

TWITTER AND RADIO NEWS: A DALLAS-FORT WORTH CASE STUDY

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This study of radio news stations adds to the field of Twitter research into broadcasters' use of this social media microblogging platform; previous research has predominantly focused on television. This case study, based on a survey with numerous open-ended questions completed in face-to-face interviews, begins to fill in data on how Twitter is being used in major market radio station newsrooms. Limited in scope, this exploratory study used answers from seven members of two radio newsrooms in trying to find out if there were stated goals for tweets; if separate, unique content was being tweeted or was content tied to the stations' on-air product; how tweets seek to increase station listenership and/or increase station website traffic; what were the most frequently tweeted topics; what hyperlinks were included in tweets for internal or external web content; and were tweets personal and/or opinionated, or kept more professional with just factual material. From a strategic management theory standpoint, there is neither a stated plan nor goals sought with these newsrooms' use of Twitter. Unique tweet content includes sending out photos which add visuals to the pictureless world of radio news and live-tweeting of ongoing news events, while complementary content is promotional to push audience members to on-air or website products. There are no analytics in place to try to determine whether the stations' listenership or web traffic increases based on tweets. Promotional teases of upcoming on-air guest interviews or news content and/or web content are the most frequently tweeted topics. Hashtags rather than hyperlinks are more often included in the stations'

tweets. News personnel stay away from expressing opinions, or being too personal in tweets, but remain more objective and professional by sticking to facts which is in step with the traditional role of journalists.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study examines two Dallas-Fort Worth radio news stations' use of Twitter. Utilizing a strategic management framework to determine whether there are plans, policies, and/or goals in place from the business operation side, this study will investigate if, and to what end, Twitter is being used by the stations. If it is being used, what is the intention of its use and how is it being used, i.e., what is being tweeted. Strategic management theory is a way to look at whether these stations are using Twitter as a resource to try to maintain any kind of competitive advantage over their competitors (Raduan, Jegak, Haslinda, & Alimin, 2009).

With its emergence in 2006 and wide acceptance within a year (Carlson, 2011), Twitter is still developing and evolving as a platform. As such, Twitter is a fertile area for study. No other such study of radio news broadcasters' use of Twitter appears to have been done yet and, while limited in scope to just two stations – and both of which are owned by one company – this study will open a path for future work. This study will investigate whether there is a contemplated plan for utilizing Twitter by these radio broadcasters or whether such use is merely an a posteriori exercise.

Radio News and Twitter

News has been an integral part of radio broadcasting since its earliest days; for example, a 1920 broadcast of the Harding-Cox presidential race election vote counts

(G. Douglas, 1987; California Historical Radio Society, n.d.), President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "fireside chats" (Albarran & Pitts, 2001; G. Douglas, 1987; National Museum of American History, n.d.), coverage of the 1937 Hindenburg crash in New Jersey (Schechter & Anthony, 1975; History of WLS, n.d.), and Edward R. Murrow's CBS broadcasts during World War II from London (Sperber, 1986). Schoenherr (2002) notes Murrow created radio's first regular 15-minute daily news broadcast in 1938 on CBS called the *World Today*.

Before radio stations made delivery of news and information a regular staple of programming in the 1930s, news was primarily written by newspaper journalists, shared with other papers via – with some content also created by – wire services, printed in papers, and delivered to people (Jackaway, 1994). A number of newspapers owned a bevy of radio stations, but the Associated Press (AP) warned its newspaper members in 1922 not to broadcast material from its newswire (Danna, 1975). Coverage of the 1924 presidential election was radio's first major political news event with many stations staying on the air after midnight providing voting results interspersed with musical interludes – "newspapers were annoyed to have been scooped by radio" (Sterling & Kittross, 2002, p. 86). Newspapers' ensuing attempts to restrict radio news failed since many people viewed it as an unnecessary limitation of disseminating news by a competing medium (Sterling & Kittross, 2002). Radio gave birth to modern broadcast journalism, with specific credit given by Cloud and Olson (1996) to Edward R. Murrow for providing direction for his "band of correspondents" at CBS during World War II. Decades worth of traditions in radio and TV news started during radio's war broadcasts from 1941 through 1945 (Sterling & Kittross, 2002). As of March 31, 2016, there are

15,491 radio stations in the United States – 4, 680 AM stations; 6,715 FM commercial stations; and 4,096 FM educational (non-commercial) stations (FCC, 2016). News/Talk and All News top the 2015 list of most listened to radio formats in the U.S. among people age 6 and older as compiled by the audience rating company Nielsen (2015, December).

Twitter debuted on March 21, 2006, with a tweet from co-founder Jack Dorsey: “just setting up my twttr” (Twitter, 2016; Wauters, 2012). Here are some highlights from Twitter’s (2016) own list of significant moments that intersect with journalism: hashtags – the # symbol used together with keyword(s) – debuted in August 2007 allowing linkage curation of tweets; a photo from the crash landing of a US Airways plane in New York City’s Hudson River was tweeted in January 2009 before traditional media even knew of the incident (this event is detailed in Chapter 2 below); Egypt’s pro-democracy movement played out on Twitter in January 2011; the unlaunched Periscope live video streaming platform was acquired by Twitter in March 2015 and went live two months later; and furthering the concept of hashtags, the platform began rolling out its new Moments function in October 2015 with human curators aggregating tweets of information, video, photographs, and/or hyperlinks on a few, selected topics in constantly moving, or evolving, windows of time. As I conducted on my initial research work on this paper, I found it interesting that I first heard about the August 11, 2014, death of entertainer Robin Williams from a tweet. I am a professional journalist and scan various news sources every day, but I find myself often being alerted about breaking news by tweets and then searching for additional information with my access to the AP newswire or other online news sources.

The Pew Research Center (2012) found that urban dwellers used a wide array of digital sources for information “including internet searches, Twitter, blogs and the websites of local TV stations and newspapers,” but suburban residents rely more often on radio for news, traffic reports, and information on arts/cultural events, restaurants, and taxes – reliance on radio is probably due to the length of their commutes. While delivery of news content over the air on U.S. radio stations, both commercial and non-commercial, was traditionally a form of linear or one-way communication, the advent of the Internet began opening the path for two-way communication, albeit a limited path.

This study will investigate the Twitter platform – which utilizes the Internet to provide immediate short bursts of communication – and its use by two U.S. major market radio news stations to try to see how their newsrooms use tweets with any strategic management plan as ways to push their product and/or brand, invite their audience members to provide feedback, add to their news product with supplementary information, or to acquire news story tips from listeners. While Ferguson and Greer (2011) provided an overview comparison of the kinds of tweets being sent by radio stations programming music versus news, my research is an exploratory case study of specifically radio newsrooms which will hopefully lead to future, and perhaps broader, examinations of Twitter’s use by radio journalists.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Radio, the Internet, and Twitter

Mass communication dates to cave dwellers who yelled warnings to others within earshot, then technology was added with the use of sound making devices such as bells or horns and the progression continued: the printing press, the Pony Express, the electrical telegraph, the telephone, and then broadcasting (Sterling & Kittross, 2002). Radio, or wireless as it was first known, was “a logical extension of wired telegraphy and telephony ... [and] communication could take place as rapidly ... [without] a physical connection” (Sterling & Kittross, 2002, p. 21-22). As opposed to wired devices, radio communication signals could be heard by anyone tuning a receiver to the proper frequency with early stations serving as “basic communication systems, transmitters of messages that were meant to facilitate commerce and protect the health and well-being of U.S. citizens” (Messere, 2010, p. 1).

In the early 1900s, radio’s first practical use was “to communicate with ships at sea and for military communications” (Albarran & Pitts, 2001, p. 17). With the medium still in its infancy, following the Titanic disaster, the Radio Act of 1912 was focused not on broadcasting but on point-to-point, or two-way, communication to try to ensure the safety of passengers and crews aboard ships at sea and on America’s Great Lakes; the Act also gave the president the power to suspend broadcasts during a war (S. Douglas, 1987). Corporate entities – Radio Corporation of America (RCA), General Electric Corporation (GE), and American Telephone & Telegraph Company (AT&T) – became giants in the field focusing on the new technology’s point-to-point use, not on the

potential that young RCA visionary David Sarnoff saw for radio to become a “household utility” (G. Douglas, 1987, p. 2). But it was hobbyists who were the early radio broadcasters, then others began experimenting with providing limited news and music programming until President Woodrow Wilson invoked his authority in 1917 to stop private citizens from broadcasting to prevent amateurs from interfering with military communications during World War I (Lule, 2012).

Following the Armistice, there was an effort – it actually began before the U.S. became involved in the war – for stronger government control of the wireless technology similar to Europe, but a growing outcry of opposition led President Wilson to require “all seized stations” be given back to their owners by March 1920 (Sterling & Kittross, 2002). G. Douglas (1987) points out most historians mark the November 2, 1920, Harding-Cox presidential election returns broadcast by KDKA in Pennsylvania as “the beginning of radio broadcasting as we know it today” (p. 1). In the following months, commercial broadcasts on radio got underway with a number of stations owned by profit-seeking businesses that ran ads akin to today’s public broadcasting underwriting announcements – “a genteel sales message broadcast in ‘business’ (daytime) hours, with no hard sell or mention of price” (Sterling & Kittross, 2002, p. 124).

In the late 20th century, the technological advances utilized by stations evolved with the Internet and social media to give AM and FM broadcasters new ways to connect with listeners. Lind and Medoff (1999) found stations primarily used their websites to add to their connection with audience members. Lin and Jeffres (2001) went further with a content analysis which showed most radio websites featured “content associated with self-promotion, as well as ‘links to government sites’ and

'technical features'" (p. 564) – and giving “‘community service’ information as a means of attracting listeners” ... and ‘build[ing] brand identity by promoting their stations’” (p. 568). In a review of FM station website homepages, Potter (2002) saw stations offering “a contact email address, and information about talent and ‘station events’” (p. 375), but were not effectively using the platform to connect and interact with their audiences. Pitts and Harms (2003) looked at the promotional aspect of AM and FM stations’ websites and found that while most still failed to provide their audiences with avenues to fully interact with station personnel, almost 20% of the sites allowed direct interaction with the DJs. As the adoption of the new Internet platform spread, “news organizations embraced the Web ... because owners believed it was an economic necessity” (Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes, & Wilhoit, 2007, p. 55). The utilization of online communication has remained to be important for broadcasters. Abelman (2005) concluded websites were being used to assist in both branding and promotions for several stations, especially those switching frequencies in a market.

As the 21st century dawned, the broadcasters’ paradigm continued to shift with Internet entrepreneurs creating products for the burgeoning world of computers that now begin to merge with the mobile telephone. Facebook appeared in 2004 (Phillips, 2007; Carlson, 2010) and Twitter in 2006 with fewer than 5,000 users – but Twitter exploded into a hit in spring 2007 at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Interactive conference in Austin, Texas (Java, Song, Finin, & Tseng, 2007; Carlson, 2011). According to Nielsen (2009), people began taking to Twitter quickly, with use increasing 3,712% year over year compared to 699% for Facebook. Twitter is a microblog with succinct text updates of no more than 140 characters with information about someone’s

status, opinions, activities, or retweets of another person's posted information (Java et al., 2007). People can share extra facts or provide support for their statements in their tweets with links, however, it is prudent to use a link shortening web service such as TinyURL (<http://tinyurl.com>) or Bitly (<http://bitly.com>) as an aid to staying within the 140 character limit of a tweet (Phuvipadawat & Murata, 2010). While Twitter is used in all kinds of ways by different people, tweets may be seen as always giving some information about someone's identity (O'Banion, Birnbaum, & Hammond, 2012).

In a Pew Internet report, Lehnhart and Fox (2009) found broadcasters were using Twitter to communicate with listeners and also disseminate news. Farhi (2009) also wrote about journalists' use of Twitter to not only provide news updates, but also to get news tips. Krishnamurthy et al. (2008) found Twitter being used by online radio stations to provide currently playing song information while *The New York Times*, BBC, and some other media members pushed news headlines. Kaye and Johnson (2003) found people were spending more time seeking political information from online media, but were not changing their use of "traditional media."

While some digital audio technologies provide an alternative to radio, the AM and FM bands still provide important local connections (Albarran et al., 2007). Radio was also noted as still being "a highly popular source of news for Americans" (The State of the News Media, 2009, para 1). Twitter has bolstered broadcasters' ability to quickly disseminate news such as California fires in 2008 (Lehnhart & Fox, 2009), the 2009 Iranian election and ensuing protests (Parr, 2009), and the 2009 death of Michael Jackson (Oloffson & Snyder, 2009). A study by Webster (2009) showed Twitter users were quite active in consuming online news.

