THE ONE-VOICE MODEL OF A CORPORATE SPORTS ACCOUNT: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AT WORK

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Research Interest

Research Questions

- ❧ Changing role of journalists
- ❧ Implications of multiple operators working as a team to present a common face under the banner of one account
- ❧ Social network analysis
- ❧ ESPN's SportsCenter Twitter account

- ❧ To what extent does social network theory explain the operations of the social media team responsible for a selection of ESPN's Twitter accounts?
- ❧ a) To what extent does this team exhibit network properties?
- ❧ b) How are these network properties influenced by a multi-operator organizational design where multiple people are responsible for one Twitter account?

Foundational Concepts

Journalist as Information Provider

- Journalism, like information science, is a “meta-field,” one that “cuts across, or is orthogonal to, the conventional academic disciplines” (Bates, 1999, p. 1044).
- Larsson (2013) noted that journalists have traditionally been viewed as gatekeepers, but that role has been changing with the evolution and expansion of technology.
- Democratization of information

Social Network Theory

- “The basics of social networks are straightforward: ‘actors’ maintain ‘relations’ with others which form the ‘tie’ between them. The collective set of actors and ties forms the ‘network’ of connections among all members of the particular social set. Analyses and visualizations of networks follow graph theory with the actors as the nodes and relations as lines between nodes” (Haythornthwaite, 2010, p. 4838).

Background Information

Twitter

- ∞ Microblogging site with 313 million monthly active users
- ∞ Influential force in media in general and sports journalism in particular (Hambrick et al., 2010; Shockley, 2010; Spezia, 2011)

ESPN

- ∞ Eight member Social Production Group
- ∞ Curate, create, collaborate
- ∞ More than 32 million followers

SportsCenter ✓

@SportsCenter

All things sports. Nominate top plays using #SCTop10. *If you tweet or otherwise send us content, you consent to ESPN using and showcasing it in any media.*

📍 Bristol, CT

📺 816M Vine Loops

📅 Joined March 2009

✉ Tweet to SportsCenter

TWEETS
78.5K

FOLLOWING
1,660

FOLLOWERS
28M

LIKES
771

LISTS
26

Following

Tweets

Tweets & replies

Media

SportsCenter @SportsCenter · 29m

Kentucky Derby favorite Nyquist spends some time with the Stanley Cup on race day.

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

Joe Sondow @JoeSondow

+ Follow

Brooklyn Tab Choir @Brkly...

+ Follow

Brooklyn Tabernacle @The...

+ Follow

Find friends

Trends · Change

<http://twitter.com/SportsCenter>

Methodology

- ❧ Research design
 - ❧ Descriptive, exploratory perspective
- ❧ Participants
 - ❧ Eight member Social Production Group at ESPN
- ❧ Data collection and analysis
 - ❧ Surveys (Cross & Parker, 2004; Wasserman & Faust, 1994)
 - ❧ Interviews and observation (Cross & Parker, 2004)

Data Collection: Written Surveys

- ❖ Four statements
- ❖ Five levels of ranking
- ❖ Additional space for comments
- ❖ Goal of identifying network patterns
- ❖ Based on Cross and Parker (2004)

Name	Statement 1	Statement 2	Statement 3	Statement 4
GroupMember1				
GroupMember2				
GroupMember3				
GroupMember4				
GroupMember5				
GroupMember6				
GroupMember7				
GroupMember8				

Data Collection: On-site Interviews & Observations

- ❧ Travel over two days
- ❧ Up to 60 minutes with each team member
- ❧ Observe formal and informal meetings
- ❧ Digitally recorded and transcribed
- ❧ Semi-structured interviews related to group, communication, and Twitter

Results: Density

	Density, Dichotomized where 1, 2, 3 = 1; 4, 5 = 0	Density, Dichotomized where 1, 2 = 1; 3, 4, 5 = 0
Statement 1: I typically turn to this person for information about work-related topics.	0.892857	0.660714
Statement 2: I typically provide information to this person on work-related topics.	0.910714	0.785714
Statement 3: I typically turn to this person for help in thinking through a challenging problem at work.	0.732143	0.535714
Statement 4: I typically collaborate or discuss new or innovative work-related ideas with this person.	0.857143	0.607143
Statements One and Two	0.768	0.786

Results: Sociograms

Statements One and Two, dichotomized
and with tie strength illustrated

Statement Three, dichotomized,
with reciprocated ties in blue

The One Voice Model

Results: On-site Interviews and Observations

- ❧ Demographics
- ❧ Social network measurements
- ❧ Interview responses
- ❧ Emergent themes

Participant Quote

“So in terms of collaboration, conversations are like, ‘Hey did you see this story? Would you want to click on it? What do you think about sharing this? Is it cool?’ kind of stuff like that. And then we kind of think of a way to sell it to the fan and be like, ‘Would you click on this if this is what it said?’ And we kind of proofread each other’s words, that kind of thing. That’s on a daily basis.”

Conclusion

❧ Future Research Directions

❧ Theoretical Implications

❧ Practical Implications

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