with the literature and theoretical framework, and offer conclusions.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

This concluding chapter compares theories discussed previously from both practitioners', and academics' perspective, with insights from the content analysis of actual policies. Conclusions related to theory in practice will be followed by discussion of the limitations of this research, and recommendations for future study on the topic of managing online behavior in organizations.

Theory in Practice

Practical advice and theories related to human networks, introduced in chapters two and three, were both presented in terms of five thematic categories: (1) guidance for employees (2) guidance for the communications staff (3) internal/external strategies, (4) implementations and (5) evaluations. The findings from a thematic content analysis of the social media policy documents were presented in four categories: (1) audience and purpose, (2) social media practices, (3) behavior management practice, and (4) style and voice. In order to reconcile understanding from the literature and the content analysis of social media policy documents, this section will present the traits revealed by members of each category as they demonstrate: (1) the purpose for which social media policies are written, (2) best practices, (3) style of expression, and (4) evaluation of the policies by the organizations.

News

News organizations are concerned with presenting a credible image. Some news organizations have seen social media as a competition, and are cautious to embrace it as a tool, yet many newspapers and broadcast concerns are using websites like Twitter, Facebook, and Flickr to scan the environment for newsworthy activity.

Purpose—Journalistic organizations value impartiality and a credible identity, and are written to journalists. It could be argued that journalists need a level of independence, but the policies of news organizations are written exclusively to internal staff, and though maintenance of external image is on major purpose of composing a policy document, the practices listed are internal.

Practices—News organizations cautiously embrace the opportunity for social media to extend the relevance of their news channels to online audiences. News organizations approach the behavior of their journalists to manage the credibility of the organizations' image.

Style—The use of short sentences and simple words is consistent with the journalistic culture of concision. As a group, the social media voice of news organizations is principled, confirmed, and reviewed. The policies addressing their journalists encourage using social media as a resource and a channel, and values accuracy and diplomacy.

Evaluation—Measuring outcomes of the social media policy itself is not integrated in the policy documents of news organizations. Outcome metrics are placed at the responsibility of individuals. Journalists are advised to have a second pair of eyes critique comments and posts before publication, and to just use common sense. The AP explains their rationale for expecting employees to prudently evaluate their own social media use "we cannot expect people outside the AP to know whether a posting on Facebook was made by someone who takes pictures processes payroll checks or fixes satellite dishes" (2009). It is possible that evaluation of analytics such as, number of daily site visitors and interactions, is described in a strategic marketing plan somewhere else in

the news organization, but evaluative metrics are not mentioned in any social media

policy that was examined in the news category.

Nonprofit

Nonprofit organizations cover a large breadth of activities, but share a

commonality in commitment to improving social and environmental conditions rather

than improving the financial condition of the organization. Even in organizations that

span international territory, the mission is supported through grassroots efforts.

Purpose—Nonprofit organizations want to empower their grassroots support to

use Web 2.0 tools. Policies are written to a broad audience which includes paid staff,

volunteers, and external constituencies. Shih (2009) writes "Though it requires some

coordination effort, eventually reconciling across disparate grassroots campaigns can

reduce cost and confusion, and ultimately improve the effectiveness and risk management

of your initiatives" (p. 202).

Practices—Nonprofit organizations practice similar community building in social

media as they always have as grassroots initiatives that serve people. Nonprofit

organizations seek to limit harm to the individuals using social media accounts associated

with the organization by managing content by the use of comment monitoring and

deleting inappropriate material.

Style—The policies of nonprofit organizations are written in a flexible and

informative style. The voice of these policies and the social media voice for nonprofits as

a group are values driven, ethical, compassionate, guiding, and credible. Many of the

nonprofit policies do include consequences for misbehaving, but the purpose is to guide

appropriate conduct rather than direct or punish.

Evaluation—Training for staff is not precisely an evaluative measure for the

social media policy implementation, but it's as close as the nonprofit organizations'

policy documents come. Bread for the World state that they "endeavor to ensure

consistency of messages," but they expect to accomplish this end though consensus of

grassroots participants (McDonald, 2009). Easter Seals (2007) simply asks commenters

to remain "on-topic." Further evaluative measures may be handled in the

Communications Department, but are not included in the policies reviewed from the

nonprofit sector.