Freedman (2014) calls himself a “dinosaur” and lays out some insightful thoughts about how he and other older broadcast journalists have to make use of advancing platforms because the Internet has changed deadlines from traditional evening newscasts into “hourly if not constant” (para. 2) deadlines. Freedman felt that when online social media were beginning “most tweets and Facebook postings, even by fellow journalists... [were] self-serving and mundane” (para. 4), but he now makes tweets and posts part of his work flow and finds his online images and words often “tell a story of their own” (para. 6) which invites interactions with viewers as broadcasting moves into being a two-way communication business. In Carr’s (2010) compelling case for Twitter’s long term survival amid the many come and go Internet fads, there was a standout note about *Time* magazine referring to Twitter as becoming similar to plumbing which is important since “plumbing is eternal” (para. 9). Just as plumbing provides part of the central infrastructure for modern, civilized societies, Twitter seems to be entering the permanent part of modern communication because of its characteristics of what is termed the real-time Web. Fromm (2009) helped define

that the real-time Web... 1) is a new form of communication, 2) creates a new body of content, 3) is real time, 4) is public and has an explicit social graph associated with it, 5) carries an implicit model of federation (para. 4).

Johnson (2009) was initially skeptical of Twitter, but came to the realization of the depth of the service due to hashtags which enabled searches that “fundamentally changed the rules of engagement ... [and] the sum total of those tweets added up to something truly substantive, like a suspension bridge made of pebbles” (para. 10). Tracking its growth, Weil (2010) gave a report from Twitter’s internal analytics team indicating the number of tweets per day grew from 5,000 in 2007 to 50 million in 2010

which is “an average of 600 tweets per second” (para. 2) which he credited in large part on retweets. Lenhart and Fox (2009) also point out that more than 10% of people using the Internet signed up for Twitter accounts within its first three years. In the sphere of Twitter, unlike many social networking sites, there is no requirement of reciprocity – users follow others or are followed (Kwak, Lee, Park, & Moon, 2010).

Java et al. (2007) believe Twitter as a microblog allows fulfillment of faster communication since a user might send several tweets in one day versus bloggers updating content every few days. Citing research in 2009 of Americans who use social web sites, Doctor (2010) found 49% claimed to use Facebook for news and 20% did so with Twitter. Doctor stressed that the changing dynamics of the news presentation paradigm meant the leaders of some news organizations encouraged or demanded that news staff members “promote their stories (and themselves) routinely through social media” (p. 46). The Pew Research Center (2015) found a big jump in the number of American social media users depending on the platforms as news sources with 63% of both Twitter and Facebook users saying they used the services to keep up with news as it happened.

In a personal narrative after taking part in a study of several journalists living together while only getting their news content from Twitter, Tremblay (2010) discovered journalists’ personal tweets are retweeted much more often than are the official tweets with hyperlinks to stories from newspapers and broadcast newsrooms’ websites. Tremblay felt this indicated Twitter users had stronger “personal engagement” when a writer or journalist tweeted his or her own story which could lead to more clicks on

embedded links, possibly gathering new followers, and informing more people about the news.

Taking a longitudinal look, Purcell (2012) compared computer use between 2000 and 2012 – from the days of slower connections centered on a desktop computer with information flowing primarily one way to faster, mobile devices that allow for portable information flow that is participatory and personal. Purcell noted 88% of adults in the U.S. have cell phones (46% of those are smartphones) and 65% of American adults make use of social networking websites with more than a third of Internet users becoming “news participators” (p. 17). That means they are contributing content, making comments about, or disseminating news on social media platforms.

Adoption and Use of Twitter by Broadcasters

In the early 1990s, online social networks emerged as popular platforms (Krishnamurthy, Gill, & Arlitt, 2008). While Facebook became a community gathering place for friends, Moon and Hadley (2014) felt Twitter became “increasingly relevant for the journalism profession” (p. 292). Ferguson and Greer (2011) found among broadcasters that television had more quickly adopted Twitter than had radio, but the authors believe the potential is greater for radio to increase Twitter use since existing and potential audiences are more mobile. The authors’ research showed music stations gathered more listeners with “promotional tweets” while news programmers were building audience with tweets of news updates. Twitter has been compared to a “broadcast medium” with news organizations looking to make use of social media platforms to add distribution of their content especially by retweeting (Doctor, 2010;

Webster, 2010). Napoli (2010) views Twitter as a way to redistribute content online, not just produce new content. In an analysis of tweets from newspapers and television stations, Armstrong and Gao (2010) found the topics of crime and public affairs topped the list.

In studies of TV broadcasters' use of Twitter, Greer and Ferguson (2011b) analyzed stations' Twitter feeds and found more than 80% of those sites featured news with only a little content pushing station branding or trying to increase their newscast viewership. In another study, Greer and Ferguson (2011a) found people were mostly accessing weather content online accounting for "roughly half" of the information being sought. The authors determined "attention to news on Twitter is not simply trivial" (p. 53) with stories on politics, business, disasters or accidents, and sports falling in behind weather as the top attention-getting online content. Moon and Hadley (2014) felt Twitter "has distinctive characteristics that allow it to function as a more prominent partner for news media than other social networking sites" (p. 289). Different skills are also needed in the computerized newsrooms of today's world with Duffy (2015) defining the modern day workflow for a radio news reporter as: "Twitter > Website > On-Air > Facebook (linking back to website story)" (para. 13).

In trying to discern the influence of online social networks, Huberman, Romero, and Wu (2008) found "attention" is a precious resource of the Internet and that Twitter users may follow lots of people, but only regularly communicate with a few of those people as either Daily Active Users (DAUs) or Monthly Active Users (MAUs). Heil and Piskorski (2009) found 90% of tweets were coming from the top 10% of the most active Twitter users. Twitter is a noisy medium with facts and rumors jumbled quickly in a

large volume of tweets and retweets – facts and rumors together – that arrive as soon as the system receives them (Sankaranarayanan, Samet, Teitler, Lieberman, & Sperling, 2009; Hermida, 2010a; Jackoway, Samet, & Sankaranarayanan, 2011). Sankaranarayanan et al. proposed an algorithm to wade through all the tweets to recognize breaking news so that Twitter could then partially resemble a news wire service with additional filtering to keep clusters of tweets from getting too diffuse since the goal was to have as little lag time as possible between news information creation and audience reception. Jackoway et al. proposed a methodology to sift out Twitter users who post the most reliable information and to limit some of the noise by “discarding tweets that clearly cannot be news” (p. 27). Phelan, McCarthy, and Smyth (2009) developed an algorithm to recommend news stories to Twitter users based on their content preferences selected from RSS (Really Simple Syndication) and Twitter feeds. This would maximize someone’s attention resource for news stories. Much of the literature on Twitter and personalization is not focused on how users send and receive personal messages, or have a personal give and take with a journalist or even a celebrity, but are instead studies of how to fine-tune the selection of tweets a person aggregates (Abel, Gao, Houben, & Tao, 2011; El-Arini, Paquet, Herbrich, Gael, & Agüera y Arcas, 2012; Fiaidhi, Mohammed, & Islam, 2012; Han & Lee, 2012; O’Banion, Birnbaum, & Hammond, 2012; Phelan, McCarthy, & Smyth, 2009; Phelan, McCarthy, Smyth, & Bennett, 2011).

As Twitter gained in popularity, journalists found it to be a valuable tool in finding sources for stories, but news organizations overall had difficulty using it as more than just another channel of disseminating their existing news content. Messner, Linke, and

Eford (2012) found traditional news outlets were quick to fully accept the new microblogging platform, but were “not using Twitter as a community-building tool, nor ... engaging with their audiences on a frequent basis” (p. 83). Messner et al. discovered it was not being used regularly by news media organizations for anything other than tweeting about existing news stories with many television stations merely linking to their own websites “like a streaming RSS service for news stories that promotes and re-distributes previously published news content” (p. 84). A shortcoming of this study was the lack of research into individual Twitter accounts for TV news anchors, reporters, editors, or producers.

Herrera-Damas and Hermida (2014) discussed how media organizations’ use of Twitter mostly adopted the pattern of Internet use more than ten years earlier and gave radio an extra tool to “foster a sense of ambient intimacy ... by offering one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many exchanges” (p. 483). While focused on three radio news talk stations in Canada, Herrera-Damas and Hermida found Twitter was being used to provide headline news, but “had yet to grasp the conversational aspect ... [nor the] marketing and promotional platform” of Twitter (p. 486-487). Rare use of hashtags coupled with how these stations were using Twitter suggested an ongoing “one-way, broadcast approach to Twitter, rather than a two-way model of interaction” and was frequently used to push audiences to the stations’ own websites instead of “directing users to the most appropriate and relevant information” (p. 494). Crawford (2009) pointed out that radio broadcasters had yet to fully make use of the new platform and embrace the concept that “unlike radio, which is a one-to-many medium, Twitter is many-to-many” (p. 528). Crawford draws the comparison of radio to Twitter in that both

have content flows that oscillate between important and trivial which requires “tuning in / tuning out” (p. 529) or attentive listening (focused reading) / background listening (superficial reading).

Another aspect of Twitter usage in a nationally framed study by Moon and Hadley (2014) excludes radio in an examination of seven prominent newsrooms of legacy newspaper and television media: *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, Fox News Network, and CNN. While that yearlong content analysis study found more than one-third (35.5%) of the stories used Twitter material as the only source in those “elite newspapers,” three networks, and two major cable channels, it would have been more revealing about the broader spectrum of media to have included prominent radio networks, too; AP Radio News and National Public Radio (NPR) come to mind. Citing material from Twitter as the sole source may seem haphazard given the traditional journalistic ethos of relying on credible and verified information, it must be noted the findings showed “mainstream media relied more on the Twitter feeds of traditional official sources than on those of non-official sources” (p. 299).

Use of Twitter for Marketing

Burton and Soboleva (2011) blamed a lack of effective and efficient use of Twitter by corporate marketing departments on a dearth of theoretical or empirical research of Twitter use by organizations. While there were no broadcasters in this study, Burton and Soboleva found some businesses were making wide use of Twitter albeit without a definitive strategy and highlighted one – Microsoft US – as utilizing

“retweets, hyperlinks, and hashtags to promote positive messages, especially by independent influential individuals” (p. 497). The use of messages from people outside a company give a certain credibility to apparent endorsements. Some businesses make use of Twitter for electronic and online word of mouth communicating with customers (Jansen, Zhang, Sobel, & Chowdury, 2009a & 2009b) and for viral marketing (Asur & Huberman, 2010). Jansen et al., (2009b) cited the short tweets as a positive platform to have direct connections with customers in near real time to “build and enhance customer relationships” (p. 2186).

Studying television Twitter accounts, Greer and Ferguson (2011b) found news stories were tweeted frequently, but tweets were rarely used to encourage viewers to watch the stations’ newscasts or other programming. Popescu and Jain (2011) found businesses largely tweeting updates or announcements about the company, often with hyperlinks, and to a lesser degree sending opinions or advice and customer service. An early concern raised by Power and Forte (2008) urged organizations to make sure policies were in place to cover communications made through Twitter and other social media platforms to ensure company secrets were not transmitted around the world.

Overall, in the realm of public relations, there has been skepticism about gauging social media’s benefit to the bottom line. DiStaso, McCorkindale, and Wright (2011) explored communication/public relations executives’ ideas about social media with a majority feeling social media was important in having conversational engagement with customers and “as a cost effective way to receive greater reach for research” (p. 327). This report indicated a need for training people in organizations how to use social media

and having controls in place with policies about using social media to try to better understand these emerging platforms' effectiveness.

Braided Journalism

One of the new ways of reporting news involves regular people becoming journalists by using Twitter. Israel (2009) coined the term "braided journalism" (p. 184) and continues to explore the convergence of novices as journalists with that of reporters still practicing the traditional role of journalism. Israel gave definition to

three strands to braided journalism, each comprising a great many fibers 1. **Traditional Media** ... [which continues] publishing news to derive ad revenues. 2. **Citizen Journalism** ... [which is] reporting of news by amateurs ... for free because they believe others should be informed. 3. **Social Media** ... where traditional and citizen journalism touch and braid into the very fiber of social media [on the Internet]" (p. 184-185).

Israel cites numerous news events that have brought this to the forefront with Twitter at its core, such as the coordinated 13 Mumbai bombings in March 1993, China's Sichuan earthquake in 2008 (detailed in a later section), the US Airways crash landing in New York's Hudson River in 2009, and Iran's elections in 2009. Israel notes that traditional media have fewer "feet on the street," but social media abounds with "millions of feet on a great many of the world's streets" when news breaks (p. 195). But Israel notes how important the work of traditional reporters is with their discipline, ethics and professionalism as they maintain standards of excellence in presenting news stories. Israel (2011b) believes social media and blogs have joined the world of traditional journalism in that "we are now the media" (para. 8).

