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# Newsrooms and Social Media

Hanna E. Steinker

*The University Of Akron*, [hes33@zips.uakron.edu](mailto:hes33@zips.uakron.edu)

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Newsrooms and Social Media

Hanna Steinker

The University of Akron

### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify how local newspapers and newsrooms are converging to social media. An Ohio newspaper, *The Post* volunteered to have its Facebook Pages analytics studied over the course of two months, August through September. A constructed week was formed and four of the company's Facebook Pages were analyzed. The study intends to examine the current social media position of *The Post*, assess the potential or areas of growth, and create a best practices manual to propel the selected newspaper's social media accounts forward. Unlike traditional newspaper consumers, social media users tend to gather their news towards the weekend, more specifically on Fridays, the findings suggest. To further advance the credibility of the data analysis, social media editors Mark Smith from *The Washington Post*, Dan Kadar of *The Akron Beacon Journal*, and Amanda Harnocz from *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, were interviewed to determine other companies' social media practices. These interviews informed that content and post strategy directly impact success of a given social media post. In addition, the research looks toward the importance of teaching journalists to think about how the story would be crafted for social media while writing their given beats.

*Keywords: Newsrooms, Social Media, Local, Fridays, Facebook, Analytics, The Post, The Washington Post, Best Practices, News, Stories*

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## Newsrooms and Social Media

### Introduction

In the growing world of search engines and the instantaneous flow of information stemming from the Internet, it's a wonder how traditional newsrooms are keeping up. According to a 2014 Pew Research study, "half of social network site users have shared news stories, images or videos, and nearly as many (46 percent) have discussed a news issue or event" (Anderson & Caumont, 2014). With powerhouse social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, many users are sharing and talking about news events online. Conversations have gone digital, and traditional reporting has had to adapt to the new medium. Major news outlets like *CNN* and *The New York Times* have succeeded in converging their content to fit the new style, but where does that leave local newspapers? These localized sources of information have smaller budgets and limited resources to create the same presence or impact on social media as the larger news corporations. Without hesitation, however, these local companies have taken to social media and are trying to make waves in their communities; but first, they have to understand why and how to engage in the practices.

## **Social Media and Society**

Even with limited resources, local newspapers are still creating and contributing to the social media news convergence. With the emergence of Web 2.0 in the last several years, social media has taken on a new form. Not only can mass amounts of information make its way onto the inter-webs, but now everyday users can contribute to the collection. Defining Web 2.0 seems to be harder than posting on the user-generated content market. Many experts have offered definitions all containing a few key elements, but for the most part the exact definition is up for debate. For the most part, Web 2.0 denotes the new age of technology, instant gratification, social media, and user-generated content. Long gone are the days when average people needed to learn how to code sites when they wanted to post a thought or piece of information online. Today, according to the 2013 U.S. Census Bureau, 74.4 percent of all U.S. households use the Internet (File & Ryan, 2014). Moreover, according to a Pew Research report, 133 million U.S. citizens were considered “active” on Facebook at the end of 2011 (Mitchell, Rosenstiel & Christian, 2012). Twitter, another prominent social media site, has 49 million “active” users a Business Insider report reveals (Yarow, 2013)

First, placing an exact definition for social media seems as tricky as defining Web 2.0. Anvil Media, a marketing firm search engine defines social media as,

[A]n umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction and the construction of words and pictures. This interaction, and the manner in which information is presented, depends on the varied perspectives and “building” of shared meanings, as people share their stores, and understandings (Search Engine Marketing, 2014).

In a round about way, this definition offers some interesting perspectives into what this new interaction medium entails. One of the key phrases in this definition is sharing. A multitude of social media encompasses the idea of sharing. Take for example Facebook posting. Often times a user can “share” a post made by other users, whether it’s a link to a video, photo, website, or blog. One of the very first social media sites was created in 1997 and dubbed “sixdegrees.com” (Liu, 2014). Five years later, in 2002, the first real social networking site, Friendster was launched and took the Internet by storm (Liu, 2014). Friendster gave users who shared similar interests the ability to connect and communicate via one main webpage. Not only was the site a hit, gaining “more than three million registered users,” but this also opened the door for many other networking sties to gain popularity in the market (Liu, 2014). In 2003, both Myspace and LinkedIn launched and took off with different audiences. One year later, university students created the infamous Facebook web domain, which is now the leading social media network to date (Liu, 2014). Twitter made its way into the scene in 2006 and received high volumes of praise by many. As of September 2014, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram and Twitter are the most used sites in 2012-2014 (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart & Madden, 2014). Multi-platform use, or using a number of different social media sites simultaneously, appears to be on the rise according to a third Pew Research Center study. To be exact, “52 percent of online adults now use two or more social media sites, a significant increase from 2013” (Duggan et al., 2014). A continuous increase in social media user growth indicates that companies wishing to market and communicate on these sites should invest their time into generating the right content and practices.

Moreover, news media should absolutely consider these numbers and concepts when creating a social media presence of their own, because of the new statistics that indicate a

growing social media world. Joining a social media medium that is antiquated or not suited for news content could be a horrendous blunder for a company to make. In most cases, these companies are looking at joining Facebook and Twitter since recent statistics are providing promising leads for reporters. In the months of August and September 2013 the Pew Research conducted a study to determine just how many social media users are tapping into news via links posted on Facebook. Forty-seven percent of adult Facebook users reported getting their news from the site (Mitchell, Kiley, Gottfried & Guskin, 2013). Twitter on the other hand, has less of a demand for news sharing and generally has a younger audience using the site. That's not to say that news companies should steer away from using the Twitter platform. News organizations like *The New York Times* and *Reuters* have a large following on Twitter and pump out mass amounts of tweets about current events and worldwide news stories. As each social medium platform continues to grow and adapt to new technology and ideas, content sharing will grow in tandem and flourish, as more individuals become avid users.

More and more research is being conducted to determine the effects of social media in the everyday life of people. As this research discovers exciting, yet sometimes shocking new facts, numerous basic communication and social concepts/theories are being brought into the mix. Social media was not just one day born and turned a sensation overnight. Instead, social media took gradual steps to become the powerhouse that it is today. Scholars and researchers are pointing to traditional theories such as the diffusion of innovations theory, gate-watching theory, situational theory of publics, and uses and gratifications theory to assess how the whole craze started and how it will continue. By analyzing the theories in question further, news companies will become better equipped at creating persuasive and engaging social media campaigns. In



turn, these news outlets will see a higher percentage of their content receiving engagement and outreach from their audience.