Manufacturing

The creators of products for public consumption craft an image out of the items

they produce. The personalities expressed by the organizations examined in this category

are diverse, yet the practices for social media found in this category were in-fact the most

consistent with the expectations gained through a review of relevant literature.

Purpose—Manufacturing businesses embrace the new tools, but use the social

media policy to communicate uniform practices to their employees. The collaborative

system used to develop IBM's policy demonstrates Social Learning Theory while the

appearance that other policies in this industry are directed specifically to communication

departments indicates existence of Tribes within these examples.

Practices—Manufacturing organizations are adapting to the increasing relevance

of consumer voices in creating brand identity. Manufacturing organizations manage

behavior through supporting consistent knowledge.

Style—The range of style and voice in this group is highly reflective of the

various brand personalities represented. Kodak's friendly, informative, and instructive

handbook; IBM's thorough, open and flexible wiki; and Coca Cola's principles, values and commitments; are crafted in the language and style most understandable to their target audiences.

Evaluation—The manufacturing industry social media policies are targeted primarily to those who will use social media for marketing and public relations campaigns. The tactics of the policies describe evaluative behaviors such as: setting blog comment preferences to review all comments before making them public, using software like TweetDeck and Seesmic to scan comments, and continuing to use the discussion infrastructure which built the policy to manage evolution.

Healthcare

Healthcare organizations are ostensibly committed to the betterment of human health. Their social media activities are directed at providing accurate and helpful information and support systems for patients. The caring field also has a large amount of risks such as misdiagnosing ailments from misleading internet information, disclosure of personal medical information and malpractice liabilities.

Purpose—Healthcare organizations deal with trauma and tragic illness, so they want to use the social media tools to empower support systems built of external individuals. The benefits to patients of sharing their own stories and gleaning hope from the stories of others resemble the reciprocity ring which Shih (2009) argues arises out of Metcalf's Law. Organizations serving human health are also legislatively bound to protect personal privacy through HIPPA.

Practices—Healthcare organizations, like news organizations, cautiously embrace the new arena of social media, but whereas news organizations seek to protect

the credibility and identity of the organization, journalist, or news source, health organizations are obligated to protect the identities and personal health information of their patients. Healthcare organizations focus mainly on legal responsibilities or liabilities that may befall them through inappropriate disclosure on social media websites.

Style—The healthcare industry has a very professional approach to policy. Even though the purpose of these documents is to permit the expression of emotional stories and messages of hope for patients and potential patients, the voice of the documents themselves is legalistic. In healthcare, the policy voice and the social media voice are the most disparate.

Evaluation—As in the other categories, not much is stated about evaluating outcomes of the social media policy within the policy document. Typically evaluation of comments is frontloaded by specifying that comments be moderated before publication. The Cleveland Clinic policy in paragraph 11 warns that "THIS POLICY MAY BE UPDATED AT ANY TIME WITHOUT NOTICE, AND EACH TIME A USER ACCESSES A SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE, THE NEW POLICY WILL GOVERN, USAGE, EFFECTIVE UPON POSTING." Other hospitals such as Sant Joan de Déu leave evaluation of personal social media use up to the professionalism and discretion of the individual.

Education

Organizations of higher education value independent thought, seek understanding of new phenomenon, and to disseminate knowledge. The practices express a style which is able to combine the traditions of academic professionalism with evolution through new technologies.

Purpose—Education organizations value scientific exploration, but they seek the "best practice" methods, which have been tried and proven sound, to direct decentralized groups of academic departments, student organizations, and clubs. As Ravi Achrol (1997) explained, environmental factors such as industry restructuring, downsizing, and outsourcing have contributed to the development of the modern networked organization. In the academic arena the silos might never have been as significant, which may precipitate the trend for this type of organization toward centralization of social media accounts.

Practices—Organizations of higher education create policies that highlight allocation of resources needed to do social media well. The various social media practices expressed in policy reveal the ways in which the organizations of various industries define the social media arena. Educational organizations seem to employ tactics of many other types of organizations, no doubt drawing upon study of the topic.

Style—Small words and short sentences are easy to digest, but academic parlance tends toward complex, multisyllabic language. Ohio State's philosophy " be smart, be respectful, be human" takes 1,900 words to express. The policy voice reflects values of collaboration, exploration, and accurate information held by the academic community.