Currier (2014) promotes the effort for passage of "a federal media shield law" which would protect journalists from being compelled by the government to testify about

their sources used in writing news stories. But Currier notes the issue is contentious “over the definition of the word journalist [and] could disadvantage bloggers and other non-traditional journalists” (para. 4). Citing an Oregon case, Israel believes a blogger deserves journalistic Shield Law protection even though the author adds a caution against slandering someone in a blog post, that is, using defamatory terms about someone unless it is true since “truth is the ultimate defense of libel” (para. 6). Murthy (2011) notes “the brevity inherent to Twitter as a medium shapes” how it is used and allows individual tweets about breaking news to give Twitter users short-lived fame before the public’s attention turns to more detailed coverage provided by professional media outlets (p. 779-780). Napoli (2010) asserted that Twitter was among a small group of platforms “in which the individual audience member operates on nearly equal footing with traditional institutional communicators” (p. 509). Napoli notes the difference in today’s world is people have the ability to “*distribute* content” that they have created, along with a person’s ability to also circulate “traditional media content,” via the Internet. This allows more and more people to become journalists; albeit amateurs get thrown into the mix with professionals which often requires more skepticism from recipients to ferret out the informational truth from rumor or erroneous material.

Hermida (2010b) refers to this phenomena as ambient journalism with Twitter especially serving as a key medium allowing citizens to participate in observing, selecting and filtering, then interpreting and distributing accounts of news events alongside professional journalists. Twitter has changed the news paradigm by providing “both a one-to-many and many-to-many framework that is public, archived and searchable” (para. 4). Before Twitter even came along in 2006, Williams and Carpini

(2000) predicted online platforms would increase people's ability to take part in the journalism process.

Israel (2009) highlights the "single moment when braided journalism came together" (p. 200) on January 15, 2009, when Janis Krums took a photo with his iPhone of US Airways Flight 1549 after it made an emergency water landing in New York's Hudson River, used TwitPic to send it to the rest of the world and in not too much time got a call from MSNBC for a live interview. Israel notes Krums spoke with "all major TV networks and a great many newspapers around the world" (p. 201) in the 48 hours after shooting his famous iconic picture. The merging of journalism resources between professionals and citizens allows for wider and deeper coverage of news events.

Lowery (2009) noted a more localized event that brought an "aha' moment in experiencing how social media, Twitter, in particular, opens up new possibilities in journalism" (p. 33). On Thursday, March 5, 2009, an early morning natural gas explosion leveled half a block of downtown Bozeman, Montana, and no "local news organization had a reporter on the scene" (p. 32). But in the town with a population at the time of less than 40,000 people (U.S. Census, 2015), "those on Twitter were ... acting as a larger reporting team than any individual news organization in the community could have mustered" (p. 32). Lowery wrote that his online news organization – located 200 miles away in Missoula – changed its behavior after the Bozeman explosion: stopping the automated functionality of their Twitter feed, removing their Twitter link to their Facebook page, "treating their Twitter feed as a separate product" (p.33), and getting a new duty added to his job to "spend meaningful time on [both] Twitter and Facebook" (p. 34). The author included information that

Twitter was not in widespread use in remote Montana, but news organizations' reporters "filtered the information and confirmed facts ... using the information and pushing it to the broader public" (p. 34).

Israel (2011a) saw braided journalism become mainstream when *The New York Times* tweeted a request for content from citizens on scenes where few journalists were allowed access. Israel (2012) also took part in an experiment with three other freelance journalists in which Dell Computer had them interview various departments' managers. A Dell corporate communications staff member then made assignments and set deadlines for the journalists to complete stories derived from their interviews with the caveat that content of the completed works would not be changed by anyone at the company, but any of the finished pieces could be killed for any reason. The content was then posted to a Dell sponsored website, which Israel notes looked like a news magazine but was an experiment that Dell did not continue and the site was taken down. Maltoni (2010) wonders if the Dell experiment could be a hallmark of future public relations work. Maltoni feels journalists embedded with businesses could benefit the economic market by adding credibility and context with more complete stories that include the voices of companies, customers, and non-customers.

One man who has embraced and made wide use of braided, or citizen journalism is Andy Carvin, NPR's senior strategist for social media. Farhi (2011) noted Carvin began tweeting soon after Twitter's 2006 launch and has carved his own niche for "another flavor of journalism" (para. 15). Farhi suggests Carvin could be called a "tweet curator" or "social-media news aggregator" or "interactive digital journalist" (para. 14). Carvin tries to make it clear that his sources on Twitter – tweeps he calls them – often

provide him with unconfirmed information and he puts fact-checking and skepticism in the open by sending his tweets or retweets of such information “preceded by a question, ‘Source?’” (Stelter, 2011, para. 5). Carvin’s “one-man Twitter news bureau” for NPR (Farhi, 2011, para. 4) has also moved beyond traditional, mainstream media in making graphic video or photos available to the general public – at least to those who follow Carvin on Twitter. Carvin believes the newsworthiness of graphic imagery is important to be available for people to make their own individual choices about whether to view it or to simply not click on a link that he has clearly labeled with blunt language about its contents (Schumacher-Matos, 2012).

Twitter for Breaking News

Buttry (2012) used the July 20, 2012, movie theater massacre in Aurora, Colorado, to illustrate his belief that “breaking news is one of the most important ways journalists can use Twitter” (para. 2). The author also wrote about using hashtags in tweets to “reach the larger audience following that hashtag [and not] to use competing hashtags in a story like this. If one outlet starts a good hashtag like #theatershooting, other media should use it” (para. 21, 24).

Farhi (2010) points out the immediacy of Twitter in the September 2010 case of a gunman walking into the headquarters of the Discovery Channel in suburban Washington, D.C. – the news did not come from “radio, TV or newspaper Web sites, at least not at first” (para. 3). It was Twitter and its photo-sharing service Twitpic that alerted the world and journalists about what was unfolding at a national cable television network’s home. Blasingame (2011a) notes traditional journalism, be it newspapers or

broadcasters, have performed the role of “gatekeeper” in vetting facts in stories and controlling the flow of news content whereas Twitter has claimed the role of “gatejumper” by taking news directly to the audience as raw, unfiltered, and sometimes erroneous information. Before Twitter was developed and in use as a microblog there were longer blog posts being made by some journalists. Singer (2003) studied the ongoing discussions among journalists and their professional organizations about changes with news content being posted on the web and the large ethical dilemma over the capacity for speed which can make online journalism “untrustworthy” since it emphasizes “getting information fast rather than getting it right” (p. 152). This can sometimes be evidenced by television’s 24-hour news cycle when national networks produce wall-to-wall coverage of a news event that leads to misstatements, then to retractions and apologies. Garrison (2000) also found journalists being cautious about too much reliance on sources from the Web because of concerns with whether the information was credible and could be verified. Twitter ramped the speed factor up even higher with information coming directly from the scene of news events either from participants or witnesses. In studying how some journalism practices are shifting because of “social media tools,” Hermida (2010a) uses coverage of two stories by the BBC that included unverified tweets along with their correspondents’ material that showed some “filtering and selecting” was being done to maintain and enforce “the gatekeeper role.” Even before the onslaught of Twitter, Singer (2001) studied the changing role of newspapers providing readers with news in light of the growing availability of online news and found journalists’ “traditional gatekeeping” role was

“evolving out of the recognition that the Web offers the ultimate, so far, post-modern medium” in which users aggregate stories “important to him or her” (p. 78).

The gatekeeper/gatejumper role was studied in detail by Blasingame (2011b) in a review of how four San Antonio television news departments handled a multiple murder-suicide that occurred between the evening’s early and late newscast times. In this case, Blasingame found Twitter being used by gatejumpers who delivered breaking news information instead of the high-level news anchor gatekeeper which helps highlight that “the pecking order of traditional gatekeeping is irrelevant to a Twitter audience” (p. 21). Outside of breaking news situations, Blasingame’s content analysis of 60 Twitter accounts spread among these four TV news departments showed the primary use of the accounts was promoting upcoming newscasts or stories on the stations’ websites.

Deuze (2003) wrote about how the Internet became a new destination for some older activities with traditional media largely continuing a one-way model of “we write, you read” that was slowly beginning to change as the 21st century got underway (p. 220). In studying how Twitter provides people a major new communication tool, Lasorsa, Lewis, and Holton (2012) found professional journalists’ tweets were “offering opinions quite freely ... which deviates from their traditional professional conventions” (p. 30). Journalists giving their opinions could be due to the aforementioned brevity of Twitter – 140 characters per tweet does not leave a lot of room for subtle storytelling.

In Twitter’s infancy, the highest rates of adoption of the new microblogging platform were in North America, Europe, and Asia (Java et al., 2007). By crossing continental boundaries, Twitter is popular globally. Among the evidence of Twitter’s use in people’s lives, Parr (2009) tracked several social media platforms’ message content

during the election in Iran and found an immense use of Twitter culminating in a peak of 221,744 tweets in one hour with the hashtag #IranElection. Parr noted the U.S. government saw how Iranians were relying on sending tweets to communicate about the election and asked Twitter to reschedule the company's server maintenance and downtime to try to make sure Iranians' conversations were not interrupted.

Li and Rao (2010) documented Twitter usage during China's 2008 Sichuan earthquake when people spread information "through text messages, instant messages, and micro-blogging services, such as 'Twitter'" (p. 3) because overloaded cellular networks could not handle the level of communication needed to provide the enormous aid required for disaster victims. Spreading news quickly (O'Brien, 2008) was highlighted by Farrar (2009) who cited a Netpop Research study that "more than 90% of Chinese broadband users use social media, compared to 76% in the United States" (para. 10). Looking into the tremendous growth of social media sites, Pérez-Latre (2013) noted "Twitter ... [will have] a place in the history of communications" (p. 46-47).

Twitter as a News Medium

While journalists have begun relying more on information gleaned from Twitter as sources for stories or at least a starting point for further investigation to create a story, Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveira (2012) believe Twitter has become a news medium. Gleason (2010) also notes nearly every media outlet have Twitter accounts with some entities also dedicating staff members' time to only handling this platform.

Early in Twitter's life, Kwak et al. (2010) gave light to this social media's ability to disseminate information quickly to a wide-ranging audience with "retweet trees as

communication channels [that] reach an average of 1,000 users no matter what the number of followers is of the original tweet” (p. 599-600). The aspect of retweeting could be inferred from Twitter co-founder Biz Stone’s announcement about how the original conception of Twitter as a “mobile status update service” with people posting tweets that answered the question “What are you doing?” had changed in only three years since people were posting answers to the “more immediate question, ‘What’s happening?’ with such things as “witnessing accidents ... sharing links, [and] breaking news” (Stone, 2009). Instead of tweeting about what a great cup of coffee they had just enjoyed, people were tweeting what was going on around them which led to more retweets about important events. Pontin (2007) also noted reservations about tweeting too much personal information and thought if that was all that Twitter was about, it might flounder.

Bruno (2011) described the “Twitter effect” in which news organizations do not have reporters on the ground at a location to cover breaking news and rely on citizens who are generating real-time content that is posted to Twitter and elsewhere online such as Facebook and YouTube. Mackintosh points out that these citizens “are not quite journalists ... tweet[ing] with the intention to ‘break news,’ but rather to document and broadcast events happening their daily lives” (p. 28). Mackintosh also detailed how BBC journalists covered a high profile murder trial in London by relying on tweets from a staff member in the courtroom which gave “a live notebook of information ... [showing] Twitter has turned journalism inside out” (p. 39).

Pew (2015, July) showed that the number of Americans using social media sites as news sources continues rising – 63% of Twitter and 63% of Facebook users say

those platforms are news sources for them. But a higher percentage look to Twitter over Facebook for breaking news coverage at 59% and 31%, respectively; Twitter users also follow news organizations and individual journalists at a higher rate than Facebook, 46% vs. 28%. These Pew numbers show the increased use of social media for getting news tracks across nearly every demographic group – age is the exception on Facebook with younger users, less than 35 years old, more likely than older users to see news there.