### **Notable Communication Theories**

*Diffusion of Innovations Theory* Before social media became an integrated part of society, only a small number of people knew about and accessed the networks. Many researchers and communication professionals have tried to document and analyze how it became such a sensation. In 1995, E.M. Rogers suggested a theoretical explanation of similar phenomena that is an extension of the more commonly known two-step flow theory (Rogers, 1995). Two-step flow theory, in a condensed sense, explains that members of society will form their beliefs based off the opinions of prominent members of the same society (Bran, 2002). For Rogers, this type of flow of information stems from four stages, “invention, diffusion (or communication through the social system, time and consequences” (Rogers, 1995). Each stage forms a part of the network in which the new information runs through. Opinion leaders will set the standard of approval when a new practice or idea is invented or enters a market. As the opinion leaders form their beliefs about the product and these become commonly known, more individuals or “opinion followers” will start to adopt the new concept (Rogers, 1995). To help understand the process even more, Rogers breaks the flow of information down even more. An innovation will go through 5 groups of adopters: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards.

To understand these segments, one must consider the propensity each group has to adopt or take on the innovation and imagine a bell curve. Those on the left hand side of the curve will have a high predisposition to adopt the innovation from the initial release of said idea/practice. Those on the right hand side will have a lower desire to get their hands on the innovation. In this respect, innovators, early adopters and early majority individuals will have a higher need to

obtain the innovation. While those in the late majority may still eventually try the innovation in question, they will have a lower level of propensity to immediately attain it. Finally laggards are those with the highest propensity to ignore or oppose obtainment of the innovation. One of the most interesting aspects of this theory is that while it originated decades ago, the theory still has significant merit today.

While previous applications of diffusion theory have primarily focused on technological products (Long, Chei & Dion, 2014), social media encompasses an aspect of diffusion theory that is unique to the platform. According to Rogers, “individuals are interconnected to form a communication network through which information flows,” and social media platforms offer users such a communication network, just via the Internet (Rogers, 2003). In doing so, social media sites, according to Shu-Chuan Chu of DePaul University and Yoojung Kim of The University of Texas at Austin, allow users to feel as if they fit in and provides them with emotional support from those they connect with online (Chu & Yoojung, 2009). While studies have examined the motives of use for those on social media, only a small number have looked into news sharing and social media usage (what this research is aimed at exploring). In 2014, a group of researchers looked at social media users news sharing tendencies and cross-applied diffusion theory to better understand the process.

Their study found that diffusion of innovations theory explains a “users intention to share news in a social media context,” (Long, Chei & Dion, 2014). In other words, the researchers were able to document specific reasons and motives that users have for sharing certain news stories on their personal social media sites. Moreover, the study also found that users would likely repost a news story that has significance relative to their close personal relationships, whether or not the story is originally posted from a reputable source or opinion leader, or if the

story is current or breaking news (Long, Cheir & Dion, 2014). These three components were found to be the most common reasons as to why a news story is shared, or diffused through the communication channels of social media. Therefore, the diffusion of innovations theory helps illustrate how social media forms a communication network, which enables news sharing to diffuse throughout.

*Uses and Gratifications* Another notable communication theory that sheds light on newsrooms convergence to social media is the uses and gratifications theory. The theory attempts to explain the ‘why’ behind individuals who seek out specific media to satisfy certain needs of their own (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2013). At the core of this theory stems the notion of an active audience. To be considered an active member of an audience a user must seek out media to satisfy certain needs (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2013). Under this theory, each active member has psychological needs that can and must be satisfied by various forms of media. By engaging in that media, the theory posits, that these members are knowingly doing so and can absolutely explain why they are doing so (Pavlik & McIntosh, 2013). While the theory might have critics, Pavlik and McIntosh suggest that for users to access certain media types online, they have to interact with that media or with other users (2013).

Furthering the idea that online media has extended the meaning of the uses and gratifications theory, Thomas Ruggiero, from the University of Texas at El Paso, argues that “new media like the Internet possess at least three attributes of data not commonly associated with traditional media: interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity” (Ruggiero, 2000). In other words, to Ruggiero, the Internet allows users to control their messages, interact with other users, and users may send and receive messages at different times yet still at their own convenience. Such an allowance indicates that the Internet encourages and thrives from

interpersonal communication, but behind a screen. While users may never see one another in person, they are still able to hold conversations and create relationships all via the various social media networks established online.

To understand why people are connecting via these sites rather than in person, Pavica Sheldon's survey of 172 Louisiana State students' use of Facebook should be analyzed and considered through the uses and gratifications scope. According to the results, most students in the sample mainly utilize the social network for relationship maintenance (Sheldon, 2008). Many female participants cited that they used Facebook to "pass time when they are bored or after they receive an email suggesting [to] them that someone had posted on their Facebook site" (Sheldon, 2008). Her findings suggest that people are using computers and the Internet as a way to engage different forms of media, including Facebook. With this knowledge, many businesses can format their social media marketing plans to capture the most attention of viewers in a given experience. Since the research shows that personal connection seems to be a motivating factor behind social media use, it's fair to argue that the more companies practice these fundamentals, the more likely they will be to see an increase in social media following. Before the Internet, companies had to conform and think outside the box for traditional print media; today it's a different story. As for newspaper companies, "half of Facebook and Twitter users get news" through those social media sites, indicating that even when people are seeking connection, some news stories will catch their eye (Matsa & Mitchell, 2014). Extending that, a 2014 Pew Research Study found that 78 percent of Facebook users mainly see news while they are scrolling through their news feed for other reasons (Matsa & Mitchell, 2014).

Since users are going to social media for interpersonal reason and yet wind up looking at completely unrelated posts and ideas, companies are picking up on the trend and attempting to

reach the psychological needs of those individuals via Internet marketing. From a uses and gratifications stand point, companies are noting the ‘why’ behind consumers use of these sites and are looking to satisfy their needs by creating messages tailored to connection. In the annual Social Media Examiner State of the Media 2014 report, researchers found that “92 percent of marketers said that social media was important to their businesses” (Kusinitz, 2014). A Forbes article explains that when companies put the effort into their social media presence, the companies brand awareness and recognition increases (DeMers, 2014). Moreover, brand awareness alone isn’t the only benefit businesses or companies are seeing from using social media platforms. According to a Texas Tech University report, “companies now have access to a channel where they can speak directly to their customers” (Bell, 2013). Rather than just the company sharing new products with consumers, individuals are now able to talk back and share with the company their stories or grievances. This process of two-way communication opens up the doors to brand loyalty.