Evaluation—The trend observed relating to evaluation of the social media policies written for educational institutions is deferral to a central account for the organization. The evaluation of campaigns can then be handled through Communications Departments rather than placing the burden on faculty or staff for various school departments.

Purpose

Ultimately, the specific practices included in each organization's social media policy are means of reaching its purpose. Trends emerged suggesting that social media policies are addressed to an audience to serve a purpose which is dependent on the industry that the authoring organization serves. Olivier Blanchard (2011) included three audience strategies in his list of ten sections to include in social media policy: internal, external, and other parties, who are neither fully internal nor external.

The platforms of social media are always changing, and the communities they support also evolve over time, so it is important to draft adaptable strategies for the people, not the platform targeted. Clara Shih (2009) advises careful consideration of the fit of the audience and community design of the platforms that make up social media before using it. Practices include specific social media website instruction as well as provisions for managing behavior.

Best Practices

The various industries employ different practices because of the variety in values, goals, and purpose, for governing online behavior in different industry sectors. Behavior management practices are included in social media policies of all types of organizations. Blanchard (2011), Kerpen (2011) and Shih (2009) all recommend laying the operational groundwork for authentic, hyper-targeted, honest communication strategies. These theoretical "best practices" follow assumptions such as those included in Bloom & Dees, (2008) network ecosystem paradigm. Specific behaviors like listening first – then responding based on what the audience is saying, and consistent messaging and leveraging the interrelationships between groups in the larger social networks, are tools of the flattened hierarchy, decentralized, and networked organization predicted by Achrol

(1997). The network model lends greater flexibility than hierarchical silo-ed

organizational structure through technology and strategic alliances between both internal

and external stakeholders such as suppliers, distributers, and even competitors.

Style

The practices and tactics that an organization chooses ultimately translate into the

voice perceived by the target audience(s). The voice of an organization is expressed

through the words or images and video media that are shared. Kerpen's (2011) guidebook

to *Likable social media* says to speak in an authentic tone, provide value, and to give up

expectations of a direct engagement-to-sales relationship are a means to establish the

organizations' social media voice. The authentic tone means to share stories that inspire,

demonstrate curiosity about the audience needs/desires, admit any wrongdoing - should it

occur, and most of all provide information – not a sales pitch (Kerpen, 2011).

Relationship marketing has gained popularity given the tools that social media provides.

Shih (2009) projected that new categories of relationships would evolve from the

influence of social media. Trust is accomplished through alignment of the voice with

values of the influential people in the target communities.

Evaluation

According to the literature evaluation of the success of the policy is needed just as

much as evaluation of the individual initiatives carried out under its guidance. Tactics

such as deferral to central accounts, and account settings for bloggers which allow an

employee to approve all comments before they become public, and special social media

training, are evaluative measures included in the policies reviewed. Evaluation of metrics

and analytics specific to social media websites are not as prevalent in the policy

documents reviewed as they are in how-to books. It is possible the measurement of

success is handled by marketing and communication departments separate from the social

media policy.

Limitations

For the purpose of making the material more manageable, the scope of topics

explored has been limited to documented policies of organizations toward the use of

social media. There are numerous avenues of discussion relevant to online human

behavior and social networking websites which have been ignored in order to build

relevant understanding of the key issues. The limitations relevant to organizations which

have publicly available social media policies fall into two main categories, sample

limitations and phenomenological limitations.

In order to draw concrete assertions about how "the average organization"

practices social media, a representative sample that could include organizations that do

not have policies to manage social media use would need to be found. The sample

examined was a convenience sample of policies that were made public and can be easily

accessed through various websites and blogs. Discovering the ratio of organizations that

use a written social media policy to all possible organizations is beyond the scope of this

study. By analyzing the available financial performance metrics to select policies from

organizations of various size and geographic reach, I hope to reduce the bias that may rise

from the convenience sample selection.

The phenomenon of social media is made up of numerous autonomous websites

which are used by both individuals and organizations for networking. Social media is a

rapidly changing landscape because of the ease of entry and exit, the constant evolution

of the individual websites, and the drift of individuals from one community to the next.

The policies and people who administrate them are changing to keep up. Research into

the way that new technologies change human behavior are limited, and far beyond the

scope of this thesis.