Honan (2015) gave a glimpse of a new feature under development for Twitter that was being called Project Lightning with quotes from several company officials in June 2015 just as leadership for the company was about to change with Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey stepping back into the CEO role. Hern (2015) noted the coming release of this project would bolster Twitter's longstanding lead among social media networks for bringing live events to users. When the new feature was released in October 2015 it had been renamed Moments, but the lightning concept was kept with the use of a lightning bolt as the feature's icon nestled in the Twitter app's tabs (Boorstin, 2015; Newton, 2015; Pierce, 2015; Wagner, 2015). Moments seeks to "instantly browse the biggest stories on Twitter without having to follow any accounts or search for any hashtags [put together by] a team of human curators" (Boorstin, para. 3, 5). Newton notes Moments "sounds like Twitter is now running a media company inside a technology company" (para. 11). Calling Moments "very much the future of Twitter" (para. 5), Pierce wrote that the curators would be posting "collections of tweets, images, videos, anything you can find on Twitter today" (para. 3). Much of this feature's effort is aimed at increasing Twitter's number of users without the new account holders

having to learn much at all about using the platform and being able to quickly see what is happening in the moment – once everything in the tab has been scanned, it advises the user to check back later to see what has changed. Three years before Moments was available, Mackintosh (2012) characterized Twitter as “a live newswire ... the *new* newswire of our digital age” (p. 6) and now it has enhanced that position.

Twitter and Radio News Demographics

While Webster (2010) found an estimated 17 million users of Twitter in early 2010, Sherman (2014) cited analytics firm Twopcharts’ finding that there were 974 million Twitter accounts, but most are inactive; with Twitter itself claiming in the last quarter of 2013 of having “241 million active users, defined as people who logged in at least once a month” (para. 2). The statistics website Statista (2016) culled Twitter’s records which indicated the platform posted in the fourth quarter of 2015 the first decline of Monthly Active Users (MAUs) of Twitter worldwide – down to 302 million from a high mark in just the previous quarter of 307 million. Java et al. (2007) identified Twitter users’ main intentions fell into the categories of daily chatter – postings of daily routines or activities (most common and largest user of Twitter), conversations – using the @ symbol for direct messaging, sharing information/URLs – sending out something the user found interesting with frequent use of a URL shortening service, and reporting news – posts of recent news and comments about events.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project has kept track of Twitter usage, at first lumping it together with other social media platforms until giving Twitter its own category of study in November 2010. In spring 2008, 6% of American Internet users

made online postings of status updates using Twitter or other microblogging service; in winter/spring 2009, 11% of those Internet users did so; and by August 2009, the rate hit 19% (Lenhart, 2009). Among the data about those early users of Twitter, Lenhart found they were younger (39% of online adults 18-34 years old in December 2008 which grew to 68% of the users being in that age group by August 2009) and, while ethnically diverse, Twitter users were more often minorities (December 2008 showed Twitter users were 9% white, 15% African-American, and 16% Hispanic versus August 2009 with 19% white, 26% African-American, and 18% Hispanic). The youthfulness of the Twitter crowd could be seen as a limitation to radio news broadcasters' use of tweets since the bulk of the radio news audience skews older as noted below. Also, the Pew Research Internet Project (2014) noted that African Americans have consistently used Twitter at higher levels than whites (22% compared to 16% of online users) with even higher rates among younger users mentioned above. Pew research from Lenhart and Fox (2009) determined Twitter users usually had less income and lived in urban areas. This can be attributed to a higher concentration of Twitter use by African-Americans than whites: 40% of 18-29 year old online blacks versus 28% of comparable young whites (Pew Research Internet Project, 2014).

Twitter allows users to stay informed about the latest happenings while on the go. Pew Research Internet Project (2009) information shows Twitter users are more than twice as likely as non-users to read newspaper content via smartphone, cell phone, or online while also deriving a primary utility from Twitter by "learning about and sharing relevant and recent nuggets of information" (para. 1). Additional Pew Research (2008) classified Americans' news consumption into groups: 23% were Integrators,

getting news from traditional sources and the Internet; 13% were Net Newsters, relying more on the Internet than traditional sources; 46% were Traditionalists, “an older, less educated, and less affluent” (para. 5) group more often tuning in for TV news; and 14% were Disengaged, that is having little interest in news and often not receiving any news in a given day.

Purcell et al. (2010) provide some excellent statistical breakdowns showing audiences who get news from radio is made up of people primarily “ages 30-64, college graduates, and those using Internet and cell phones” (p. 21). Going further, “56% of all American adults follow news in general ‘all or most of the time’ and 25% say at least ‘some of the time’” (p. 3). In keeping up with news, “57% of Internet users get radio news regularly compared with 44% of non-users” and “59% of Americans ‘get news from a combination of online and offline sources in a typical day’” (p. 21). Purcell et al. further break down the online use noting “46% of Americans say they get news from four to six media platforms on a typical day; 7% get their news from a single media platform” (p. 2). This study also found “3% of Internet users have used Twitter to post or retweet a link to a news story or blog – that amounts to 18% of Twitter users” (p. 44). A number of people – especially “young online news users” (p. 41) – judge a news organization’s website by the ease of being able to share news and information through social media or email. Pew (2012) found large city residents as the most likely to use Twitter, and therefore also the ones who more frequently tweet local news or information. The Pew Research Center (2015, January) showed 52% of adults who were online in America were using “two or more social media sites, a significant increase from 2013, when it stood at 42% of internet users” (p. 2). The same report

indicated Facebook remained the most popular, while Twitter saw usership increase among several demographics – but only “36% of Twitter users visit the site daily ... a 10-point decrease from the 46% who did so in 2013” (p. 3). These 2015 numbers also show 23% of adult American Internet users, representing 19% of the country’s adult population, were using Twitter with significant growth in college educated, upper income, and urban demographics.

Additionally, in its July report on Americans using Twitter and Facebook as news sources, Pew (2015) noted 8% of adults get news from both social media sites; the total saturation of these platforms across the U.S. adult population was listed as 17% for Twitter and 66% for Facebook. This same report of U.S. adults showed the biggest difference in usage was for those following breaking news events: 59% of Twitter users do so on that service which is nearly double the 31% of Facebook users tracking news as it happens on that platform. One caveat from the researchers in this report is that “the academic community is still learning how audiences respond to differently worded questions on this topic” (p. 11).

In a Pew Internet study, Purcell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel, and Olmstead (2010) found people use Twitter to get news as a supplement to their use of traditional media with 54% of respondents getting news from radio either at home or while driving. The authors found, however, more than 42% of Americans reported a preference for “Twitter over radio” and 54% liked “Twitter over newspapers.” The Pew Research Internet Project (2013) found half of U.S. Twitter users get news using Twitter, with mobile devices being their predominant method for consuming news; 85% of those

users said they get news of some kind on mobile devices. Twitter news consumers were also found to be younger and more educated than the population overall.

In another Pew study, Rainie (2008) predicted news platform distinctions might fade in news consumers' minds – newspapers vs. television vs. Internet vs. radio vs. magazines – “since it is now possible to “watch TV’ on your phone and ‘read the newspaper’ on your laptop...and post breaking news yourself on...Twitter” (para. 11-12). Rainie cited a Pew Research Center For The People & The Press survey which found more than one-third of American adults were getting their news from traditional sources and the Internet, nearly one-half of the population still relied primarily on television news, and 14% reported having little to no interest in news. In an ensuing Pew survey of online news use, Rainie and Purcell (2010) wrote that 53% of American adults were getting their news online and only 35% had a favorite news website which makes it difficult for providers to establish their brand. News providers could benefit from utilizing a social networking strategy since Rainie and Purcell found survey respondents relying on friends and colleagues for news alerts and context of news events. Raine (2012) showed news consumers spent 70 minutes each day in 2010 with news content, of which 15 minutes was spent listening to radio news.

Media Organizations' Social Media Policies

A few media industry trade organizations have encouraged social media guidelines that address ethics when using these new tools. The Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA), the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), and the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) have “specific policies for social media use in reporting that emphasize traditional codes of ethics represented by

credibility and transparency” (Moon & Hadley, 2014, p. 302). Herrera and Requejo (2012) wrote media outlets needed to develop strategies by taking “their time to define and understand the objectives of the service ... [to] stop trying to apply the same old patterns to this new platform, and embrace new behaviors ... [to] turn their audiences into communities” (p. 81). One aspect of building that community is thoughtfully hearing what people are saying, which Sherman (2009) points out as: “The key to successful social media marketing is listening” (para. 4).

Kelly McBride, ethicist at the Poynter Institute, told Betancourt (2009) that newsrooms need guidance and “if you don’t write it down, it’s open to distortion” (para. 5). From McBride’s view of ethics, Twitter is a place where people essentially stand up publicly and shout something which for journalists means the same values preventing them from putting political signs in their front yards carry over to tweets since a journalist would be seen as representing their organization. City University of New York journalism professor Jeff Jarvis (2011) sent a tweet with simple Twitter guidelines, “Rule1: Don’t be stupid. Rule2: If you have to ask what stupid is, you’re too stupid.” Jarvis was echoing and adding an extra rule to *Wall Street Journal* reporter Katie Rosman’s tweet of what a deputy managing editor told her was the best policy about using Twitter (Ingram, 2011). Ingram also wrote, “One of the biggest flaws of most policies is that they spend so much time talking about how bad social media is for the profession, and” little about its usefulness (para. 6).

The BBC’s (2015) social media guidelines start off noting the importance of social media and then hits a significant point in the document’s second sentence that “social media easily blurs the line between the personal and professional” and mistakes

could affect everyone's credibility including "BBC News as a whole" (para. 1). While the document includes a lot of "don'ts," the biggest one is up front with the admonition "Don't do anything stupid" which in the next sentence is translated to "You're a BBC journalist; act like it" (para. 4). The guidelines also encourage BBC staff members to keep in mind what impression any social media activity gives to others, to "be polite," and to avoid "reacting aggressively" (para. 8, 11). The British company also wants its staff to do more than just post to social media about more than their work since it "is all about personality and being human" (para. 15).

The Associated Press' (AP's) revised social media guidelines (2013) start with encouragement for staffers to have social network site accounts that can be used to bolster both AP's brand and the individual journalists' brands. This policy is written more along the lines of what staff members should do after an early admonition that everyone "should not express personal opinions on controversial issues" and later giving a "yes" to allowing comment on things "like sports and entertainment" while pointing out that any tweet will likely "be seen by the target of your comment" (p. 1-2). AP encourages its journalists to tweet links to not only its own content, but also that of competing news organizations, and to live-tweet ongoing events once the staffer has "provide[d] full details to the appropriate news desk for use in AP services" (p. 3). AP also encourages its employees "to share their work on their personal websites and blogs ... [but it] must be clearly identified as AP content" and it should be a hyperlink instead of being uploaded (p. 4). The company with journalists scattered around the world also believes in the community aspect of social media and encourages

engagement with “those who consume our content ... to answer questions ... [but] it’s best to avoid protracted back-and-forth exchanges with angry people” (p. 6).

ESPN (2011) has a much shorter social networking guide that includes bullet points to “think before you tweet ... do not break news on Twitter ... exercise discretion ... [and] receive permission” before posting sports content on social media (para. 2, 4, 6, 9). Reuters (2013) also has a more simplified instruction sheet which is comprised more of ideas for its journalists to consider and keep in mind when using social media rather than a list of do’s and don’ts. It starts by encouraging social media participation while warning “the online world is ... full of pitfalls ... [but wishes] for people to benefit safely from social networks, not to muzzle anyone” (para. 3, 4). Reuters’ guide points out “the trust invested in the judgment of its journalists ... [and encourages] common sense in dealing with these new challenges ... [especially since] journalism has many ‘unsend’ buttons ... social networks have none” (para. 5, 8).

NPR’s guidance on social media is part of a lengthy document on overall ethics for its staff. There are few stated rules, rather NPR (2012) uses broad strokes of concepts within its blocks of definitions of terms including accuracy, honesty, independence, impartiality, accountability, respect, and excellence. The document opens with the caution to “tread carefully” and goes on to point out to “tweet and retweet as if what you’re saying or passing along is information that you would put on the air or in a ‘traditional’ NPR.org news story” (para. 1, 5). There is a reminder that social media are public spaces “and regardless of how careful we are in trying to keep them separate, our professional lives and our personal lives overlap when we’re online ... [so] don’t behave any differently online that you would in any other public setting” (para. 25,

27). The general issue of journalist credibility is addressed, too, with “Don’t be careless. Keep your opinions to yourself” (para. 32).

Louisiana State University journalism professor Steve Buttry includes extensive posts on his blog about media’s use, or encouragement to use, social media. The author frequently posts reactions to news organizations’ release of social media policies with a mix of praise and critiques. Primarily an educator now, after years as a working journalist, Buttry (2009) offered a lengthy and detailed post on getting news people started with this element of social media with the advice “journalists need to use Twitter” since it has many positive uses in their work (para. 3). The author also encouraged newsroom management to allow Twitter use to “help change your newsroom culture ... [and show] you are changing and trying new things” (para. 5). Buttry (2014) added to that encouragement by challenging other writers who said one reason a journalist might be dismissive of Twitter was because only 19 percent of American Internet-using adults were on the platform; Buttry challenged that idea by translating the 19 percent into the more quantifiable figure of 40 million Americans, a better “measure of how big Twitter is” (para. 9).