Now consider the concept of uses and gratifications theory. First a user must have a need for something from the media; then the user must engage the media to fulfill that need. The same can be said for a company. Therefore, social media brings about uses and gratifications for both the average citizen and the company using the platform. Since people tend to want to feel connections or create/maintain relationships via social media, companies can utilize this knowledge to their benefit through engagement. By commenting back on posts made by customers or sharing information that directly helps individual customers, said people will begin to feel connected to the brand. Once this is established there is a higher likelihood, in accordance with the previous studied research, that these customers will continue to use the media and

purchase product or service from the company. In this sense, the company has a need to sell its brand and by using social media to connect with its audience it is able to satisfy that need.

*Gatekeeping and Gatewatching* Before the Web 2.0 came into the mix, journalists had more control over what style and types of stories that were produced and read by the masses—a practice commonly known as gatekeeping. News editors and journalists, according to psychologist Kevin Lewin, are “individual[s] or [a] group [that] is ‘in power’ for making the decision between ‘in’ or ‘out,’” (Lewin, 1947). In other words, journalists and editors take all the news in a given area and determine which stories will be published objectively and in an unbiased fashion. With the installation of social networking sites, citizen journalism sprang into the mix; average citizens are now playing a part in the dissemination of news, also referred to as gatewatching. While some may argue that such a lack of bias still exists in gatewatching and gatekeeping, Dr. Axel Bruns of Queensland University of Technology suggests, “online news operations are therefore not primarily charged with an obligation to report objectively and impartially” (Bruns, 2004). While his statement is primarily opinion, it does shed some light onto the concept that is gatewatching. Everyday people are able to access and interpret all different kinds of news articles from a variety of sources. From here, these “gate watchers” are able to post the stories to their personal social media sites and add their *own* opinion or reporting. By adding their own opinion or judgment to a story, the story no longer has the same amount of unbiased content in the person’s audience.

Rather than getting the latest information from the front page a newspaper, people have access to the information instantly, and in some cases right when it’s happening. The amount of information that people post on Facebook and Twitter is astounding. During the Mumbai terrorist attacks on the financial district in India, observers of the occurrences were the first to report the

attacks on Twitter (Crowe, 2012). In his book, Adam Crowe points out one of the benefits of social media reporting, “social media is inherently self-correcting” (Crowe, 2012). By this the author extends that because of the open forum on social media sites, other users are more likely to comment with corrections or new information in regards to messages that might not be accurate. Unlike traditional news media, though, there is a common understanding that news on social media can sometimes be unintentionally incorrect (Crowe, 2012). Therefore, with the emergence of gatewatching, it is important to consider these citizen journalists as allies rather than just mediocre reporters. Newspaper companies on social media should align themselves in a leveraging position with said individuals so that they can use breaking information reported by these people. “Friending” or following these citizen journalists could provide exponential benefits to newspaper companies. According to Crowe, “local and national media outlets routinely follow various Twitter users for breaking news” (2012).

### **Demographics of Study Area**

The study area of interest is Medina County, but also extends into three other counties. Specifically, the study area will concern itself mainly with the locally owned publication, *The Post Newspapers*. In 1975, Bruce and Sabrina Trogdon founded the newspaper company and have since incorporated their business. A once small publication run by Trogdon Publishing, Inc., has now grown to a reach of four-counties, 110,000 papers delivered each week, and encompasses 14 school districts. The paper covers nine local areas and produces nine separate editions tailored to the specific area. According to recent census data, Medina County has an estimated population of 174,915. The county consists of three cities, Brunswick, Medina, and Wadsworth. These areas include: Strongsville, North Royalton, Brunswick, Medina, Eastern Medina, Southern Medina, Wadsworth, Northern Wayne and Norton township. Strongsville has

a population of 44,730 and *The Post* reaches about 18,000 individuals. North Royalton has a population of 30,367 and *The Post* reaches about 13,500 individuals. Brunswick has a population of 34,544 and *The Post* reaches about 22,000 individuals. Medina, including the eastern and southern areas has a population of 26, 570 and *The Post* reaches about 20,000 individuals. Wadsworth has a population of 21,842 and *The Post* reaches about 12,000 individuals. Wayne County has a population of 115,071, but *The Post* only delivers to the northern part of Wayne, reaching about 13,000 people. Norton has a population of 12,050 and *The Post* reaches about 5,000 individuals. David Sickels, one of the managing editors at *The Post* reported that about two thirds of the individuals in the papers reach read the actual paper.

Each of the nine editions of *The Post* has its own Facebook page and Twitter account. Facebook pages, according to the Facebook Company, “are for businesses, brands and organizations to share their stories and connect with people. Like profiles, you can customize Pages by posting stories, hosting events, adding apps and more. People who like your Page and their friends can get updates in News Feed” (Facebook Help Center, 2015). For *The Strongsville Post* Facebook page, currently 622 users have liked the page. For *The North Royalton Post* Facebook page, 329 users have liked the page to date. For the other seven publications: 830, 1,112, 113, 263, 1,140, 388, and 561 users have liked each page respectively. As for Twitter, *The Strongsville Post* account has 296 followers. For *The North Royalton Post* Twitter account, 139 users have followed the account to date. For the other seven publications: 136, 225, 16, 61, 84, 11, and 34 users follow the accounts respectively.

Currently, *The Post* uses an automated content management system (CMS) that will post simultaneously on each local editions’ Facebook and Twitter. A content management system is a software component that allows users to upload, edit and manage any and all content on a



particular website. In addition to its ability to shape and control the media being placed on the site, users are in turn able to set time frames and dates for when they want their content to be published online. Most systems are created for ease of use, so that those with less experience in technology can utilize the software. For *The Post*, the CMS software posts links from stories on the Facebook and Twitter pages. In most cases only the link appears on each social media medium. According to managing editor and social media director David Sickels of *The Post*, often times the company will post breaking news immediately and save feature and opinion articles for soft news days. For the most part, the company relies on the Facebook platform rather than Twitter. Although their CMS software and Twitter are linked, the company rarely uses the software to post on Twitter. Sickels said that their Twitter is more used for “sports and high school games. We have a better following of high school students on our Twitter rather than Facebook.”