Recommendations

Humans have always been social creatures, but the new level of connectivity has

lent to the evolution of digital habitats where the physical limitations of both space and

time are irrelevant. Today people use Facebook the way we breathe. It's amusing at first,

but there is a true addiction to the *uberconnectivity* that we gain through having access to

all of our "closest friend's" every thought on our cellular phone. Social media is

relatively new, and so are policies to manage organizational use of it. As with any new

phenomenon, the ethical considerations of how to react are vast—this section will touch

on three topics that are under some ethical debate: workers rights, protection of business

assets, and management of human resources.

Worker Rights

Organizations may expect a level of employee connectability beyond the

traditional work schedule. So they may need to develop expectations that reciprocate

constant connectivity back to the employee for their families, social connections, and

non-work life. In his article about legalities of social media policy, Brian Hedelberger

(2012) asks "Does your policy prohibit using social media while at work?" If so, there

may be litigation.

> The NLRB indicated that completely prohibiting employees from using social
>
> media with employer resources or on employer time was unlawful, because

employees have the right to engage in certain activities on the employer's

premises during non-work time and in non-work areas. (Hedelberger, 2012)

Ethics isn't just about following the law, but it is about doing what is right. If an

organization expects employees to be connected through email, instant messaging, etc.,

then it's fair to allow the employees' families an equal expectation. Not only does this
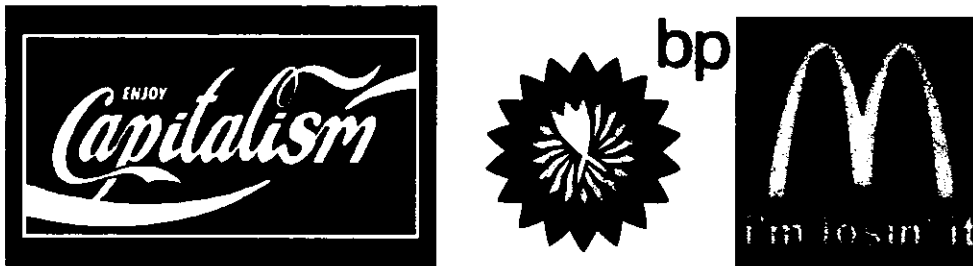
practice seem "right," but not allowing it could be illegal.

Assets Management

Business operators logically seek to protect proprietary information from being

inadvertently leaked by employees. They may also wish to guide employees to safe

personal online behavior which protects their own privacy. Social constructivism

assumes that people learn together by a process of complimentary insights that ultimately

result in a greater comprehension for each party than would be possible by any individual

on their own. Policies may not legally limit the participants in individual social networks,

but managing ownership of intellectual property that stems from social construction

could be an ethical dilemma.

In this example a number of edited images have become what is known as a

meme. The evolution of a simple photograph to an internet meme is chronicled on the

website, http://knowyourmeme.com/memes/ridiculously-photogenic-guy-zeddie-little.

The original photographer posted many images to Flickr and Facebook where friends dub

a certain runner in one of the snapshots the "ridiculously photogenic guy." Within hours

trollers created a cornucopia of slightly off-color composite images. The intentions in this

case are good natured and comical, but for an organization, the distortion of images can

take a darker turn.

A practice dubbed "subvertising" by the website nowsell.com in its marketing-

guide "refers to the practice of making spoofs or parodies of corporate and political

advertisements in order to make a statement." The use of such subvertisement brands can

damage the organizations most valuable intangible asset, their image. Examples like

these may seem reasonably harmless, but could mean big trouble in a smaller

marketplace.

http://www.nowsell.com/marketing-guide/subvertising.html, http://vi.sualize.us/circlel/spoof/?page=3, http://teevault.com/blog/t-shirts/miscellaneous/logo-parody-tees-t-shirts-based-on-famous-logos/

Further study of this phenomenon could provide valuable information about the

economic costs of negative image campaigns that are conducted against organizations

online.

Human Resources

There is a cost risk of lost time an employee may work if they become involved in

cyber bullying or other emotionally volatile interactions on the web regardless of if the

firestorm occurs during work hours or they are affected outside of work. As noted above it is illegal to restrict the freedom of speech through the clauses of a social media policy, however where guidance that helps people to understand the risks to themselves of using social media are included, disclosure of emotional risks might spare employees unnecessary pains and employers time loss expense. Further study of this topic could provide metrics about time loss costs to organizations.