Strategic Management Theory

A diverse discipline, strategic management theory is seen to include “industrial organization economics, marketing, finance and administrative behavior.” (Snow & Thomas, 1994, p. 457). Raduan et al. (2009) noted this theory reviews the ways in which an organization specifies its objectives and then works to achieve its goals with policies, plans, and resources. Twitter has become an extra, perhaps unplanned,

resource available for use at various levels within companies – product marketing, product branding, promotional goodwill, and customer feedback, just to name a few.

In looking at how Twitter is being employed by radio news stations, Chan-Olmsted (2006) provides several bases for this strategic management study. First, strategy can be seen “from two distinctive perspectives: ‘process’ and ‘content’” that is, ‘how’ a strategy is formulated and implemented and ‘what’ the strategy is” (p. 14). Second, a number of theories have been brought to bear in rooting the discipline of strategic management between the financial and “behavioral/organizational” views. Chaffee (1985) provided definitions of three main areas of strategy: 1) linear, which is a financial and forecast-based management planning effort; 2) adaptive, which is analysis-based and includes middle managers in the decision making process; and 3) interpretive, which pulls the other two together with a broader view that includes mutual benefits for everyone and allows more participation by all organizational stakeholders. This present study will help determine whether strategic management is being employed to make use of Twitter along with which type: linear, or whether there is a planned and forecast outcome; adaptive, or whether Twitter use by others has been analyzed and includes consultation with middle managers on its use in these entities; or interpretive, which melds linear and adaptive elements with broader input from up and down the management chain and labor groups.

Lynch (1997) narrows these three areas within strategic management down to two main foci: prescriptive and evolutionary. Prescriptive can be seen as the linear and rational approach of how a strategy should be conceived rather than how it is actually formed while the evolutionary allows for a continuum of adapting to the marketplace

environment in order to allow a strategy to emerge. Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel (1998) identified ten areas of the business world's concept of strategy with each forming "one 'school of thought'" (p. 4) with these ten schools falling into three groupings (p. 4-5). First is the *prescriptive* group of three schools of thought: Design, "concerned with how strategies *should* be formulated;" Planning, which is "a more detached and systematic process;" and Positioning, which is "less concerned with the process because it focuses on the selection of strategic positions in the economic marketplace" (p. 5-6). Next is the *descriptive* group of six schools: Entrepreneurial, having the "vision by the great leader;" Cognitive, which "seeks to use the messages of cognitive psychology to enter the strategist's mind;" Learning, which sees strategies emerge over time with 'small steps, as an organization adapts;" Power, which utilizes negotiation either within an organization's conflicting groups or against external environments; Culture, which is a "process ... fundamentally collective and cooperative;" and completing this second group is the Environmental School, which views "strategy formation ... [as] reactive ... [to] external context ... to understand the pressures imposed on organizations" (p. 6). The third group contains but one, the Configuration School which seeks "to be integrative, cluster the various elements of our beast ... into distinct stages or episodes" that can be transformational (p. 6-7). Mintzberg et al. believe strategy is harder to define since it is not simply a company's plan of action for the future, but is also a pattern of past behavior since "the real world inevitably involves some thinking ahead as well as some adaptation en route" (p. 11).

The question of whether these two stations' use of Twitter flows from any type of strategic management theory or school of thought is important to see if any forethought

comes from corporate management. Montgomery and Porter (1991) note that strategy became a “full-fledged management discipline” in the 1980s (p. xi). Goold and Campbell (1991) indicate strategic management involves overlapping responsibilities wherein personnel in frontline units or divisions and corporate staff, including executives at headquarters, work together to exchange ideas that “stretches the thinking and improves strategy proposals by the exposure to a variety of views” (p. 334). My study will help explore if any of these things are occurring from leadership down to the newsrooms.

While radio’s content is meant to be heard with writing that is more conversational and, usually, more simple, that over the air content is juxtaposed with news postings to a station’s website or tweets that are written for the eye – to be read and perhaps reread. Chan-Olmsted (2006) classifies media firms’ property-knowledge resource typology as important for trying to understand the “creativity” and “industry knowledge” that go into producing what is mostly “intangible content” – that is, what broadcasters write, produce, and present over the air to their audience. While media companies’ Twitter feeds and websites contain what could arguably be perceived as “tangible” – because the content can be seen – it is still intangible because it is a service since you cannot hold it and use it like a material object such as a kitchen appliance. Creation of this content – on air broadcasts to Twitter and web stories – can easily be tied in with the resource-based view theory that Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001) believe allows a media company’s unique internal resources to perform with enough differences to sustain a competitive advantage.

Use of Strategic Management Theory

This study will examine two Dallas-Fort Worth radio news stations' use of Twitter. The goal is to find out how the stations' management seeks to make use of the platform from a marketing and programming standpoint while also gaining an understanding of how Twitter is actually put to use by the stations' front-line personnel.

This study will examine these research questions:

RQ1: What are the goals of Twitter content?

RQ2: Do radio news station personnel set out to create separate, unique content on Twitter or provide complementary content to what listeners hear on the air?

RQ3: How do radio news stations try to create Twitter content that will be retweeted to gain attention/push traffic to on-air content or website content?

RQ4: What topics/subjects are radio news station personnel trying most frequently to tweet about?

RQ5: Do radio news station personnel include hyperlinks in their tweets; and if so, what kind of links are posted for internal (station website) content and/or external content?

RQ6: To what extent are personnel encouraged to be "personal" (friendly and perhaps expressing opinions) or "professional" (unbiased, neutral, and sticking with the facts) in their tweets?

This literature review shows the breadth of research into media's use of Twitter with most of it focused on television and newspapers. Research into radio stations' use of this social media tool has been on news talk stations and music stations, which use the platform to push out information about songs and musicians. Since I was unable to

locate any research into radio station newsrooms' use of Twitter, my study seeks to begin filling in what seems to be an empty area of knowledge.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this study's examination of Twitter use at two Dallas-Fort Worth radio news stations, information was sought to start filling an empty data field since I could not find any other study of this type. Six areas of exploration were defined earlier: 1) were there stated goals for tweets, 2) was separate, unique content being tweeted or was content tied to the stations' on-air product, 3) how do tweets seek to increase station listenership and/or increase station website traffic, 4) what were the topics being tweeted, 5) what hyperlinks were included in tweets for internal or external web content, and 6) were tweets personal and/or opinionated or kept more professional with just factual material? The in-depth interview process allowed for free flowing information to be shared for several of what were presented as closed-ended questions as well as other open-ended questions. These responses allowed for the delineation of several specific content categories for content analysis.

Stan (2010) notes content analysis became established in the 1940s, then began focusing on concepts rather than words in the 1950s. The methodology has become widely used since the 1980s for media analysis and evaluation; and "is particularly useful for case study research" (Stan, p. 231). Janis (1965) describes semantical content analysis as a research method to classify signs by their meanings and utilizes designations analysis by checking for the frequency of the various mentions of objects.

Content analysis can be used to describe trends in communication by discovering stylistic features, identifying the communicator's intentions and other characteristics, and revealing the focus of attention (Berelson, 1952). Going further,

Holsti (1969) wrote that describing the characteristics of communication with content analysis helps with the contextual purpose by looking into what, how, and to whom the message is given; can infer why a message is presented; and can infer the effects (decoding) of the message on the recipient by reviewing the recipient's subsequent messages and/or actions. However, "assessing the effect of communication ... [risks] falling prey to the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy," that is, making a false assumption that the recipient's ensuing activity was actually caused by the communication (p. 36-37). My study makes no attempt to infer any effects, but focuses only on the encoding process of the communication. Stone, Dunphy, Smith, and Ogilvie (1966) note that providing education is one of the prime applications of content analysis with the technique's historical origins in journalism and mass communication.

As posited by Berger (1998), the crucial decision in a content analysis – especially for this case study which involves in-depth interviews – is determining the categories to examine. Berger also notes "the matter of defining terms is critical" in order to have "operational definitions of concepts and subjects" being studied (p. 25). Adler and Clark (2003) note that "content analysis is well employed when qualitative social scientists aim for primarily verbal, rather than statistical, analysis of various kinds of communication" (p. 391). Berger points out interviews help gather qualitative data because real-world participants sharing their experiences count more heavily than researchers' speculation, but these interviews can also present a disadvantage because of "the questionable generalizability of the theories they lead to....[however] the richness and accuracy of theories generated from qualitative data analysis are well

worth the trouble, especially if their limitations are kept in mind and, perhaps, investigated further through future research” (p. 497).

Recording/coding of interviews is cited by Krippendorff (2004) as the way “to transform unedited texts...into analyzable representations” (p. 84). The author also notes one of the big reasons for using content analysis is when phenomena cannot be observed directly such as this case of people’s decisions to use Twitter and their thinking about the frequency of that use in radio station newsrooms. This study is also following Krippendorff’s concept that “qualitative studies tend to be carried out by analysts working alone” (p. 88) which is not “considered incompatible with content analysis” (p. 89).

The study utilizes verbal designations as the strategy to operationalize the semantics of the data which is in line with Krippendorff’s belief that “it is most typical for content analysts to simply name their categories, using verbal designations that are common and widely understandable” (p. 132). This study is what Krippendorff terms “a text-driven analysis ... [of] a collection of taped interviews” and is qualitative in nature (p. 341).

Interviewing several members of two radio stations’ newsrooms mimics what Stake (1995) calls a “collective case study” (p. 4) because of the need to utilize information from several people about their use of Twitter; and qualitative because this research is “searching for happenings” (p. 37). In this way, Stake explains “qualitative research uses ... narratives to optimize the opportunity of the reader to gain an experiential understanding of the case” (p. 40). While Stake believes a “qualitative case study seldom proceeds as a survey with the same questions asked of each respondent”

(p. 65), the case study here is not focused on the stories about the environment in which the respondents work or their habits while performing their jobs, it is focused on a narrow aspect of their jobs: Twitter and, to a smaller extent, the Internet since the web plays a part in the content of tweets. The aim here is use of a survey asking the same questions of each respondent to stimulate long form answers in face-to-face interviews despite Stake's belief because having a conversation in person allows for follow-up questions to add clarification or elaboration of answers as needed.

Therefore, a qualitative content analysis will be utilized after answers are accumulated from questions that will be asked in face-to-face personal interviews with a limited number of personnel from two Dallas-Fort Worth radio news stations.

Conducting this research in the Dallas-Fort Worth market provides an appropriate representation of professional broadcasting on a major scale since it is the fifth largest radio market in the United States behind New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco (Nielsen, 2015, Fall).

After submitting information about this study to the University of North Texas Institutional Review Board (IRB) in fall 2014, initial contact was made with managers at two major radio broadcast companies with news operations in Dallas-Fort Worth – CBS (KRLD-AM) and Cumulus (WBAP-AM and KLIF-AM). After receiving IRB approval in February 2015, only Cumulus had agreed to participate. Cumulus is the second largest radio company in the U.S., behind iHeartMedia (formerly Clear Channel), with 454 stations in 90 markets (Cumulus, 2016; Wagoner, 2015). The company operates stations in 22 of the top 50 radio markets in the U.S., often with multiple stations in those individual markets (Cumulus, 2016; News Generation, 2016). The Atlanta,

Georgia-based company has more than 6,000 employees and was founded in 1998 (Grantham, 2016).

The sampling frame was drawn from a staff roster to include personnel across the strata of newsroom jobs. A list of eight people was submitted to a Cumulus manager who requested one change which was then made. Requests for participation were sent to the eight people in this convenience sample. Follow-up emails were sent to those who did not respond initially; and interviews were completed between April and September 2015 with seven of the eight Cumulus employees for an 87.5 percent response rate. Most of the interviews were held in Cumulus offices in downtown Dallas; for three interviewees' convenience, two were completed over the telephone after meeting with the respondents face-to-face and one was done on the patio of a North Dallas coffee shop. The interviews lasted from 15 minutes to 25 minutes. These employees worked for either WBAP (820 AM) or KLIF (570 AM) in the positions of news director, news anchor, news producer, news reporter (radio and Internet), morning show co-host, and morning show producer. Two news directors were interviewed which bolsters the anonymity of the respondents as will be seen later in the Results chapter.

Questions used in the interviews are found in Appendix A. These questions were formulated to elicit information to answer this study's research questions. The phrasing of the questions sought to allow respondents to give as much additional information as they wanted to both closed- and open-ended queries. Since there have not been any previous studies on this particular topic about Twitter's use among radio news personnel, there was nothing to use as a guide for help in forming these interview questions.