There is little research regarding particular models or best practices for social media success of newspapers. According to the Pew Research Center’s annual journalism review, “social media news consumption is supplemental” (Pew Research Center, 2012). In other words, people are not turning to Facebook or other various social media sites to strictly obtain news. Rather, these sites are an extension of news sources. For the most part, people are using social media to connect and maintain relationships with new and current acquaintances. In the case of newspapers taking to social media, current research points to the idea of connecting with the readership. When a person picks up a paper copy of their local news, they aren’t able to directly interact with the writers or editors. Now, in the age of instant communication, newspapers with Facebook’s and Twitter accounts are able to interact with readers. Instead of writing a letter to the editor about an article that they found interesting or disagreed with, consumers are now able

to write comments directly on the page and share the particular posts with their social media friends/followers.

### **Conclusion**

By considering the current state of social media in accordance with the aforementioned communication theories, it is possible to create an overarching approach to constructing a social media plan for *The Post*. In doing so, it will be important to consider the audience in which the newspaper is most familiar and well received. After examination, *The Post* appears to have an older generation of audience members, who may or may not be as technologically aware as some younger generations. The social media plan, therefore, should focus on harvesting a younger generation as the primary audience. This can be done through promotional pieces that raise awareness of the paper's brand image online. Those in the current primary audience will not be overlooked, as content will still have intentions of gaining their attention as well. Creating more engagement on Twitter and Facebook will require utilizing the CMS software as more of a springboard into these conversations. In this sense, it is necessary to post material with headlines and tag lines that are conversational in tone and bring about dialogue with online consumers. To do so, multiple pieces of sample content will be created that will exhibit such tones and ideas.

Overall the finalized product will include a best practices manual that will explain and debrief the procedures and plans for the social media revitalization. The manual will take into consideration the fact that there is only one main individual running the social media side of the paper. While many researchers suggest that there should be a multi-staffed department operating it, local papers have limited resources and smaller staff sizes to begin with. Even with such a limitation, reviewing the aforementioned research and tailoring all best practice suggestions to *The Post*, can still achieve the right content and desired results.

*Methodology*

The aim of this project is to examine the current practices of *The Post* papers---a group of small papers in Medina, County, Ohio--- and to establish best practices for the news organization's social media and to develop a set of recommendations and training module for *The Post* papers, in order to help them improve their social media practices. Two key activities will take place: an audit of *The Post* papers current social media and a compilation of best practices gathered from in-depth interviews with other newspaper social media directors and data from *The Post's* social media sites.

*The Social Audit.* In order to successfully determine the current state of *The Post's* social media profiles, an audit of current social media practices by *The Post* must be completed. To do so, Facebook analytics will be studied and recorded in several ways. The audit will be conducted using Facebook analytics. Likes, shares, comments and ratings will be counted to determine whether or not the target audience is engaging with the content of the newspaper. From the nine Facebook accounts, the largest paper in population, smallest paper in population, median population paper, and the main *Post* Facebook page will be considered.

Post data will be collected from each individual page from each constructed day of the constructed week across the board. Content posted on Facebook will be researched beginning August 2015 and ending September 2015. In an effort to simplify the data analysis, a constructed week will be randomly drawn. Each day of the week will be counted from August to September and a number from that set will be randomly pulled to determine which specific day is selected. The random sample for the constructed week yielded the following dates: Monday, August 10, Tuesday, September 15, Wednesday, September 2, Thursday, August 6, Friday, August 21, Saturday, August 29, and Sunday, September 6, 2015.

In addition to separating the Facebook pages and days of the week, specific categories based on the *Field Guide to Covering Local News* by Fred Bayles were created to break the Facebook posts down further, as well as for SPSS purposes. Bayles' book is used in newswriting classrooms throughout the country and provides a basic breakdown of how print publications/newspapers cover the news. The following categories were used: Cops and crime, fires and emergencies, courts, government, and education. To account for the variety and repeated type of posts *The Post* puts out, four additional categories were created: sports, miscellaneous, obituaries, and business. Conclusions about content and preferred story genre will be drawn and explained in the manual and findings.

*The In-Depth Interviews.* Phone interviews will be conducted with individuals who manage social media accounts for a large newspaper and a medium sized newspaper. Size is determined by audience reach, thus the individual responsible for managing the social media will be chosen based on the newspapers audience reach. For this project, Mark Smith from the *Washington Post* was interviewed for the large newspaper portion. The *Washington Post* social media page (Facebook) reaches 3.5 million viewers. This reach places the paper into the large newspaper category. For the small-size paper, Dan Kadar of the *Akron Beacon Journal/Ohio.com* will be interviewed. Around 29,000 people view this newspapers social media site (Facebook), which places the paper into the small-size range. The medium-sized newspaper interviewed was *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*. Their audience reach consists of around 275,000 people. Amanda Harnocz, a social media manager for the company, was interviewed through electronic communication. All three individuals were asked the following series of questions that helped determine best practices for newspapers on social media:

What is your approach to posting news content on Facebook and Twitter?

What types of components do you consider when you are forming a post?

What stories might you not share on social media?

What types of stories do you see get the most shares and likes?

How do you determine a tagline for a post? Do you formulate the tagline first?

How important are photos to accompany the posts? How do you choose the image you will use?

What's the most important piece a paper should consider when posting on social media?

What do you recommend for smaller newspapers?

*Creating Best Practices, Recommendations and Training.* After conducting the audit and in-depth interviews, the information will be reviewed and analyzed to determine common themes and trend of both *The Post* itself and the recommendations from two major social media managers. Information gathered will be placed into a separate manual/document that will explain the best recommendations collected for the client. Upon completion, the manual will be presented to the client in a personal setting such as a conference room or over the phone depending on the timing. The training session should take no longer than an hour to go over the comprehensive manual and further recommendations for the client. During the session, each best practice will have corresponding examples to help the client visualize the suggestions.