This thesis has revealed aspects of the interaction of organizations in the social media arena with individuals and other organizations. Trends in the purpose and practice that organizations of various industrial categories display through their social media policies illustrate alignment with the values and goals of the organization and the industry in which it operates. As mentioned in the sample limitations heading, this was not a comprehensive study of all organizations – future research could be conducted that seeks to discover what percentage of organizations actually use policy to manage use of social media.

Questions about the affects of social media use on personality traits such as attention span, conscientiousness, and flexibility were beyond the scope of this thesis. Books written for how-to interact with social media in a business capacity include many instructions toward how to set up an account on Facebook or Twitter. The actual policies include fewer minutiae, but do spare attention to which websites are considered social media. Future research that follows the shift of power, from people who remember pre-social-media-times to those who do not, might show changes in the focus of and purpose for writing social media policies in the future.

APPENDIX 1: Selected Policy Resources

This list provides a path to the policy documents which were available for each of the 25 organizations studied. All policies were originally retrieved through links on one or both of the following websites:

Chris Boudreaux. (2009-2012). Online database of social media policies [Online database]. Retrieved from http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies.php.

Lasica, JD. Social media policies [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/

Selected Policies

Associated Press (AP)

Associated Press. (2009, June 23). Social networking Q&A [Web log post]. Retrieved from http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/associated-presss-social-media-policy/.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

Scott, M. (2009, November 4). RE: Use of social media [Electronic mailing list message]. Retrieved from: http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/australian-broadcasting-corporations-social-media-policy/

Bread for the World

McDonald. J. (2009, October 27). Bread for the World's social media policy. Retrieved

from http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/bread-for-the-worlds-

social-media-policy/

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

BBC News. (2011, June). Social media guidance. Retrieved from

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/14_07_11_news_social_media_guidan

ce.pdf.

Children's Hospital Los Angeles

Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Share your story – Use and access. Retrieved from

http://www.chla.org/site/?c=ipINKTOAJsG&b=5245675.

Cleveland Clinic

The Cleveland Clinic. Social media policy. Retrieved from

http://my.clevelandclinic.org/about-cleveland-clinic/about-this-website/social-

media-policy.aspx.

Coca Cola Company

The Coca Cola Company. (2009, December 15). Online social media principles.

Retrieved from http://www.viralblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/TCCC-

Online-Social-Media-Principles-12-2009.pdf.

Daimler AG

Howe, J. (2004, August 29). Daimler AG social media guidelines. Retrieved from http://www.daimler.com/Projects/c2c/channel/documents/1895107_Social_Media_Guidelines_eng_Final.pdf.

DePaul University

Gallagher, K. Social media guidelines. Retrieved from http://brandresources.depaul.edu/vendor_guidelines/g_socialmedia.aspx.

Easter Seals

Easter Seals. (2007, July 14). Easter Seals Internet Public Discourse Policy SECTION III PART I-9. Retrieved from http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2008/04/nonprofit-blogg.html.

Fellowship Church

Bailey, B. (2005, April 22). Personal website and weblog policy. Retrieved from http://www.leaveitbehind.com/home/2005/04/fellowship_chur.html.

Hamilton College

Krywosa, J. & Jackson, E. (2011). Social media at Hamilton. Retrieved from http://www.hamilton.edu/social/creating.

Hewlett-Packard (HP)

Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. (2011). HP blogging code of conduct.

Retrieved from http://www.hp.com/hpinfo/blogs/codeofconduct.html.

International Business Machines (IBM)

IBM. (2005 spring). IBM social computing guidelines. Retrieved from

http://www.ibm.com/blogs/zz/en/guidelines.html.

Iowa Hospital Association

Iowa Hospital Association. (2011). Comment policy. Retrieved from

http://blog.iowahospital.org/about/comment-policy/

Kodak

Hoehn, T. Social media tips: Sharing lessons learned to help your business grow.

Retrieved from

http://www.kodak.com/US/images/en/corp/aboutKodak/onlineToday/Social_Med

ia_10_7aSP.pdf.

Lake Forest College

Lake Forest College. Lake forest college social media guidelines. Retrieved from

http://www.lakeforest.edu/offices/communications/socialmedia/.