Transcriptions were prepared of the interviewees answers, then qualitative information was gleaned to perform a content analysis “by systematically sampling, coding, and counting ... to make discoveries” (Treadwell, 2014, p. 216). Per Stan (2010), emergent coding was developed after collecting the interviews and making an initial data review. Even though a number of the questions were closed-ended, the majority of respondents gave open-ended answers rather than just an affirmative or negative response. One application of content analysis is “the use of verbal data gathered in the form of answers to open-ended interview questions” and other verbal responses (Krippendorff, 2004, p. 11).

For coding, categorical designations were made to determine frequencies of major concepts meant to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive for reliability of the analysis results. This is what Janis (1965) refers to as using designations within the semantics to allow for the frequencies of certain terms to rise to the top for subject matter tabulation. Some initial categories were combined to make sure the concepts were mutually exclusive. The categories of the issues and topics used in this analysis are detailed in the next chapter. Multiple mentions of a single topic made while answering a single question were only counted once as a concept for the answer of that single question. This now allows for a look into how this representative group of two radio stations’ employees make use of Twitter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

There were a number of areas that got frequent responses allowing for the discernment of several main topics of the radio news stations' use of Twitter (see Table 1). In the categorical concept groupings, some totals were higher than the total number of respondents due to multiple mentions over several open-ended answers.

It was interesting that only one person mentioned using Twitter to impart weather information given the importance of keeping track of conditions when there is a threat of severe weather in Texas since thunderstorms and tornadoes can wreak havoc. That may simply be due to the timing of the interviews when weather conditions were not an issue and the fact that there was not a question specifically targeting Twitter and the weather. The stations utilize the talents of a single meteorologist who provides on-air weather information primarily during morning drive ("generally ... considered to be from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. ... Monday through Friday") (Business Dictionary, 2016), but a cursory check of the stations' Twitter feeds during times of severe weather does not show any tweets from the meteorologist.

The dispersal of concepts derived from the interviewees' answers to questions in the face-to-face interviews can be seen in Table 1. These concepts were developed by grouping some answers together to reach mutually exclusive and exhaustive results of separate ideas. In order to try to ensure the interviewees' anonymity, only job titles are used in the following material. Another level of protection is provided by not using any pronouns in this chapter that would denote gender.

Categorical Data of Issues / Topics in Answers	News Director 1	News Director 2	Morning Show Producer	Morning Show Producer / Reporter	Morning Show Co-Host	News Anchor	News Reporter / Web Reporter	Total Mentions
Station (Call Letters) / Show or Program Promotion / Segment Tease / Upcoming Guest / Push to Air Signal	2	1	6	3	2	4	4	22
Credible News Source for Tweets	3		2	2	1	2	3	13
Breaking News	2	1	1	2	1	1	4	12
Promote Personalities – Hosts / Promote Remote Broadcasts - Events	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	12
Local News / Top of the Hour Newscasts	2	1	1	1		2	4	11
Tweets Push Audience to Websites	2			1	2	2	3	10
Encouraged to Set Up Twitter Account / Use Station Branded Twitter Accounts	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	10
Use of Photos in Tweets	1		1		1	4	2	9
Hashtags Encouraged	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	8
Facebook Posts Automatically Tweeted	2	1		1	1		2	7
Seek Listener Information from Scene of News Event / Story	1	1	1	1	1		1	6
No Retweets of Listeners		1	1	1	1	1	1	6
No Official Twitter Policy	1	1			1	1		4
Encouraged to Tweet Frequently	1	1					2	4
Encouraged to Respond to Listener Tweets	1		1	1				3
Promote Giveaways				1		1		2

Table 1: Number of mentions of these concepts derived from open-ended answers during face-to-face interviews.

The Importance of Tweeting

News Director 2 summarized the use of Twitter by WBAP and KLIF: “Everyone tweets – anchors tweet once an hour during their anchor shift and reporters tweet whatever story they’re working on either in the newsroom or out in the field.” All of the respondents said Cumulus did not have a designated social media director in the WBAP/KLIF newsrooms – although several noted there was a “digital director” who focused solely on the stations’ websites for infrastructure and sales support, but that was not a part of this study. There were a few comments about someone who had recently taken a lead role with their social media platforms who was being referred to as a “reporter/web reporter.” The person in that new role said it is “kind of the pseudo role of the social media guru” for the news side while there is someone else, a “digital director who manages the [web]pages” in general for the stations; again the websites were not a part of this study. The News Anchor pointed out the new role is filled by someone who

is a reporter, but we’ve actually – because it has become such a big, important part of our business now to stay relevant – [that person] is now taking over in the mornings doing the social media, posting stories on the website, doing the tweets, and I kind of take turns with [that person]...I might also use Twitter as a way to set an appointment with our listeners....to get them to listen in at [a] specific time.

In describing the new duties, the Reporter/Web Reporter said:

I will tweet breaking news updates. I will retweet any reporter that’s in the field when they put out a tweet. Our Facebook page and Twitter pages are linked, so whenever I post a story to Facebook, it automatically tweets it – which is very helpful, that just takes an extra step out of the process. And then, again breaking news, then just whatever else I’m working on I’ll schedule a tweet for an upcoming newscast and was “we’ve got the latest on the fire in Wise County, details coming up at nine o’clock on WBAP or, and KLIF.”

Elaborating further that the social media duties are not defined by a job description, but simply resulted from a discussion with a news director

to take over the web reporter position in the mornings. It was to get web content on during our morning drive shows. And along with that just came like, “OK, how can I make Twitter more efficient, or tweeting more efficient for our web stories that we’re putting up?” And so that’s, it’s just become a little bit of what I do now, just part of the job.

As far as understanding both Twitter and Facebook, the Reporter/Web Reporter said:

I was pretty fluent with both. I learned how to use TweetDeck (<https://tweetdeck.twitter.com>), which is very cool and I can just – especially when there’s breaking news – I can just send out three tweets: one from my own page, one from WBAP, and one from KLIF; and I don’t have to go to individual pages. I just send out one tweet and it tweets three times, and so that’s been invaluable, being able to use TweetDeck. Everything else is just, it’s a learning process trying to condense what I want to say into 140 characters.

Five of the seven interviewees pointed out how Facebook and Twitter were linked at the stations; it was important enough to two of the people that they mentioned it twice each. The Morning Show Co-Host said “whatever we post on our [stations] Facebook page[s] automatically gets pushed out on Twitter.” The Morning Show Producer/Reporter noted a problem that

sometimes a Facebook post isn’t, doesn’t necessarily make a good tweet because [of] the character limit.... So even with that, that feature which is really handy, sometimes it’s more ideal to go back then and change the, delete that tweet, and post a new one that’s a little bit better for that type of platform.

Twitter can – at times when a broadcaster is not on the air live from an event – be a faster way to get news to the public. All the interviewees talked about the emphasis placed on sending tweets about breaking news which got a total of 12 mentions. The Reporter/Web Reporter said:

If you can live-tweet, like a press conference or if you’re at a trial and they let you keep your cellphone, tweet, live tweet that. In fact, I live-tweeted the opening

[statements] of the Eddie Ray Routh trial, the murder of Chris Kyle.¹ I spent probably an hour just doing nothing but live tweeting and I wasn't able to take any notes because I was tweeting, but my notes ended up being those tweets and so I was able to turn those into my news stories. So it was, it's become very valuable.

All of the interviewees send tweets and have found it to be an important part of their jobs in today's marketplace of broadcasting. They all have developed their own ways to use Twitter and modify those uses to fit within their job functions.

Tweets to Promote the Stations and Programming

The promotion, or tease, use made of Twitter answers RQ4 since the effort to get people to tune in to the stations' air signals is the most frequently tweeted topic; this also partially addresses RQ2 in that promotional tweets complement the on-air content. All the interviewees talked about the importance of these tweets making this the top categorical topic with 22 total mentions in their answers. The Morning Show Producer gave a good summary of these type of tweets:

I try to tweet before the show, so I try to tease a couple of things that I know that the hosts are going to talk about. But then, during the show I would tweet right before, you know to tease a particular segment. So maybe we're going to have somebody who's going to be interviewed, so we'll tweet that out and give them a time that the interview will be on.

The Reporter/Web Reporter detailed how various staff members contribute to the stations' promotional effort:

for morning drive, we'll tweet "hey, we've got a guest coming up at 5:07, or we're going to be talking about this certain issue." We also tweet, we had an event a couple, several months ago actually, it was a listener event and so we were, we had somebody tweeting about that, and we were tweeting a lot promoting that, trying to get people to come. We'll tweet the talk show hosts – especially our morning talk show host likes to tweet a lot and we retweet him – for, again we've got Senator Ted Cruz coming up at whatever time. We'll also promote not only

¹ See Lamothe (2015), for an overview of Routh's trial and facts about the murder.

the local shows, but also what's coming up on Rush Limbaugh [11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.], Mark Levin [5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.], or Michael Savage [2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.]. And it's just, I've found it's just a great way to engage the listener not just about what the news department is doing, but what the station as a whole is doing.

On that promotional side, News Director 1 said, "We'll tweet about special appearances like say the morning show's going to be out somewhere." News Director 2 said, "It could be come see [host's name], or come see [another host's name] at a particular place, yes. Or, we're at so-an-so, come and see us."

The Morning Show Co-Host combined several uses of Twitter to do promotion of on-air and web content along with additional ways to find information:

I read what [other staffers are tweeting] and retweet them. They're doing news stories, we're linking back to our website. We're linking to other sites. A lot of what we do is what we have coming up on our show. If we have a guest coming up, I'll tweet that we have the guest coming up and if I have the Twitter handle of the person who's coming up, I'll put "at" [@] and whatever their Twitter handle is. And a lot of times I'll use hashtags that are appropriate.

News Director 1 talked about the same thing by saying:

We tweet information about stories that are coming up on newscasts. We tweet links back to our webpage. We tweet links to our Facebook page. And then, of course, everything we tweet shows up on our Facebook page, too, so it's like a big circle of social media death going on.... Either we want to specifically tweet back as a way of promoting forward something on the air or something in regard to our webpage content. So it's either got to be a link or it's got to be a tease to on-air. Links are very important. We do a lot of retweeting, too.... All the reporters and anchors are expected to tweet regularly. You know, I tell the anchors: 'You've got to tweet at least once an hour – find something to tweet. The reporters, if they're on a story and they've got a photo to share, you know tweet it out; if they've got developments on a news story that are happening, they tweet that out as well. And a lot of times, they'll tweet on their own personal Twitter, they will retweet just to save them having to login [to] two different accounts, that sort of thing.

The Morning Show Producer/Reporter noticed that "actually somewhat recently the website's kind of coming first" with management "wanting us to definitely push more

digital interaction, more so than even the on-air product.” There were a total of 10 mentions in five of the interviews about using tweets to push their audience toward the stations’ websites. But News Director 2 felt the audience was not being pushed to the stations’ websites “through a tweet. We push them to the website on-air: ‘You can find more information at WBAP.com or KLIF.com.’ Also, we push people to the website from Facebook.” News Director 2 elaborated in another answer about the aspect of promoting both the stations’ on-air programming and website content being an important use of Twitter by newsroom personnel, show hosts, and promotional support staff:

I think the fact that it, the tweet, is coming from a WBAP or KLIF account, that promotes the station because that’s our branding. When we tweet the stories that we’re working on, we say: “Hear more about this, or listen for this particular story at this particular time.” So, we use it to drive people back to the air signal.

All the interviewees use Twitter for promotion of on-air programming and this concept garnered the most responses in the entire survey with 22 total mentions (see Table 1). Only the Morning Show Producer/Reporter felt encouragement from management was shifting to include more promotion of the station’s website than the on-air signal. This is indicative of an overall look at what content is being created and not just the delivery method.

Use of Hashtags in Tweets

While RQ5 sought to determine the use of hyperlinks in these stations’ tweets, it was hashtags that the interviewees indicated was a higher priority promotional tool. All seven respondents mentioned being encouraged to use hashtags with one of them mentioning it twice giving this topic eight total mentions. But News Director 1 said

[We don't use them] as much as they should be because I'm not sure that a lot of us understand the hashtag thing. I mean, I know that it ties you to that conversation and ultimately should help you, but we don't do that as much as we should, no – and myself included.

The News Anchor is the one who mentioned the importance of hashtags twice adding in one answer that it was something “I do personally and it's something we're trying to encourage more and try to train more on how to effectively do that.” The Reporter/Web Reporter said:

We do use hashtags. If there is an event, if there's like an official hashtag that's been set up and we're covering that event, I've used [those] hashtags before. That's not where, we haven't necessarily ever been told we have to use hashtags. When I was live-tweeting the Eddie Ray Routh trial, there was a certain hashtag that was being used by a lot of reporters and so I just picked up on that, but no one told me I had to use that.²

The Morning Show Producer believes “you have to focus on Twitter handles and hashtags to make sure you can really get your station's name out there; otherwise whatever you're tweeting out kind of goes out into some abyss.” That Producer added that it was beneficial to know a guest's Twitter handle so it could be included in a tweet promoting his or her upcoming on-air interview “because then they'll retweet that and that's another way to promote the station” – however, getting a Twitter handle is “sometimes a real pain in the ass to do because you have to look it up...[and] some of them aren't so easy to figure out.”