*Findings*

A total of 200 Facebook posts from four of *The Post's* Facebook were coded. Of these, type 1 (Cops and Crimes) had a total of 10 posts, type 3 (Courts) had a total of 6, type 4 (Government) had a total of 42, type 5 (Education) had a total of 18, type 6 (Sports) had a total of 35, type 7 (Miscellaneous) had a total of 54, type 8 (Obituary) had a total 34, and type 9 (Business) had a total of 1. There were not any type 2 (Fires/Emergencies) posts out of the 200 coded. Amongst the four Facebook pages studied (n=200), comments per post averaged .92 (s=4.037). The maximum or highest number of comments amongst the four pages for an individual post was 44. Shares per post across all four pages (n=200) averaged 1.10 (s=4.326) and the maximum numbers of shares for an individual post was 39. Likes per post across all four pages (n=200) averaged 3.87 (s=14.635) with the maximum amount of likes per an individual post at 153. Reach per post averaged 468.36 people (s=602.291), with a minimum amount of reach for a single post of 36 and a maximum reach for a single post of 4,425. Finally, post clicks per post across all four pages (n=200) averaged 36.48 (s=107.562) with a maximum number of post clicks on an individual of 990.

More descriptive statistics were retrieved to find the mean and standard deviations of each of the nine different types of stories. Reach for type 1 stories (cops & crime) where n=10, averaged 1237.90 per post (s=1316.576). Post clicks for type 1 stories averaged 242.60 per post (s=379.889). Comment for type 1 stories averaged 3.20 per post (s=6.564). Likes averaged 7.90 per post (s=17.953). Shares averaged 6.70 per post (s=13.755). There were no type 2 stories or fires and emergencies pulled from the constructed week.

Reach for type three (court stories), where  $n=6$ , averaged 1005.67 per post ( $s=99.723$ ), post clicks averaged 108.67 per post ( $s=146.403$ ), comments averaged 2.17 per post ( $s=5.307$ ), likes averaged 2.17 per post ( $s=4.355$ ), and shares averaged 1.17 per post ( $s=1.941$ ).

Type four stories (government stories,  $n=42$ ) reach averaged 430.26 per post ( $s=520.373$ ), post clicks averaged 28.26 per post ( $s=52.666$ ), comments averaged .93 per post ( $s=2.645$ ), likes averaged 2.29 per post ( $s=9.547$ ), and shares averaged .86 per post ( $s=3.065$ ).

Type five stories (education stories) where  $n=18$ , averaged a reach of 383.06 per post ( $s=618.704$ ). Post clicks averaged 20.50 per post ( $s=49.790$ ), comments averaged .22 per post ( $s=.732$ ), likes averaged 4.61 per post ( $s=13.169$ ) and shares averaged .28 per post ( $s=.669$ ).

Type six stories (Sports stories), where  $n=35$ , averaged a reach of 380.83 per post ( $s=241.236$ ). Post clicks averaged 12.31 per post ( $s=12.520$ ), comments averaged .26 per post ( $s=1.521$ ), likes averaged 2.00 per post ( $s=5.041$ ) and shares averaged .20 per post ( $s=.531$ ).

Type seven stories (miscellaneous or stories that could not be classified under the categories according to Bayles) where  $n=54$ , averaged a reach of 378.80 per post ( $s=589.647$ ). Post clicks averaged 18.65 per post ( $s=36.110$ ), comments averaged .74 per post ( $s=2.644$ ), likes averaged 6.96 ( $s=23.470$ ) per post and shares averaged 1.26 per post ( $s=3.803$ ).

Type eight stories (obituary), where  $n=34$  averaged a reach of 474.47 per post ( $s=390.233$ ). Post clicks for type eight averaged 35.88 per post ( $s=70.440$ ), comments averaged 1.41 per post ( $s=7.536$ ), likes averaged 1.68 per post ( $s=7.331$ ) and shares averaged .88 per post ( $s=3.796$ ).

Type nine stories (business stories) where  $n=1$ , was a single post with a reach of 383. The post was clicked 3 times, but the post had no likes, comments or shares. . Standard deviations were unable to be calculated for these variables of type nine.

Table 1.0 Descriptive Statistics for posts on all four pages.

Total	Post Clicks	Reach	Comments	Likes	Shares
Mean	36.48	468.36	.92	3.87	1.10
N	200	200	200	200	200
Std. Deviation	107.562	602.291	4.037	14.635	4.326

After reviewing the descriptive statistics across all four papers, another set of descriptive statistics was run to break each publication into its own report. Descriptive statistics indicate the overall mean, total number of posts (in this case) and standard deviation. For the first publication, Medina, there were a total of 50 Facebook posts (n=50) that were coded and analyzed. Post clicks and reach averaged 40.72 per post and 323.92 per post respectively (s=142.471, s=655.874). Comments, likes and shares averaged 1.18, 5.68, and 1.60 per post respectively as well (s= 4.129, s=23.197, s=6.550).

For the second publication, Norton, there were a total of 19 Facebook posts (n=19) that were coded and analyzed. Post clicks and reach, averaged 20.95 and 247.79 per post respectively (s=41.824, s=576.729). Comments, likes, and shares averaged .58, 6.74 and .79 per post respectively as well (s=1.261, s=17.622, s=2.097).

For the third publication, Strongsville, 28 Facebook posts (n=28) were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Post clicks and reach averaged 18.61 and 258.75 per post (s=31.152, s=215.005). Comments, likes and shares averaged .25, 2.04 and .36 per post (s=.799, s=4.940, s=.870).



For the fourth and final publication, the main *Post* Facebook page was used and 103 posts ( $n=103$ ) were coded and analyzed. These posts covered the constructed week and potentially could have seen some duplicates from posts gathered from the other three Facebook pages. Post clicks and reach of the main page averaged 42.14 and 636.15 per post ( $s=109.917$ ,  $s=608.575$ ). Comments, likes and shares averaged 1.05, 2.96 and 1.12 per post ( $s=4.793$ ,  $s=9.656$ ,  $s=3.818$ ).