Los Angeles (LA) Times

Standards and Practices Committee. (2009, November 19). Times updates social media guidelines. *Los Angeles Times.* Retrieved from http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/readers/2009/11/updated-social-media-guidelines.html.

National Public Radio (NPR)

National Public Radio. (2009, October 15). NPR ethics handbook: Social media. Retrieved from http://ethics.npr.org/tag/social-media/.

Ohio State University Medical Center

Social Media Policy Committee. (2009, December 18). The Ohio State University Medical Center policy and procedure manual: Title social media. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/27663931/Ohio-State-University-Medical-Center-Social-Media-Participation-Policy.

Communications and Marketing (2009, December 10). Social media participation guidelines. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/27664236/Ohio-State-University-Medical-Center-Social-Media-Participation-Guidelines.

Communications and Marketing. (2009, December 10). Ohio State University Medical Center Philosophy on social media. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/28858335/Ohio-State-University-Medical-Center-Social-Media-Philosophy.

Pfizer

Pfizer. Social media playbook. Retrieved from http://www.forums.pharma-

mkting.com/attachment.php?s=243d568d11bf2015bd60c22f8c09660a&attachme

ntid=177&d=1310733268.

Red Cross

Harman, W. (2009, July 16). Social media handbook for local Red Cross units. Retrieved

from https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1-

ePB9tl0gAZIGU_lOJrxpOKNpcxBXZaslL-LhYlOwlY.

Harman, W. American Red Cross online communications guidelines. Retrieved from

https://docs.google.com/document/pub?id=1peevQnjJVKNybDLhxU-4zxjnh-

TpTzgNahVpExRV59M#_PERSONAL_COMMUNICATIONS.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2009). Social media

guidelines for IFRC staff. Retrieved from. http://sm4good.com/wp-

content/uploads/2009/11/Red-Cross-Red-Crescent-SocialMedia-Guidelines.pdf.

Reuters

Thomson Reuters (2012, February 16). Reporting from the internet and using social

media. Retrieved from

http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php/Reporting_From_the_Internet_And_Using

_Social_Media.

Sant Joan de Déu

Hospital Sant Joan de Déu. (2011, May 25). Social media policy of Hospital Sant Joan de

Déu – Barcelona. Retrieved from

http://www.hsjdbcn.org/polymitaImages/public/institucional/xarxes/Social_Media

_Policy_HSJD.pdf.

University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. (2011). Cancerwise Blog policies

and guidelines. Retrieved from http://www2.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/policies-

and-guidelines.html.

Appendix II: Additional Policy Websources

http://www.mediaspy.org/report/2009/11/abc-sets-down-social-media-guidelines/

http://www.tamaleaver.net/2009/11/05/digital-culture-links-november-5th-2009/comment-page-1/

http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/page/guidance-blogs-personal-summary

http://www.socialmedia.biz/2004/08/29/business-use-of-blogs/

http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntlc8_community_guidelines

http://www.slideshare.net/adamclyde/the-impact-of-corporate-culture-on-enterprise-social-media-presentation.

http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/ibms-social-media-policy/

http://www.kodak.com/US/images/en/corp/aboutKodak/onlineToday/Kodak_SocialMediaTips_Aug14.pdf.

http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/los-angeles-times-social-media-guidelines/.

http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/npr-news-social-media-policy/

http://ethics.npr.org/

http://www.socialmedia.biz/social-media-policies/reuters-social-media-guidelines/

References

Achrol, R. S. (1997, Winter). Changes in the Theory of Interorganizational Relations in

Marketing: Toward a network paradigm. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing*

Science, 25(1), 56-71.

Bingham, T. & Conner, M. (2010). *The new social learning.* San Francisco: Berrett-

Koehler. (Kindle editions)

Blanchard, O. (2011). *Social media ROI: Managing and measuring social medial efforts*

in your organization. Boston: Pearson.

Bloom, P.M. & Dees, G. (2008,Winter). Cultivate your ecosystem. *Stanford Social*

Innovation Review, 47-53.

Boudreaux, C. (2009). *Online database of social media policies.* Available online at

http://social mediagovernance.com/policies.php#axzz1socfVBgL.

Boudreaux, C. (2009, December 16). *Analysis of social media policies: Lessons of best*

practices.   Available online at http://SocialMediaGovernmance.com/blog.