Hashtags, not hyperlinks (URLs), have become the focus of additional attention within the interviewees' tweets. This is an important aspect of Twitter because hashtags allow for curating topics for recipients' to perhaps get a broader view of an event or story while also allowing reporters to use a series of their own tweets to

² Routh was convicted in February 2015 of killing Chris Kyle, author of *American Sniper: The Autobiography of the Most Lethal Sniper in U.S. Military History* (2013). For more on the case and trial, see Lamothe (2015).

compose a more complete story to broadcast on-air or post to a station's website. There was a sense from several of the interviewees that more use of, and/or training about, hashtags would be beneficial. The importance of hashtags has surfaced, as mentioned earlier, in several previous studies since they can add tweets together to accumulate substantial information, allow outside sources into the information stream, and should be used in breaking news situations by adopting whichever hashtag has become the most prevalent.

Tweets from Listeners

Six of the seven interviewed staffers said 'no' to the closed-ended question about whether they retweeted listener information from the scene of a news event or story. Adding this topic to the ones about utilizing credible news sources in tweets and seeking listener information from the scene of a news event, both of which were also mentioned by six of the seven, yields a total of 25 mentions which indicates maintenance of the traditional gatekeeper role of journalists. In further explaining their 'no' answers, News Director 1 said:

We don't ever put anything on the air just based on a tweet. Period. Because it's just too unreliable. We've seen it so many times. If we can't verify it independently outside of a social [medium], outside of a tweet, we don't do it. We just won't do it – that's my policy, that's our policy here. And somebody'll be like, 'Oh my God, they're tweeting that three people are dead and there's [been] an explosion and all that kind of stuff.' That's great, but unless you've got eyes on it, or unless you've talked to somebody independently, we're not going to run with it, we're just not. I think we're in a day and age where a lot of people say "be first and fix and correct later." [But] I'm one of those old school guys – I'd rather be second and be right than be first and be wrong, so we do it that way. Once the genie's out of the bottle, you can't ever put it back in – it still exists on the Internet forever and I'd rather just try to be a little bit more responsible than that personally.

News Director 2 said Twitter is used to seek information from people at the scene of a news event, “but we verify that information ... [by] contacting the people who are, I guess, I hate the [terminology] – the spokesperson, spokesman, the official source. You take the information and verify it. You don’t just go with Twitter information.”

The News Anchor felt it would be reckless to retweet listener tweets about a breaking news story:

We have not used it as a vehicle at an actual location where a story’s going on. I wouldn’t just because it’s not verified. If you use anything on-air, you’ve got to verify that that’s actually happening. Now you can use that as a stepping stone to go in a certain direction – if you see something tweeted out, you might call the police department for that area and say “is this happening” or something like that. But you definitely just can’t go with what people, random people say.

While most of the personnel said they do not engage with listeners on Twitter, three of them thought it was okay to respond to listener tweets. The Morning Show Co-Host said, “No one’s ever said anything, but I do respond [to listeners, because]...this is all sort of personal what we do.” The Reporter/Web Reporter did not feel:

encouraged or discouraged either way. I have responded a few times, but not, not very much. I don’t see myself as a pen pal with any of the listeners. I might respond once if they’re polite and they have an actual substantive question, but we’re not going to get into any back and forth. It’s just going to be like: here’s the information, thanks for listening.

News Director 1 said the staff was encouraged “to respond, but do it in a civil manner, “ but if “they’re not sure how to respond” then they should bring it to the attention of management – either the news director or operations manager – since they “might be a little more used to dealing with listeners.” News Director 2 said staff members were discouraged from responding to listeners on Twitter because “that’s one for management” which mirrors some of the thoughts of News Director 1. News Director 2 inferred that station management was best equipped to respond to listener tweets to try

to avoid any miscommunication which could lead to less than polite responses when dealing with a listener's criticism.

Using Photos in Tweets

The Morning Show Co-Host talked about the importance of adding a visual element to radio broadcasts and said listeners' pictures would be retweeted or used on the station's website "it they give me permission – obviously I'll know that they were there." Including photographs in tweets adds separate, unique content on Twitter which is part of RQ2. There were nine total mentions of this topic, but two of the interviewees did not mention it at all. By retweeting photos from someone at a news event, this is the closest these broadcasters get to taking part in the growing element of braided journalism. The News Anchor also talked about the usefulness of tweeting photos since:

radio is not a visual medium, so using social media is a way where we can add that visual image. It's very important if a reporter is out on a story to take a picture and tweet it out so that our listeners – should they have their cell phones in their hands – they can follow along and maybe see a picture. And we can also add video. So it does help bring a picture to the verbal story in the radio business.

Emphasizing the value of posting photos, the News Anchor also talked about the Reporter/Web Reporter who works for both WBAP and KLIF who "updates both websites and will put out pictures on Twitter" and that "reporters are encouraged every time they go on location to a story to take pictures" and post them on Twitter.

The News Anchor also added later that Twitter allowed some new possibilities "because radio is not a visual medium – this is your way to add that element into it, if you stay with it. And like I said, we're just trying to build that part of our business right

now.” The Reporter/Web Reporter said, “Everyone is encouraged to tweet, especially field reporters when they’re out in the field, we always encourage them: ‘take a picture, tweet the picture out, take multiple pictures.’”

Personal Twitter Accounts versus Station Twitter Accounts

All seven interviewees agreed that they are encouraged to have personal Twitter accounts that News Director 1 said is “not necessarily tied to the brand.” This topic was mentioned a total of 10 times and News Director 1 also pointed out some of the veteran broadcasters, “i.e. older, would not have a Twitter account and would not have a Facebook page if it wasn’t for the station pushing them to get them.” The News Anchor did not think everyone was necessarily encouraged to have personal Twitter accounts:

but most of the time I think – I pretty much think all of us have a personal [Twitter account] – I think we do most of our work through our personal Twitter account[s]. And I know that other stations, for example I know [at] KRLD they encourage their reporters to have an account that has KRLD in it.³ So, we don’t do that, we’re not that big of a staff. We do – at that point you have to be careful what you put on Twitter then.

The Morning Show Producer talked about how important it is to be mindful as a media professional of having a Twitter account that is in public view:

If I’ve ever tweeted out something personal, I make sure it’s not controversial or whatever – and I won’t attach the station’s Twitter handle to it. But basically we just have our individual accounts and it’s kind of, sort of an unspoken rule that, don’t get on there and say something you shouldn’t because even though it’s your personal account, chances are we’ve retweeted you so we associate ourselves with you and your personal handle, so basically behave.

News Director 2 said no one in the WBAP/KLIF newsrooms was encouraged to have station-branded Twitter accounts, noting “I know the jocks do, the DJs on the [Cumulus] music stations do, but the news reporters – no.”

³ KRLD is the CBS-owned competition to Cumulus’ WBAP and KLIF.

Headlines or Conversational Style in Tweets

The style of language used in tweets seems to depend on whether a news person or a personality (show host) was doing the tweeting. News Director 1 said the morning guy would be less formal, way more conversational, and perhaps be more opinionated in a tweet than newscasters would be:

I might tweet something that's much more formal. I mean, even though it's – it might be conversational, I still would not have a bunch of slang or.... It's like a newscast, so you want it to be conversational but yet it's really not. It might be more – it might be less formal, less “cop-speak,” or whatever, but to be saying it's really conversational it probably really isn't Sometimes we'll tweet out things that are really extremely formal and make sure we're covered as far as attribution. Other times it's very, if it's a personality it's going to be way more conversational.

Without comment, News Director 2 felt the style of tweets should be headlines. In that interview, taken with other comments, that means that particular news director's staff was expected to stick to the facts and try to give listeners enough information about a story to try to get them to tune in to the station's newscasts. This line of thought addresses RQ6 with personnel being encouraged to tweet facts, not opinions.

The News Anchor definitely sees Twitter being used to promote the stations' personalities since one of the morning show hosts “does that himself. He'll promote maybe a funny story that he has coming up or something that's happened to him, but yes, he does that in the frame of being a personality.” In that regard, Twitter is used to humanize the show hosts in promoting the stations' programming about which the Morning Show Co-Host said, “Sometimes we'll write stupid little things about each of us.” The Reporter/Web Reporter notes some of the on-air show hosts will “just start tweeting out jokes on the Twitter page [We use Twitter] for serious news, but then we also have fun with it, too.”

The Morning Show Producer did not see a preference about writing a tweet in either headline or conversational style:

I think what we're more encouraged to do is be accurate. No misspellings and make sure you can get all your information on there [in 140 characters or less]. I've burned myself for tweeting too fast. You know it's out there, you can go and delete it, but it's already out there.

The Morning Show Producer/Reporter and the News Reporter/Web Reporter also felt either style was acceptable and were encouraged equally. The Morning Show Co-Host said it was more important to be "conversational because that's how we want to talk on the air – you want it to be engaging."

Twitter Policy

While four of the interviewees said there was no official station or corporate policy about Twitter use, there was a misconception on the part of two others who thought that simply tweeting frequently was the company's policy; both topics got four total mentions each. Therefore without a corporate policy in place, an attempt to try to determine or understand either strategies or goals of Twitter content addressed by RQ1 cannot be made. The News Reporter/Web Reporter has taken a lead role in working with the stations' social media and believes the official policy is to:

tweet as much as possible and really get ourselves out there whether it's from our personal account and then it's being retweeted or if we tweet from the official station account....and then put our reporters out there and say, "Go out and take a lot of pictures and tweet" and then we'll retweet it.

And the Morning Show Producer/Reporter said "as much tweeting as possible I would say is probably the policy."

Many of the respondents felt a perception of an unwritten rule to maintain their professionalism in tweets which is the topic of RQ6. The Morning Show Co-Host said that meant to behave “like you do on the air – you wouldn’t say anything offensive, or rude, or swear, or anything like that. I consider it an extension of what I do on the air.” The Co-Host said tweets could also include the writer’s opinion since “no one’s ever said you can’t be opinionated. It’s basically the same as what we would present on the air because we do give our opinions on the air.” News Director 1 said there was no written policy, but felt most staff members were aware they should not tweet “anything that’s going to make us look bad” and to “present things in a positive light.” While they have been using Twitter for a few years, that News Director said:

a real clear definition of how we should use it doesn’t exist. It’s sort of just an ad lib, seat of your pants sort of thing, because we don’t have anybody directing it, or whose job is to sort of make sure we’re doing it right. We just sort of do it and hope for the best based on what we read and what we see and what little advice we get coming from corporate about it – which is mainly what you shouldn’t do with it rather than what you should do.

News Director 2 said while there is no official Twitter policy, use of that social medium could be summed up as: “Just don’t be stupid.”

The Morning Show Producer simply acknowledged not knowing whether the company had a Twitter policy. When informed that the news directors had said there were no official policies, this Producer said that made sense and:

I think this is how it is: you better make sure your employees do the right thing and it’s only when they get in trouble that maybe then a handbook is written. I think that’s kind of like we’re all hoping that nobody makes a mistake....probably a matter of just hope to God nobody does anything wrong.

The News Anchor summed up nicely about why there was probably not a definite corporate policy about Twitter use because

for WBAP, it's kind of in its infancy stages. We're trying to bring everybody up to the 21st century – we're a work in progress on that. But I haven't seen anybody – for the most part it's all been very responsibly used, [but] not as frequently probably as it need to be on the news level.

The use of Twitter by personnel at both WBAP and KLIF can be seen as mostly guided by personal understandings of the medium rather than corporate, or even local, leadership. There seems to be a broad understanding of a loose rule that hangs over all media organizations – those that have definite social media policies and those that do not – to simply use Twitter as a professional extension of what people already do in their jobs and to not be stupid.

Summary

The information from these interviews gives a general understanding that Twitter is being used frequently in the WBAP and KLIF newsrooms, but without any sense of direction or purpose from corporate managers at Cumulus Media. These broadcast journalists are using the platform as best they know how, seeking to implement it into their workflow as they discover its workings on their own. Several of the respondents indicate areas where improvements could be made, especially in the use of hashtags.

It is also interesting to note that the two most experienced Twitter users – the News Anchor and News Reporter/Web Reporter – understand the value of including photos in their tweets. The News Anchor specifically points out how this gives the non-visual medium of radio something for the listeners to see particularly when there is ongoing coverage of a news story.