Table 1.1 Descriptive Statistics for Medina Page

Medina	Post Clicks	Reach	Comments	Likes	Shares
Mean	40.72	323.92	1.18	5.68	1.60
N	50	50	50	50	50
Std. Deviation	142.471	655.874	1.261	23.197	6.559

Table 1.2 Descriptive Statistics for Norton Page

Norton	Post Clicks	Reach	Comments	Likes	Shares
Mean	20.95	247.79	.58	6.74	.79
N	19	19	19	19	19
Std. Deviation	41.824	576.729	1.261	17.622	2.097

Table 1.3 Descriptive Statistics for Strongsville Page

Strongsville	Post Clicks	Reach	Comments	Likes	Shares
Mean	18.61	258.75	.25	2.04	.36

N	28	28	28	28	28
Std. Deviation	31.152	215.005	.799	4.940	.870

Table 1.4 Descriptive Statistics for Main Page

Main	Post Clicks	Reach	Comments	Likes	Shares
Mean	42.14	636.15	1.05	2.96	1.12
N	103	103	103	103	103
Std. Deviation	109.917	608.575	4.793	9.656	3.818

In order to determine whether or not there was statistical significance between days of the week and post clicks, reach, comments, likes and shares, an ANOVA test was used. An ANOVA test determines if there is a significant difference between three or more independent groups/variables. For the purpose of this test, days of the week were the independent variables and likes, comments, shares, post clicks and reach, were entered as dependent variables. The ANOVA test looks at the variance between the variables and determines significance. There was a significant difference between each of the days of the week items were posted in terms of shares, post clicks, and reach.

Table 1.5 ANOVA result: Dependent Variable Post Clicks, Independent Variable Days of the Week

Type	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Shares	281.606	6	46.934	2.631	.018

Table 1.6 ANOVA result: Dependent Variable Post Clicks, Independent Variable Days of the Week

Type	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Post Clicks	269264.136	6	44877.356	4.260	.000

Table 1.7 ANOVA result: Dependent Variable Shares, Independent Variable Days of the Week

Type	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reach	6294081.919	6	1049013.653	3.073	.007

Upon further investigation into the Scheffe Post-Hoc test, it was found that the average number of post clicks on Friday (variable 5) was significantly higher than the mean post clicks of any other day:

Table 1.8 Scheffe Post-Hoc with Independent Variable Day of the Week and Dependent Variable Post Clicks

Day of the Week	Day of the Week	Mean Difference	Sig.
5	1	103.600	.055
	2	112.529	.019
	3	127.360	.009
	4	115.121	.016
	6	117.778	.010
	7	130.857	.011

Taking a closer look at the relationship between post clicks, reach, comments, likes and shares across the entire 200 posts (n=200), to see if there was a correlation between the accrual of each, a correlation test revealed positive correlation between reach and likes ( $r=.675$ ,  $p<.01$ ), reach and post clicks ( $r=.798$ ,  $p<.01$ ), reach and shares ( $r=.757$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and reach and comments ( $r=.542$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Further, there was a positive correlation between post clicks and reach ( $r=.798$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and between post clicks and likes ( $r=.450$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and post clicks and shares ( $r=.859$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and finally post clicks and comments ( $r=.605$ ,  $p<.01$ ). A Pearson correlation test showed

relationships between time of day and reach ( $r = .195$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and between time of day and post clicks ( $r = .231$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Correlations between the engagement variables reach, post clicks, likes, shares and comments were all positive and significant ( $p < .001$ ). The only variables with significant correlations to time of day were reach ( $r = .195$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and post clicks ( $r = .231$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Table 1.9, Two-Tailed Pearson Correlations

	Reach	Post Clicks	Like	Share	Comment	Time of Day
<b>Reach</b>						
Pearson Corr.	1	.798	.675	.757	.542	.195
Sig (2 tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.006
N	200	200	200	200	200	200
<b>Post Clicks</b>						
Pearson Corr.	.798	1	.450	.859	.605	.231
Sig (2 tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
N	200	200	200	200	200	200
<b>Likes</b>						
Pearson Corr.	.675	.450	1	.736	.580	.020
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.775
N	200	200	200	200	200	200
<b>Shares</b>						
Pearson Corr.	.757	.859	.736	1	.755	.123
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.083
N	200	200	200	200	200	200

Comments						
Pearson Corr.	.542	.605	.580	.755	1	.077
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.276
N	200	200	200	200	200	200
Time of Day						
Pearson Corr.	.195	.231	.020	.123	.077	1
Sig (2 tailed)	.006	.001	.775	.083	.276	
N	200	200	200	200	200	200

In order to explore how time of day impacted the engagement among Facebook viewers across all four Facebook pages, an ANOVA test was conducted (Table 2.0). The independent variable was time of day, and the dependent variables were post clicks, reach, comments, likes and shares. Time was coded as follows, midnight to 5 a.m. was coded “1”, 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. was coded “2”, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. was coded “3”, 10 a.m. to noon was coded “4”, and 12:00 p.m. till midnight was coded “5”. The ANOVA found that there is a significant difference between different times of day and the number of post clicks and shares, as illustrated in Table 2.0.

Table 2.0, ANOVA Independent Variable of Time Codes and Dependent Variables of Post Clicks and Shares

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Post Clicks	Between Groups	3139333.730	4	78483.433	7.697	.000
	Within Groups	1988416.145	195	10197.006		

	Total	2302349.875	199			
Shares	Between Groups	288.922	4	72.230	4.100	.003
	Within Groups	3435.078	195	17.616		
	Total	3724.000	199			

Because there was significance found between the dependent variables post clicks and shares, and the independent variable of time of day, a Scheffe Multiple Comparisons was conducted (See Table 2.1). The Scheffe’s Multiple Comparison test shows a significant difference in post clicks and shares between the time codes, particularly time code four, which is 10 a.m. to noon. In addition, time code four (10 a.m. to noon) had significantly higher numbers of shares and post clicks in comparison to the other time codes ( $p < .05$ ).

Table 2.1 Scheffe’s Multiple Comparison Table of Independent Variable Time Codes and Dependent Variables Post Clicks and Shares

Post Clicks	Time Code I	Time Code J	Mean Dif. (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	1	2	-6.204	21.329	.999	-72.54	60.13
		3	3.833	27.515	1.000	-81.74	89.40
		4	-173.106	31.690	.000	-271.66	-74.55
		5	-29.833	27.515	.882	-115.40	55.74
	2	1	6.204	21.329	.999	-60.13	72.54
		3	10.037	32.519	.999	-91.09	111.17
		4	-166.902	36.120	.000	-279.23	-54.57