Coats, G. (2012, March 19). 11 Ways to find your social media voice [Weblog].

Retrieved from www.radian6.com/blog/2012/03/11-ways-to-find-your-social-

media-voice.

Cross, R. Borgatti, S. P. & Parker, A. (2002). Making invisible work visible: using social

network analysis to support strategic collaboration. Available online at

http://www.analytictech.com/borgatti/papers/borgatti%20-%20making%

20invisible %20work%20visible.pdf.

Frey, L.R., Botan, C. H., & Kreps, G. L. (2000). *Investigating Communication: An introduction to research methods* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Heidelberger, B. (2012, June 12). Eight ways your employee social-media policy may violate federal law: overly broad rules on social media might violate employee rights. *Crain Communications Ad Age*. Retrieved from http://adage.com/article/digitalnext/employee-social-media-policy-violate-federal-law/235313/.

Kabani, S. H. (2010). *The zen of social media marketing: An easier way to build credibility, generate buzz, and increase revenue*. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books.

Kerpen, D. (2011). *Likable social media: How to delight your customers, create and irresistible brand, and be generally amazing on Facebook (and other social networks)*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Logan, D., King, J., & Fischer-Wright, H. (2008). *Tribal leadership*. New York: Harper Collins   Publishers, Inc.

McNickle, M. (2012, May 21). 6 Reasons physicians need to be on social media [weblog]. Retrieved from http://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/6-reasons-providers-and-physicians-need-be-social-media.

Medeiros, M. (2011, September 29). Find your social media voice [Weblog]. Retrieved from http://mattreport.com/2011/09/find-your-social-media-voice/.

Peräkylä, A. & Ruusuvouri J. (2011), Analyzing talk and text. In Denzin, K. & Lincoln,

Y. (Eds.). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 529 – 543). Los

Angeles: SAGE.

Preece, J. (2001). Sociability and usability: Twenty years of chatting online (draft).

Behavior and Information Technology Journal, 20(5), 347-356. Available online

at http://www.ifsm.umbc.edu/onlinecommunities.

Rosen, D., Barnett, G. & Kim, J. (2011).Social networks and online environments: When

science and practice co-evolve. *Social Network Analysis and Mining*, 27-42, doi:

10.1007/ s13278-010-0011-7.

Rosen, D., Kim, J. H. & Nam, Y. (2010). Birds of a feather protest together: Theorizing

self-organizing political protests with Flock Theory. *Syst Pract Action Res,23,*

419-441. Published online by Springer Science+Business Media, LLC. doi:

10.1007/s11213-010-9167-3.

Shih, C. (2009). *The Facebook era: Tapping online social networks to build better*

products, reach new audiences, and sell more stuff. Boston: Pearson.

Additional Reading

Cluett, L. & Seah, H.W.B. (2011). Measuring success: A case study in evaluating an online community using the Facebook fan page for UWA students. In *Developing student skills for the next decade. Proceedings of the 20th Annual Teaching Learning Forum*, 1-2 February 2011. Perth: Edith Cowan University. http://otl.curtin.edu.au/tlf/tlf2011/ refereed/cluett.html.

Coombs, T. W. & Holliday, S.J. (2010). *PR strategy and application: Managing influence.* West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons. (Kindle)

Deloitte Development LLC. (2009). 2009 Tribalization of business study: Transforming companies with communities and social media. PowerPoint presentation available online at http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-UnitedStates/Local%20Assets/Documents/ TMT_us_tmt/us_tmt_TribofBusFlipBook_100609.pdf

Dutta, S. (2010, November). Managing yourself: What's your personal social media strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, 1-5.

Eyrich, N., Padman, M. L., & Sweetser K. D. (2008). PR practitioners' use of social media tools and communication technology. *Public Relations Review, 34*, 412–414. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.09.010.

Griffin, E. (2009). *A first look at communication theory* (7th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

REFERENCES

Jacobson, S. & Petrie, R. (2011, February). *Favor trading in public good provision*. Paper available online at http://web.williams.edu/Economics/wp/Favor_Trading_jacobson_petrie_feb2011.pdf.