The biggest use of Twitter is for the promotion of their main product: on-air programming. Several of the personnel make use of Twitter to try to set up appointment listening with their audience with teases about specific show segments or upcoming

guests. While most of the effort is made to reference the stations' call letters and push the audience to the air signal, the Morning Show Producer/Reporter felt "recently the website's kind of coming first" which is in line with the growing importance of the Internet for all businesses. However, there was not a strong sense that hyperlinks were being included in tweets, but using hashtags in tweets was deemed important by several interviewees; a couple respondents said the effort to get people to go to the stations' websites was mainly done on-air.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Broad Findings

This study of in-depth interviews with seven news personnel from Cumulus Media's WBAP and KLIF stations in the Dallas-Fort Worth radio market on how Twitter is being used shows there is not an overall, contemplated plan for using this social media platform nor a suggestion of these staff members receiving any training on how it functions or how it could be utilized in their work. Therefore, none of the elements of strategic management theory can be applied to try to see which method of planning managers might be using in hopes of achieving some kind of results with Twitter's use. The use of Twitter at WBAP and KLIF by newsmen and newswomen can be seen to follow what Lynch (1997) termed evolutionary strategic management in that tweets are being sent into the marketplace without a preconceived strategy and therefore a strategy is being allowed to adapt and emerge on its own. This use falls outside the three areas delineated by Chaffee (1985) of linear, adaptive, and interpretive strategies since neither of these two Cumulus radio news stations appear to be using Twitter with any management dictated input for any desired outcome. Rather the front-line personnel are making it up as they go and most seem to realize management intervention would only come if someone makes a huge blunder by tweeting incorrect or inaccurate information about a news story – or worst of all, tweeting details of some story that never actually happened – and some form of corrective policy would become necessary.

No one spoke of having any goals in mind when using Twitter. This is generally due to the fact that Cumulus Media has not given anyone at these stations any definitive

policies regarding Twitter use. Therefore, from a strategic management perspective, nothing can be defined as working or not working as far as trying to meet any goals or objectives. From a corporate standpoint, this could be a missed opportunity to try to focus messages with some kind of goal in mind – such as a plan to try to either grow the audience or establish loyalty to the brands. Per Chan-Olmsted's (2006) view of process and content, there is no designated process to define the 'how' of any strategy, but there seems to be plenty of content being created by the WBAP and KLIF broadcast journalists giving the 'what' in this strategic line of thinking; the 'what' happens without a plan of 'how' any goal is to be achieved. To reiterate, the interviewees' use of Twitter, at best, comes closest to Lynch's (1997) evolutionary approach with all these tweets going out, but there does not seem to be any effort to follow up with any strategy to continue moving this Twitter use toward some goal within the stations' operations.

The results show tweets that are separate and unique, and complementary to the stations' on-air product are both being sent. Again, though, without a strategy in place, the only consistent effort that seems to have emerged is the promotional tease to try to get tweet recipients to tune into the stations to hear upcoming topics or guests. This topic generated the most responses: 22 mentions across the seven interviews. However, the full extent of the unique content side of the question was not fully realized in this study since on-air morning show talent, or hosts, were not included in the sample frame for the face-to-face interviews. Several of the interviewees provided anecdotal evidence of some of the content the program hosts write about themselves and each other in tweets. Some unique Twitter content comes from such things as reporters' live-tweeting of unfolding events while covering news stories.

Another element of complementary content is that any posts to the stations' Facebook pages automatically get tweeted. Both of these types of tweets – unique, separate content and complementary content – take full advantage of the instantaneous, constantly moving flow of information on the Twitter social media site. This type of information flow from the stations' personnel can be greatly beneficial in making a connection with the audience by keeping listeners informed about the personalities at the station (unique content) and about stories/guests/information coming up on the air (complementary content). While promotional tweets were a trend Doctor (2010) saw being pushed by news managers, Lowery (2009) noted automation of tying Facebook pages and Twitter posts together did not maximize the potential of both platforms and should be handled separately.

The promotional tease tweets (complementary content) are the most frequently tweeted topics with regular use of the call letters along with program/segment/guest promotion seeking appointment listening. Other topics being tweeted frequently are breaking news with all seven interviewees talking about this for a total of 12 mentions, promoting the stations' on-air hosts/personalities was also mentioned 12 times by all seven people, and local news/top of the hour newscasts with 11 total mentions from all but one of the respondents. These additional uses are complementary to the stations' on-air product, too. Sending out breaking news tweets correlates with what previous research has shown to be a major Twitter strength and may have helped push the company to develop its Moments function which is curated by real people, not algorithms, to feature several trending stories or topics at any given moment.

These newsmen and newswomen were not sure if anyone was adding any hyperlinks to their stations' web content into tweets, or at least not adding them on a consistent basis. Only News Director 1 and the News Reporter/Web Reporter spoke of utilizing the additional Internet site called Bitly (bitly.com) to shorten web links, or URLs, in order to fit as much content as possible into Twitter's 140 character limitation on tweets. While both of them spoke of only posting hyperlinks to their own stations' web content, the Morning Show Producer talked about sometimes finding interesting stories from online entities such as *The New York Times* (nytimes.com) and wanting to share some of those stories with the Producer's Twitter followers. Previous research shows the addition of hyperlinks to tweets makes those messages more meaningful and builds credibility when those links are to external material so that these tweets become more than self-promotional spam.

While several respondents talked about retweeting other staff members' personal account tweets onto the stations' branded Twitter accounts, no one mentioned specifically trying to get broader, audience retweets of their material into the community. This could also be a result of not having a corporate strategic plan for Twitter use.

While the platform appears to have been embraced by Cumulus Media since its radio stations have branded Twitter accounts, more of the front-line effort is happening on the employees' personal Twitter accounts with their material being retweeted onto the branded station accounts. This could be an unspoken strategy in that the various personal accounts provide a depth chart for the stations' staffing which would not be evident if all tweets emanated from the official, branded account address.

But the personalities of the personnel are not really being exposed much in tweets since they tend to refrain from getting too personal in tweets. This is an area for development on their part since past research has shown news audiences more readily retweet personal content over official, branded tweets. These respondents indicated they do not post their opinions in tweets, but remain more journalistically pure by sticking to facts. However, this detracts from previous Twitter research that shows adding some opinion is a way to allow journalists to show a more human side; this is a fine line, however, since adding comments about people or events can introduce bias, or at least reduced credibility, which media organizations want to avoid. Additional study is necessary to determine what kind of comments could be seen as humanizing reporters' tweets without stepping into commentary or opinion about news stories. Further development for a more complete answer on whether opinionated or personal tweets are posted on the station branded accounts would require additional research into message content that would include on-air program hosts whose duties include sharing their opinions. The respondents in this study's face-to-face interviews see those hosts, specifically those doing opinion-based talk shows and music DJs, as having wider latitude for putting opinions into tweets.

The aspect of braided journalism is an area open for increased utilization by the interviewees. A number of media organizations are taking part in braided journalism by relying more on tweets from people at the scene of a news event to bolster their coverage. The participants of my study are using such citizen journalists as providing story tips, or information that can be used as jumping off points to try to verify facts before going on-air with, or tweeting, the information. Other organizations also

encourage limited responses to their audience members to more fully engage their customers. Other researchers have pointed out a lack of Twitter engagement with listeners is detrimental to changing the broadcast model of one-to-many communication and fails to allow reporters to have a real human element which makes a stronger connection with audience members.

Despite the apparent widespread use and acceptance of the Twitter social media platform by these radio stations' newsrooms, there does not appear to be any analytics in place to gauge the effectiveness or reach of the tweets in regards to marketing or programming. That, however, is also a shortcoming of this study since no purposeful frame was set to gather information on whether the stations' managers or the Cumulus corporate managers might be tracking Twitter's use.

Study Limitations / Areas for Future Research

While a deficiency might be seen in some answers to the research questions, it is primarily due to the limited sample frame of only newsroom personnel being selected for this study. Another limitation of this study is that only two stations of Cumulus Media participated instead of the expectation of having additional interviews with personnel at CBS-owned KRLD. Additionally, this type of content analysis case study did not delve into any direct examination of actual Twitter content from these radio stations, but relied on survey questions of both closed- and open-ended nature which yielded good qualitative information. But because this study was qualitative instead of quantitative, that could be seen as a limitation since no true statistical data was generated. Quantitative statistics of a broader view of Twitter content from a wider sample of U.S.

radio news stations might yield more generalizable information about what radio news broadcasters are doing on a daily or weekly basis nationwide.

This study's research of Twitter use can be a baseline for more study of perhaps the entire realm of departments and personalities at radio news stations. This was a broad-based study seeking a first time glimpse into several research questions which could each be studied individually to add breadth to understanding how radio stations are making use of Twitter. Other areas that could benefit from future research include in-house retweeting versus audience retweeting by examining all the tweets in a specific time frame with a content analysis of who is retweeting station material. Also, the range of the most frequently tweeted topics is open for further analysis as to the actual content of those tweets and the frequency of such tweets within a limited study time frame instead of relying simply on the memories and recollections of those who are tweeting. The addition of hyperlinks and hashtags to tweets is another area of radio news stations use of Twitter that allows for more research and could also be answered more fully by exploring the actual content of the stations' tweets for a specific time period.

Twitter also added two elements in 2015 that were unfortunately not included in my research: Moments and Periscope. I have been checking the Moments feature periodically and found the curated material has been interesting; this is an area that bears keeping in mind for future researchers. I have seen the streaming video platform of Periscope, but have not experimented with it yet. This, too, has the potential for some intriguing future research.

While this study cannot be used to generalize widespread behavior at other radio news stations in the U.S., it opens the door to more focused studies on other stations'

use of Twitter, both in how and why it is being used as well as more concentrated examinations of the content of stations' tweets. The emergence of Twitter is allowing these broadcast journalists to have an additional professional tool. This platform lets radio stations add an important visual to the pictureless realm of radio news. Twitter also provides a means to quickly get news to these stations' audience, and also provides a promotional element to try to get listeners' ears tuned to their broadcasts and eyes onto their website content.

APPENDIX
QUESTIONS IN FACE TO FACE INTERVIEWS

1. Do you tweet?

Yes (continue to Q2)

No (skip to Q3)

2. What do you tweet?

_____.

3. Is someone designated as social media director for the station or newsroom?

Yes, for the station.

Yes, for the newsroom.

Yes, one person does both.

No.

Don't know

4. Is someone in particular encouraged to tweet for the station/newsroom?

Yes (open: if so, _____.)

No

Don't know

5. What are other people tweeting for the station?

_____.

Don't know

6. Is Twitter used for breaking news?

Yes

No

Don't know

7. Is Twitter used for non-breaking news, that is, regular news coverage or stories?

Yes

No

Don't know.

8. Is Twitter used to promote the station?

Yes (continue to Q9)

No (skip to Q10)

Don't know

9. How is Twitter used to promote the station?

_____.

10. Is Twitter used to promote on-air talent or personalities?

Yes (continue to Q11)

No (skip to Q12)

Don't know

11. How is Twitter used to promote on-air talent or personalities?

_____.

12. Is Twitter used to seeking information from people on the scene of a news event/story?

Yes (continue to Q13)

No (skip to Q14)

Don't know

13. How is that information used and vetted for accuracy?

_____.

14. Is Twitter used by the station to retweets listeners' content?

Yes

No

Don't know

15. Is Twitter used by the station in any kind of automated way to push website story headlines or content to followers?

Yes

No

Don't know

16. Is Twitter used by the station to automatically send headlines from a national wire service?

Yes

No

Don't know

17. Does the station have an RSS feed?

Yes (continue to Q18)

No (skip to Q19)

Don't know

18. Is Twitter used by the station to convert items from its RSS feed into tweets?

Yes

No

Don't know

19. Is Twitter used by the station as an official, branded account?

Yes

No

Don't know

20. Are station personnel encouraged to set up individual station-branded Twitter accounts?

Yes

No

Don't know

21. Are station personnel encouraged to set up their own individual Twitter accounts?

Yes

No

Don't know

22. Are station personnel encouraged to send tweets on behalf of the station?

Yes

No

Don't know

23. Are personnel encouraged to send tweets that are conversational or like headlines?

Conversational

Headlines

Don't know

24. Are personnel encouraged to use hashtags in tweets?

Yes

No

Don't know

25. Are you encouraged to include hyperlinks in your tweets?

Yes

No

Don't know

26. Does your station have any official policies about tweeting?

Yes

No

Don't know

27. Are you encouraged to be “personal” or opinionated in your tweets?

Yes

No

Don't know

28. Are you encouraged or discouraged to respond to listener questions or comments?

Yes, encouraged

Yes, discouraged

No

Don't know

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