		5	-23.630	32.519	.971	-124.76	77.50
	3	1	-3.833	27.515	1.000	-89.40	81.74
		2	-10.037	32.519	.999	-111.17	91.09
		4	-176.939	40.085	.001	-301.60	-52.28
		5	-33.667	26.873	.934	-148.34	81.01
	4	1	173.106	31.690	.000	74.55	271.66
		2	166.902	36.120	.000	54.57	279.23
		3	176.939	40.085	.001	52.28	301.60
		5	143.273	40.085	.014	18.61	267.94
	5	1	29.833	27.515	.882	-55.74	115.40
		2	23.630	32.519	.971	-77.50	124.76
		3	22.667	36.873	.934	-81.01	148.34
		4	-143.273	40.085	.014	-267.94	-18.61
Shares	1	2	-.190	.887	1.000	-2.95	2.57
		3	.439	1.144	.997	-3.12	4.00
		4	-5.227	1.317	.004	-9.32	-1.13
		5	-.627	1.144	.990	-4.18	2.93
	2	1	.190	.887	1.000	-2.57	2.95
		3	.630	1.352	.994	-3.57	4.83
		4	-5.037	1.501	.027	-9.71	-.37
		5	-.437	1.352	.999	-4.64	3.77
	3	1	-.439	1.144	.997	-4.00	3.12
		2	-.630	1.352	.994	-4.83	3.57

		4	-5.667	1.666	.023	-10.85	-.49
		5	-1.067	1.533	.975	-5.83	3.70
	4	1	5.227	1.317	.004	1.13	9.32
		2	5.037	1.352	.027	.37	9.71
		3	5.667	1.666	.023	.49	10.85
		5	-1.067	1.666	.111	-.58	9.78
	5	1	.627	1.144	.990	-2.93	4.18
		2	.437	1.352	.999	-3.77	4.64
		3	1.067	1.533	.975	-3.70	5.83
		4	-4.600	1.666	.111	-9.78	.58

### *Discussion*

The statistics yielded by analyzing the Facebook insights of *The Post's* Facebook page yielded a great deal of information that will assist the organization understanding how different types of posts perform, as well as how posting timing and posting days impact performance.

#### **Days of the Week that perform best**

When faced with the question of whether or not days of the week matter to the success of *The Post's* Facebook posts, analysis found a significant difference between several of the dependent variables for specific days of the week. As table 1.8 illustrated, day 5 (Friday) had significantly more post clicks than other days of the week. From these findings, it can be concluded that more post clicks occur on Fridays in general, or on the paper's weekend days. This data also supports that Internet newspaper consumers tend to receive and gather their news on social media towards the end of the week. The literature suggested that consumers read the



news most heavily on Mondays, but this finding might indicate that news consumption through a social media platform for a local paper may differ from the norm. More research would need to be developed to provide strong support for this statement. Further the Scheffe Post Hoc comparison revealed that Fridays (day 5) had significantly more reach than Sundays (day 7) ( $p < .05$ ).

### **Types of Stories that perform best**

The findings also indicate that there is a significant difference between the type of story and the overall reach of the post, reach meaning the number of people who read the post in the first 28 days after a post was generated. This also indicates that certain stories have higher reach than others. Type one stories (cops and crime), for example, had a mean reach of 1237.90. Since reach deals with actual people, that number can be rounded to an average of 1,238 people reached. On the other hand, type six stories (sports stories) had a reach of 378.8, or an average of 379 people reached per post. Type three stories (court stories) had the second highest reach of 1004.67 people, or 1,005 people on average per post. Considering these numbers, it can be concluded that cops, crime and court stories have a higher reach than all of the other types of stories studied. For a local paper, this is on par with what the previous research indicated. A limitation might be that the amount of court stories had an n of 6, but cops and crime had an n of 10. Together, these sections equaled to 16, but with the small number, they still garnered a large amount of post reach overall.

On the other hand, type six stories (sports stories) had the lowest amount of post clicks overall (covering all four pages studied), averaging 12.31 post clicks per story ( $n=35$ ). These stories were only the second lowest in reach and landed in the middle for like. Bayles (2012) did not consider sports stories a category on their own, but type six was included based on the

frequency with which *The Post* writes about sports in their paper. Newspapers also have entire sections devoted to sports. Before running data analysis, type 6 stories were expected to have a higher average number of likes, comments, shares, clicks and reach than other stories. There is no support for this in the data, and there does not seem to be any indication as to why these stories did not yield higher averages or increased user engagement. It might be that Facebook is not the platform for these types of stories for *The Post*, or that the Facebook audience is not as interested in the sports stories as the website and hard copy readers are.

During interviews with Dan Kadar of *The Akron Beacon Journal* and Mark Smith of *The Washington Post*, the general consensus was not to limiting content. The data results regarding story type do not necessarily mean that *The Post* should focus on type one stories more so or rather than type six stories. In fact, as the two top newspaper companies suggested, it's important to have a good spread of content so as to not limit attracting a varied audience. Rather than focus primarily on what type of story is posted, both Smith and Kadar suggest finding the piece of the story that will "make viewers stop." When online readers scroll through their news feeds on Facebook, an eye-catching photo or clever lead might pull them into clicking on the post. Clicking on the post leads to likes, which leads to comments, which leads to shares and then reach. This logic aligns with what the findings suggested (See Table 1.9) when the correlation between likes, comments, shares, reach and post clicks all increased when the others increased. In essence, the descriptive data might not be the tell-all for what *The Post* needs to concern themselves with going forward; rather, the presentation of the content should be at the forefront of the social media editor's and journalist's mind.

### **Population and Facebook Engagement**

Since the publications chosen for analysis were broken down based on overall population, some conclusions from those descriptive statistics could be made. Medina was considered a medium sized publication, and had the overall highest mean post clicks of the three papers (excluding the main page or publication four) with 40.72 or 41 post clicks on average. With 50 posts pulled from the constructed week, it might be a fair argument to suggest that since Medina had the largest number of cases (in comparison to Norton or Strongsville) the data might have a slight skew. Another argument might be that the town of Medina itself has a lot of newsworthy events taking place, thus creating more content to be published to Facebook. Whatever the case, The Medina Post Facebook page fans, according to these findings, tend to generate more post clicks on average than the other two pages studied.

According to the pages Facebook analytics, the current female fan percentage is about 76% with the highest age-bracket being 35 to 44 years of age (24% of the 76%). Interestingly enough, these numbers are consistent with the Norton page and Strongsville page. Norton has a female fan percentage of 77% with the highest age-bracket also being 35 to 44 years of age (24% of the 77%). Likewise, Strongsville has a female fan percentage of 77% and the highest age-bracket is again from 35 to 44 years of age (24% of the 77%). This might not explain why Medina, being the medium sized population, tends to do well on their overall post clicks, but it does shed light into another avenue of exploration. Further studies could be conducted to determine why the Facebook users that have “liked” the Medina page tend to be more engaged online. Since *The Post* doesn’t construct or craft its Facebook posts any differently on Medina’s page, it might indicate more than just a coincidence.