Jones, R., Sharkey, S., Smithson, J., Ford, T., Emmens, T., Hewis, E., Sheaves, B. & Owens, C. (2011). Using metrics to describe the participative stances of members within discussion forums. *Journal of Medical Internet Research, 13*(1): e3. doi:10.2196/jmir.1591

Key, R. & Boudreaux, C. (2011, September 28). *When can you say, "We have a social media strategy." 6 questions to determine whether your social media strategy will make a difference*. Available online at http://converseon.com/strategy. New York: Converseon, Inc.

Kotler P. & Lee, N. R. (2008). *Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good.* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Kreitner, R. & Kinicki, A. (2008). *Organizational behavior* (8th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin.

Kwak, H., Lee, C., Park, H. & Moon, S. (2009). *What is Twitter, a social network or a news media?* Paper available online through the International World Wide Web Conference Committee. ACM 978-1-60558-799-8/10/04.

Lasica, J.D. (n.d). *Social media policies.* Available online at http://www.socialmedia.biz/social- media-policies/.

Moran, E. (2009). *Organizations are not yet tapping social media's full potential:*

Highlights from the 2009 Tribalization of Business Study. Deloitte Development

LLC. Report available online at http://www.deloitte.com/assets/Dcom-

UnitedStates/Local%20Assets/

Documents/TMT_us_tmt/us_tmt_TribofBus2pgr_100609.pdf.

Petty, R.E. & Cacioppo, J. T. (1984). Source factors and the Elaboration Likelihood

Model of Persuasion. *Advances in Consumer Research, 11,* 668-672.

Qualman, E. (2009). *Socialnomics: How social media transforms the way we live and do*

business. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. (Kindle).

Rice, R. E. (1992). Task analyzability, use of new media, and effectiveness: A multi-site

exploration of media richness. *Organization Science, 3*(4), 475-500. Available

online at http://www.jstor.org/stable/2635112.

Rosen, D. & Corbit, M. (2009). *Social network analysis in virtual environments.*

Proceedings of the 20th ACM conference on Hypertext and hypermedia; ACM

978-1-60558-486-7/09/06. Available online at

http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1557967.

Rosen, D., Woelfel, J., Krikorian D., & Barnett G. A. (2003, July). Procedures for

analyses of online communities. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication,*

8(4). Available online at http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol8/issue4/rosen.html

Slyke, D. M. (2007). Agents or stewards: Using theory to understand the government-

nonprofit social service contracting relationship. *Journal of Public Administration*

Research and Theory, 17(2), 157-187. doi:10.1093/jopart/mul012.

Starks, H. & Trinidad, S. B. (2007, December). Choose your method: A comparison of

phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health*

Research,17(10), 1372-1380. doi: 10.1177/1049732307307031.

Treviño, L. K., Webster, J. & Stein, E. W. (2000, March/April). Making connections:

Complementary influences on communication media choices, attitudes, and use.

Organizational Science, 11(2), 163-182.

Waters, R. D., Burnett, E., Lamm, A. & Lucas, J. (2009). Engaging stakeholders through

social networking: How nonprofit organizations are using Facebook. *Public*

Relations Review, 35, 102–106. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2009.01.006

Wimmer, R. D. & Dominick, J.R. (2006). *Mass media research: An introduction.* (8th

ed.). Boston: Wadsworth.

ALISON M. RAWLINS
ITHACA COLLEGE
MS COMMUNICATION 2012

Alison Rawlins was awarded Ithaca College, Roy H. Park School of Communication, Department of Strategic Communication's research fellowship for academic year 2011-2012 in support of this work. Alison served as teaching assistant 011 for Dr. Cory Young, thesis adviser and current department chair, in 2010-11.

Alison's varied experience in the workforce which includes: non-profit admin, retail sales, delivery and currier service, outside sales, animal husbandry, customer service, food preparation, and restaurant management, provides unique breadth of perspective into the communication world, and served as inspiration for the comparison of practices across a variety of industries.

Alison is a native to Ithaca NY, and became a City of Ithaca homeowner in November 2010. She enjoys numerous hobby activities such as arts and crafts, photography, vidography, and playing musical instruments. In pursuit of her combined love of gardening and sustainable activity of all kind, Alison secured a work permit from the city of Ithaca to construct a stone bounded raised vegetable garden in the city-owned tree lawn outside her downtown-Ithaca home. She keeps a photo blog of the garden progress on her Facebook.com profile.

#
July 2012