Large portions of the coded posts were taken from the main *Post* Facebook page, where n=103. This page incorporates the three other Facebook pages, as well as six additional regions

(Wadsworth, Eastern Medina, Northern Wayne, North Royalton, Brunswick, and Southern Medina). Across the board, this Facebook page had the highest amount of post clicks and reach. With 5,549 page likes, it makes sense that the main page would have such a high amount of post reach in comparison to the other smaller channels. On the other hand, the smallest population Facebook page, Norton with 1,136 page likes had the highest amount of likes across all four pages analyzed, 6.74 on average likes or 7 likes. The next highest likes for a page was Medina, with 5.68 likes on average per post. Medina has a total of 1,448 page likes, which is not much more than Norton. From these findings, it can be argued that the pages all have relatively similar user engagement (likes/comments/shares).

### **Times of Day that perform best**

When considering the question of whether or not time makes a significant impact on the overall success of information posted on one of *The Post's* Facebook pages, the data analysis revealed that time does impact "success" of a post. Table 2.0 reveals that engagement on posts recording during time code 4 show significantly higher engagement in comparison to all other times (Scheffe comparison table). Across the board, the afternoon time frame (code 4) had significantly more post clicks and reach. In this case, it can be concluded that posts generated and posted in the afternoon have higher engagement rates than posts put out in the morning/time code 1 (midnight to 5 a.m.) or time code 2 (5 a.m. to 8 a.m.).

If more people are checking Facebook posts put out by *The Post* primarily on Fridays and in the afternoon, it can be said that these factors show optimum engagement periods for the company. That's not to say that *The Post* should only focus on this time frame and day of the week, but that certain items and stories might do better in the afternoons or on Fridays throughout the week. The literature pointed to the idea that Monday mornings are when average

people consume their news. Since the study analyzed news consumption via a social media network, this could indicate a different trend for this platform. In some regard, as news companies converge to social media platforms new patterns of use will be uncovered. This study does not offer support that all local newspapers will have the same type of following and result. Each company should analyze its viewers' consumption patterns to incorporate a strategy of its own. For *The Post*, such a strategy needs to consider these findings to garner and improve overall user engagement.

### *Conclusion*

Data analysis and in-depth interviews have revealed some positive opportunities for *The Post* to improve and grow their social media success. The company is already using some of the practices revealed in the interviews, such as photo use, link placement, and writing eye catching headlines. While there are concepts that *The Post* is engaging in that are in line with what the research has found, there is room for improvement. To begin such improvements, the company needs to start at the foundation, with its journalists. Staff and journalists in the company are not engaging in negative behaviors or practices, but general knowledge of writing for social media should be revisited. An in-house retreat would be a good way to rebuild the staffs' understanding of social media writing, as well as energize the entire company. Conversations about strategy, photo choice and story choice would facilitate drastic changes in the way the company crafts Facebook posts. Such changes in turn should improve reader engagement and reach.

The findings have revealed that there might be a different pattern of consumption by viewers than average newspaper consumption. The literature suggests that newspaper readers tend to consume most of the news at the beginning of a week, but this study has revealed the

opposite. Further, it should also be noted that the company's posts tend to have higher success rates when posted in the afternoon versus the morning. Again, this does not follow the typical or expected path of news consumption; however, it should also be noted that this is one study exploring the newsroom convergence to social media and not all companies might see this same pattern.

### *Best Practices Outline*

#### I. Starting with Journalists

A. Journalists are tasked with crafting creative stories that captivate audiences and entice them to continue reading/consuming news. Because of this, it's important to provide them with the right tools to do so in the ever-changing world of journalism. Social media has posed a new tool for journalists, in that they should be considering how the story or their given beat will translate well to a social media platform like Facebook.

#### II. In-House Retreat

A. Plan a day where the entire news staff can meet to learn more about writing for social media. Because *The Post* is limited on social media staff, it's important to spread the responsibility of writing social media posts. Local papers do not have full-time social media staff. Often local social media directors are responsible for more than just managing Facebook. Instead of adding to one or two individual's workload, social media strategy should become a team effort, especially at *The Post*. Holding an in-house retreat will boost staff confidence and hopefully spark new ideas. During the retreat, conversations about previous stories and posts should be analyzed. Teams should be utilized to create mock-ups of what Facebook posts should look like. Writers should be encouraged to use creativity and out-of-the-box thinking.

### III. Photos

A. A general consensus from all three interviews revealed that photos catch users' eyes. When consumers are scrolling through their newsfeeds, often times a photo will catch their eye more so than just a post with words and a link.

1. During the retreat, conversations about photos should be brought up. Journalists again should take the responsibility of thinking about eye-catching photo angles when out in the field investigating and conducting research for their stories.

2. The company should not use stock photos with Facebook posts. Granted, some stories may not have proper photo angles or photo moments, but websites like canva.com or design applications like InDesign can create content for those moments. Exceptions can be made, but journalists and social media editors should focus on producing quality posts, rather than just putting posts out there.

### IV. Choosing the *right* stories for social media

#### A. Avoid Limiting the audience

1. While some stories from the findings indicated higher success rates, it is important that the company does not only post those types. Creating a variety for the reader/social media user is more beneficial than limiting the audience.

2. Some stories do not, however, have a place on social media. Obituaries are one type of story that the company might want to truly consider when posting on social media. While it is important to note the deaths of beloved community members, some of their family members may not have social media. These types of stories might be best to leave solely on the website versus posting it to Facebook.

#### B. Framing & Post Strategy

1. Social media for all intensive purposes is great tool to foster and facilitate discussion. Knowing this, *The Post* should considering framing story headlines with questions or thought-provoking ideas to garner more post engagement. Rather than just using the same lead as the Facebook post, or just posting the link, the company should craft a strategic post headline to captivate audiences. Combining this with photography should increase the post reach and engagement numbers.

2. Another general consensus learned from the interviews was that much of the time, learning what posts work and what don't is trial and error. Framing particular stories with clever Facebook headlines should create viewer feedback. Whether through likes, comments, shares, post clicks or overall reach, *The Post* should be able to determine if this new approach has improved their overall social media. Feedback is one of the most important components to indicate success, and each of these tools should improve or increase the success of the company.



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